

1 *Proposal*

2 **Sharing the Gifts of Communion (Augsburg Agreement)**

3 **An Agreement of Full Communion between the Evangelical Lutheran Church**
4 **in Bavaria and The Episcopal Church.**

5

6 **Introduction**

7 1 Since the 1970s, a fruitful partnership has been built up in Bavaria between the
8 Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe, part of The Episcopal Church (TEC), and the
9 Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria (Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche in Bayern; ELKB),
10 which expresses itself in a consistent history of sharing in worship and prayer, and
11 working together in diaconal projects.

12

13 2 Through this work together, Episcopalians and Lutherans in Bavaria have come to
14 understand more deeply their shared mission and the bonds between their churches.
15 Building on existing agreements between Anglicans/Episcopalians and Lutherans in
16 Germany, North America and Northern Europe, TEC and the ELKB are now ready to move
17 into a relationship of full communion, enabling full interchangeability of ministries and
18 full participation in one another's mission.

19

20 3 This current agreement, made specifically between TEC and the ELKB, has been informed
21 by a number of previous agreements between Anglican and Lutheran churches:

22 • the *Meissen Agreement* (1991), between the Church of England and the
23 Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD), achieves mutual recognition of
24 churches and mutual Eucharistic hospitality, but does not achieve full
25 communion or interchangeability of ordained ministries;¹

26 and on the three regional agreements of (full) communion between Anglicans and
27 Lutherans:

28 • the *Porvoo Common Statement* (1992/93), between the European member
29 churches of the Anglican Communion and most of the Nordic and Baltic
30 Lutheran churches;²

31 • *Called to Common Mission* (1999/2000), between TEC and the Evangelical
32 Lutheran Church in America;³

¹ The ELKB is a party to the *Meissen Agreement* through the EKD

² Neither the ELKB nor TEC is a party to the *Porvoo Common Statement*. The signatories of the *Porvoo Common Statement* are, from the LWF: the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Denmark, the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, the Lutheran Church in Great Britain, the Church of Iceland, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia Abroad, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lithuania, the Church of Norway, the Church of Sweden; and from the Anglican Communion: the Church of England, the Church of Ireland, the Lusitanian Church of Portugal, the Scottish Episcopal Church, the Reformed Episcopal Church of Spain, and the Church in Wales. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia has observer status, which is intended to lead to membership. The United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany (VELKD), of which ELKB is a part, has the less binding guest status.

³ TEC is one of the signatory churches of *Called to Common Mission*.

- 33 • the *Waterloo Declaration* (2001), between the Anglican Church of
34 Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.⁴

35 Through its membership in the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), the ELKB is in
36 communion with the Scandinavian and Nordic Lutheran churches, the Evangelical
37 Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. TEC,
38 the Anglican Church of Canada, and the British and Irish Anglican churches are in
39 communion through their membership of the Anglican Communion. The LWF and the
40 Anglican Communion are also linked through the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of*
41 *Justification* (1999) agreed between the LWF and the Roman Catholic Church, the
42 substance of which was affirmed by the Anglican Communion in 2017.

43 4 In many parts of the world, member churches of the LWF and the Anglican Communion
44 work in close cooperation, with or without an agreement, and the Third Anglican
45 Lutheran International Commission urged churches to develop or adopt agreements that
46 reflect this cooperation.⁵ In this spirit, this agreement is offered as a further example and
47 invitation to other member churches of the Anglican Communion and the Lutheran
48 World Federation to consider in their contexts how such a move forward could be
49 accomplished.

50
51
52 5 Relationships between TEC and the ELKB have thus developed within the context of a
53 long history of ecumenical dialogue between Lutheran and Anglican/Episcopal churches,
54 which has shaped and enriched the experiences of many Anglicans and Lutherans. In
55 particular, through *Called to Common Mission*, mutual relationships between the ELCA
56 and TEC have become a lived reality. As distinctive churches with their own particular
57 relationships, in making this current agreement, TEC and the ELKB draw on the extensive
58 network of mutual experience of mission and ministry, as well as the experience of
59 working and worshipping together locally. The purpose of the current agreement is to
60 foster and deepen that common work through recognizing a relationship of full
61 communion between TEC and the ELKB.

62
63 6 TEC and the ELKB have already taken important steps towards full communion. The 1987
64 *Niagara Report* of the Anglican-Lutheran International Continuation Committee and
65 *Receiving One Another's Ordained Ministries* of the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission
66 on Unity, Faith and Order (received by ACC-16, 2016), define stages of relations between
67 churches. Relationships between the TEC and the ELKB have long-since reached stage 1
68 (recognition of one another as churches) and stage 2 (provisional structures exist which
69 promote mutual growth). The intention in this agreement is to move to stage 3, the
70 exploration of changing particular practices with respect to *episkopé* which will enable
71 the full interchangeability of ministries, and stage 4, the public declaration and
72 celebration of full communion.

73
74 7 In moving into this relationship, TEC and the ELKB understand full communion to be a
75 relation between distinct churches in which each recognizes the other as a catholic and
76 apostolic church holding the essentials of the Christian faith. Within this new relation,
77 churches become interdependent while remaining autonomous. Full communion

⁴ Neither the ELKB nor TEC is a party to the *Waterloo Declaration*, but the purpose of the *Memorandum of Mutual Recognition of Relations of Full Communion* is to link the *Waterloo Declaration* and *Called to Common Mission*.

⁵ *Jerusalem Report*, pp. 53.56 [Appendix 3].

- 78 includes the establishment of appropriate recognized organs of regular consultation and
79 communication, including episcopal collegiality, to express and strengthen the fellowship
80 and enable common witness, life, and service. Diversity is preserved, but this diversity
81 does not divide and is not static. Neither church seeks to remake the other in its own
82 image, but each is open to the gifts of the other as it seeks to be faithful to Christ and his
83 mission. They are together committed to a visible unity in the church’s mission to
84 proclaim the gospel and administer the sacraments.⁶
85
- 86 8 Specifically, TEC and the ELKB understand this to include welcoming one another’s
87 members to receive sacramental and other pastoral ministrations; mutual recognition
88 and interchangeability of ordained ministries; freedom to use one another’s liturgies;
89 mutual invitations to participate liturgically in one another’s ordinations and installations
90 of clergy, including bishops; and the development of suitable structures for consultation
91 to express, strengthen, and enable common life, witness, and service, to the glory of God
92 and the salvation of the world.⁷
93
- 94 9 Such a relationship is based on:
95 • a common confession of the apostolic faith in word and life;
96 • the sharing of one baptism, the celebration of one eucharist and the service of a
97 reconciled, common ministry;
98 • bonds of communion which support the churches at every level to guard and
99 interpret the apostolic faith, to teach authoritatively, to share resources, and to bear
100 effective witness in the world.⁸

101 **Signs of Communion that already exist**

- 102 10 Lutherans and Anglicans recognize that they already share communion in the Triune God
103 through their acceptance of the common gift of the Holy Scriptures; their affirmation of
104 the sacraments of baptism and the eucharist as constituent for the church; their shared
105 affirmation of the Apostles’ and Nicene creeds; their shared traditions of worship,
106 spirituality and theology; and their distinct but related experiences of the Reformation.
107
- 108 11 Anglicans and Lutherans both recognize Christ’s church as “the assembly of all believers
109 among whom the gospel is taught purely and the sacraments are rightly administered”.⁹
110 Anglicans and Lutherans hold the ordained ministry of Word and sacrament to be a gift
111 of God to the church, and recognize the necessity of structures of pastoral oversight and
112 authority.
113
- 114 12 Anglicans and Lutherans have never condemned one another as churches. TEC and the
115 ELKB now affirm that they recognize in one another the essentials of the one catholic and
116 apostolic faith, to which their statements of faith witness, including the *Augsburg*
117 *Confession*, *Luther’s Small Catechism*, and *TEC’s Book of Common Prayer (1979)*, and they
118 affirm the substance of the doctrinal consensus articulated by successive international
119 Anglican-Lutheran dialogues.

⁶ This paragraph adapted from *Called to Common Mission*, §2.

⁷ This paragraph is adapted from the *Waterloo Declaration*, §7, and the *Porvoo Common Statement*, §58(b).

⁸ These points are based on the headings of the *Meissen Agreement*, §8.

⁹ *Augsburg Confession*, art. 7, translation of the Latin text in Robert Kolb/Timothy Wengert, *The Book of Concord*, 43. Compare also the *Thirty-Nine Articles*, art. 19.

120

121 13 TEC and the ELKB affirm the cooperation between Episcopalians and Lutherans in
122 Bavaria, including the mutual invitation to receive communion, to share services and
123 joint diaconal work. In the absence of a formal agreement, the provisions of the Meissen
124 Agreement pertaining to ministry and worship have tacitly been taken to apply for TEC
125 and the ELKB in this local context.

126 **Ministry and oversight**

127 14 The key question for this ecumenical relationship has been that of the theology of
128 ordained ministry, and in particular that of episcopal ministry and its relation to
129 succession. This agreement welcomes the consensus reached on this question through
130 the *Porvoo Common Statement, Called to Common Mission*, and the *Waterloo*
131 *Declaration* and affirms the theological contribution made by those agreements in
132 moving towards a shared understanding. This agreement draws on those earlier
133 agreements, as well as on further reflection specific to the relationship between TEC and
134 the ELKB, to apply the consensus already reached to the specific situation in Bavaria, and
135 thus to the German context.

136

137 15 Together with the *Porvoo Common Statement*, TEC and the ELKB affirm that “the primary
138 manifestation of apostolic succession is to be found in the apostolic tradition of the
139 Church as a whole. The succession is an expression of the permanence and, therefore, of
140 the continuity of Christ’s own mission in which the Church participates.”¹⁰

141

142 16 Together with *Called to Common Mission*, TEC and the ELKB “acknowledge that one
143 another’s ordained ministries are and have been given by God to be instruments of God’s
144 grace in the service of God’s people, and possess not only the inward call of the Spirit,
145 but also Christ’s commission through his body, the church.” They agree that “ordained
146 ministers are called and set apart for the one ministry of Word and Sacrament, and that
147 they do not cease thereby to share in the priesthood of all believers”, and that these
148 ministers “fulfill their particular ministries within the community of the faithful and not
149 apart from it.” They recognize that “the priesthood of all believers affirms the need for
150 ordained ministry, while at the same time setting ministry in proper relationship to the
151 laity.”¹¹

152

153 17 Together with *Called to Common Mission*, TEC and the ELKB also affirm that “personal,
154 collegial, and communal oversight is embodied and exercised in both [...] churches in a
155 diversity of forms, in fidelity to the teaching and mission of the apostles.”¹² Together with
156 the LWF’s 2007 Statement *Episcopal Ministry within the Apostolicity of the Church*, TEC
157 and the ELKB affirm that in both churches, “Bishops are called to a special role of
158 oversight in the church, but the wider community also is called to participate in oversight
159 and to judge the way in which episcopal ministry is being carried out.”¹³ They
160 acknowledge also that in some other churches of the LWF, and also some other churches
161 of the EKD, those who exercise such “special role of oversight” are not referred to as
162 bishop, but rather, for instance, as Church President or *Präses*, similarly a Regional

¹⁰ *Porvoo Common Statement*, §39.

¹¹ *Called to Common Mission*, §7.

¹² *Called to Common Mission*, §7. The terminology “personal, collegial, and communal” is drawn from the discussion of ministry in *Baptism – Eucharist – Ministry* (WCC Faith and Order Paper 111; 1982), §26.

¹³ *Episcopal Ministry within the Apostolicity of the Church* (The Lund Statement), § 50.

163 Bishop may be known as *Landessuperintendent* or *Oberkirchenrat*.¹⁴ TEC and the ELKB
164 also recognize that this ministry of oversight – *episkopé* – is exercised not only through
165 bishops but also through the synods and other leadership structures of the two churches,
166 and that the relationship between bishops and these structures is an important aspect of
167 the ministry of oversight in both churches.¹⁵
168
169 18 Together with *Called to Common Mission*, TEC and the ELKB agree that the historic
170 episcopate “can be locally adapted and reformed in the service of the gospel.”¹⁶ Since
171 the
172 sixteenth century, the traditions from which both churches emerged have experienced
173 both continuity and change in their structures of *episkopé*. Different practices of
174 oversight developed in local contexts in response to diverse ecclesiological and political
175 realities and theological understandings. Anglicans maintained episcopal-diocesan
176 structures and continued to use the term “bishop” to describe these ministries after the
177 Reformation. Lutherans in Germany provided *episkopé* by adapting existing structures,
178 and described these ministries using a variety of terms, including “superintendent”, their
179 preferred translation of the New Testament term *episkopos*.
180 19 The establishment of Anglican parishes on the North American continent spread steadily
181 following the first recorded Anglican celebration of Holy Communion in North America in
182 1607 in Jamestown, Virginia. Prior to the American Revolution, representatives of the
183 Bishop of London known as commissaries provided oversight in some colonies. In the
184 context of American Independence from Great Britain, the first American bishops were
185 elected, and in 1789 The Episcopal Church was constituted as a separate ecclesiastical
186 jurisdiction and as a church independent of state authority. From this time TEC has
187 affirmed the importance of synodical government and bishops have been elected. The
188 structures established in 1789 continue to the present.
189
190 20 General Convention, made up of the House of Bishops and the House of Deputies (equal
191 numbers of elected clergy and lay people), sets the policy of the Episcopal Church. Its
192 bishops are democratically elected by their respective diocesan conventions or synods
193 and are answerable to the House of Bishops; they are to be servants of the church and
194 not its lords. The Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church is a member of the House of
195 Bishops, who since 1926 has been elected by that House, with confirmation by the House
196 of Deputies. A similar structure is mirrored in the dioceses, which have diocesan
197 conventions (made up of the diocesan clergy and elected lay delegates), that work
198 closely with the bishop. A bishop is elected at the diocesan convention by the clergy and
199 lay delegates, and is consecrated only after confirmation of this election by a majority of
200 TEC’s diocesan bishops and diocesan standing committees representing the whole
201 church. At the consecration, bishops are consecrated through prayer and laying on of
202 hands by at least three bishops, usually including bishops of the ELCA and other full
203 communion partners, with the involvement of representatives of the diocese, both
204 priests and lay persons, especially in presenting the bishop-elect for consecration, and in
205 the liturgy.
206

¹⁴ The *Lund Statement* summarizes these roles as “episcopal ministers”; to avoid confusion, this present statement refers to “ministers exercising episkopé”.

¹⁵ *Called to Common Mission*, §7.

¹⁶ *Called to Common Mission*, §24.

- 207 21 The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria was formed in 1808 after the foundation of
208 the Kingdom of Bavaria in 1806. The General Synod was established in 1848, initially
209 sharing responsibility with the ruling (Roman-Catholic) Bavarian monarch who acted as
210 *summus episcopus*, in direct continuity with the role of the late medieval German prince
211 bishops.¹⁷ After the fall of the Bavarian monarchy in 1918, the ELKB (*Landeskirche*) was
212 constituted, with a church president (*Kirchenpräsident*), who since 1933 has been
213 referred to as bishop (*Landesbischof*). The bishop works together with the Synod
214 (*Landessynode*, made up of two-thirds lay people and one third clergy) and its Executive
215 Committee (*Landessynodalausschuss*), and also chairs the Church Governing Board
216 (*Landeskirchenrat*), which is responsible for the day-to-day running of the church.
217 Oversight is exercised through these four church-governing bodies. The *Landessynode*
218 elects the *Landesbischof*. Regional bishops (*Regionalbischöfe*) or *Oberkirchenräte*, who
219 are members of the *Landeskirchenrat*, share the responsibility for oversight in their
220 episcopal areas or areas of responsibility through ordination and visitation.
221
- 222 22 Today, pastors of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria are ordained by the
223 *Landesbischof* or regional bishops. Ordination is a onetime act. Central elements of the
224 liturgy are the prayer for the Holy Spirit, the laying on of hands and the blessing of the
225 ordinand. The ordination rite provides that assistants say a biblical word of blessing and
226 also lay on hands. These assistants are not restricted to the ordained, and may include
227 (for instance) members of the parish council (vestry) or the candidate’s family and
228 friends. The installation of a bishop is understood as the installation of an already
229 ordained pastor into a new office now with episcopal functions. The *Landesbischof* is
230 installed by the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany; the
231 regional bishops are installed by the *Landesbischof*. It is good practice – but not strictly
232 necessary – that at such installations bishops or ministers exercising *episkopé* in sister
233 churches within the Lutheran World Federation or other denominations are present and
234 assist in the laying on of hands.
235
- 236 23 In both TEC and the ELKB, these ministries of *episkopé* are therefore exercised personally,
237 collegially and communally.¹⁸ Bishops share the exercise of *episkopé* with the synodical
238 structures of the church. Ministers exercising *episkopé* constitute “a supra-
239 congregational form of ordained ministry for the sake of spiritual discernment and
240 leadership.”¹⁹ In both churches, clergy are ordained only by ministers who exercise
241 *episkopé*: the diocesan bishop or *Landesbischof*, suffragan or regional bishops.
242
- 243 24 Together with the LWF’s Lund Statement, *Episcopal Ministry within the Apostolicity of the*
244 *Church*, TEC and the ELKB affirm that these forms of *episkopé* are intended to preserve
245 the apostolic nature of the church and to interpret it for today. Through these structures
246 of *episkopé*, the church “exercises responsibility for its doctrine and practices through
247 open, critical deliberation and transparent ecclesial processes.”²⁰
248
- 249 25 TEC and the ELKB affirm also with the *Lund Statement* that a bishop does not exercise
250 his/her ministry in isolation: “together with teachers of theology, pastors in
251 congregations, persons called to a ministry of education and committed lay persons,

¹⁷ This concept of church government was known as the *Landesherrliches Kirchenregiment*.

¹⁸ See *Baptism – Eucharist – Ministry*, §26.

¹⁹ *Lund Statement*, §4.

²⁰ *Lund Statement*, §52.

252 episcopal ministers [i.e. ministers exercising *episkopé* – ed.] are especially called to judge
253 doctrine in the life of the church, and to reject teaching that is contradictory to the
254 gospel. The responsibility of governing bodies in the church (parish councils and church
255 synods) is also to take formal decisions to ensure that the institutional, practical life of
256 the church is in good keeping with the message of the gospel and witnesses to it.”²¹

257

258 26 In the words of the Anglican Bishops’ *Appeal to All Christian People* (1920), TEC and the
259 ELKB affirm that both churches have maintained and been served by an ordained
260 ministry truly faithful to the gospel, and that the ordained ministries of both churches
261 have always been, and continue to be, “manifestly blessed and owned by the Holy Spirit
262 as effective means of grace”.²²

263

264 27 The four articles of the Anglican *Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral* (1888) remain the
265 foundation for Anglican/Episcopal ecumenical relations. Anglicans and Lutherans have
266 long agreed on its first three articles which affirm the foundational nature of Holy
267 Scripture, the sacraments of baptism and the Eucharist, and the Apostles’ and Nicene
268 Creeds. The *Quadrilateral* sets out as the fourth basis for church unity: “the historic
269 episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of
270 the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of [God’s] Church.”²³ TEC and the
271 ELKB affirm that in both churches, *episkopé* is exercised in a form that is congruent with
272 this article.

273

274 28 With the *Meissen Agreement*, TEC and the ELKB “acknowledge that personal and collegial
275 oversight (*episkopé*) is embodied and exercised in [their] churches in a variety of forms,
276 episcopal and non-episcopal, as a visible sign of the Church’s unity and continuity in
277 apostolic life, mission and ministry.”²⁴ However, the ELKB and TEC can go further than
278 the *Meissen Agreement*: on the basis of the congruence in their understanding and
279 practice of *episkopé* and synodical government TEC and the ELKB are able to enter into a
280 relationship of full communion, with interchangeability of ordained ministries.

281

282 **Continuity in the Gospel: Historic and evangelical succession**

283 29 For both TEC and the ELKB, continuity in the proclamation of the gospel is of primary
284 importance in establishing the apostolic character of the Church. This is preserved
285 through “succession” However, the focus of the term “succession” is different in the
286 traditions of the two churches.

287

288 30 Within TEC succession is understood as the orderly succession of bishops ordained by
289 their predecessors as integral to the preservation of apostolic continuity in the
290 proclamation of the gospel. This represents an episcopal tradition which can be traced to
291 the ancient church, in which bishops already in this succession maintain the integrity of
292 the faith by ordaining newly elected bishops with prayer and the laying on of hands.²⁵
293 TEC, like all the churches of the Anglican Communion, asserts that its bishops stand in
294 historic succession understood in this way, through the consecration of new bishops

²¹ *Lund Statement*. §52.

²² Lambeth Conference 1920, Resolution 9.vii.

²³ Lambeth Conference 1888, Resolution 11.d.

²⁴ *Meissen Agreement* §VI 17 A.4.

²⁵ This definition is found in *Called to Common Mission*, §11.

- 295 through prayer and laying on of hands by at least three existing bishops. Acknowledging
296 this background, Anglicans have still recognized in their previous agreements of (full)
297 communion that the apostolic faith is preserved, not exclusively through the succession
298 of bishops, but by the whole church, that is, also through the ministry of priests and
299 deacons and of the whole people of God.
300
- 301 31 The ELKB understands succession in terms of the continuity of this apostolic faith, rooted
302 in the proclamation of the gospel and supported by the ordained ministry. As expressed
303 in the Augsburg Confession (art. 7), the Reformation emphasized the church as
304 evangelical, established through the continuous preaching of the gospel and the
305 celebration of the sacraments. This is the basis of the apostolic succession. The Augsburg
306 Confession (art. 14) teaches that “no one should publicly teach in the Church or
307 administer the Sacraments unless properly called.” Commenting on this, Article 14 of the
308 *Apology* (1531) affirms the Lutheran commitment to “willingly retain ecclesiastical and
309 canonical order”. Luther and other Reformers worked to ensure that structures were put
310 in place to maintain the true preaching of the gospel and celebration of the sacraments.
311 These structures have always included forms of oversight such as superintendents and
312 visitations. Through and since the Reformation, this continuity in local structures has
313 therefore been associated with a conscious conviction that apostolic teaching and faith
314 must be not only rediscovered but also preserved. Those involved in oversight are
315 installed through prayer and the laying on of hands.
316
- 317 32 Both TEC and the ELKB therefore recognize, as affirmed by *Called to Common Mission*,
318 that in the context of the ordained ministry and the ministry of the whole people of God
319 both churches “value and maintain a ministry of *episkopé* as one of the ways ... in which
320 the apostolic succession of the church is visibly expressed and personally symbolized in
321 fidelity to the gospel through the ages.”²⁶
322
- 323 33 In moving forward together, TEC and the ELKB commit to share an episcopal succession
324 that is both evangelical (true to the gospel) and historic (true to tradition), including
325 regularly a bishop of the other church to participate with at least two other ministers
326 exercising *episkopé* in the laying on of hands at the ordinations/installations of their own
327 bishops as a sign of the unity and apostolic continuity of the whole church.²⁷ TEC and the
328 ELKB believe that the fullness of the apostolic tradition preserved in each church will
329 deepen as a result of the relationship of full communion, through the shared ministry of
330 bishops and presbyters and of the whole people of God.
331
- 332 34 TEC and the ELKB share congruent understandings of *episkopé*, but this does not commit
333 the two churches to a unified concept of the office of bishop. TEC and the ELKB
334 acknowledge that there is a diversity of how the office of bishops is lived out in each
335 church. TEC and the ELKB affirm that the fact that the liturgy of introducing bishops into
336 office can be understood as installation or as ordination, or that tenure in office may
337 vary, or that the status of bishops when they leave office may differ does not hinder us
338 entering into full communion.
339

²⁶ *Called to Common Mission*, §12.

²⁷ *Called to Common Mission*, §12.

- 340 35 In order to demonstrate more clearly the shared nature of the *episkopé* exercised by
341 bishops, both churches commit to ensuring that at the ordination/installation of bishops,
342 the whole church be visibly present through the involvement of lay people as assistants
343 in the ordination/installation and to working to include in their installation/ordination
344 rites an affirmation that the bishop will exercise *episkopé* in conjunction with the
345 synodical government of the church.
346
- 347 36 Each church remains free to explore its particular interpretation of the ministry of
348 bishops in evangelical and historic succession. This should be done in consultation with
349 one another. Each church maintains and can enter into relationships with other
350 churches, including relationships of (full) communion, which do not oblige the other
351 church to engage in that relationship. That is, this declaration of full communion does not
352 imply automatic communion of the one church with the communion partners of the
353 other church, although each church is encouraged to seek communion with the churches
354 with which the other is in communion.
355
- 356 37 Recognizing one another as churches that truly preach the gospel and duly administer
357 the holy sacraments,²⁸ TEC and the ELKB receive with thanksgiving the gift of unity which
358 is already given in Christ. Christians have repeatedly echoed the scriptural confession
359 that the unity of the church is both Christ's own work and his call to all Christians. It is the
360 task of the churches, and of all Christians, as well as Christ's gift. Every Christian – and
361 every church – must “make every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of
362 peace” (Ephesians 4:3), praying that they may rely upon, and willingly receive from one
363 another, the gifts given by Christ through his Spirit “for building up the body of Christ” in
364 love (Ephesians 4:16).
365
- 366 38 As TEC and the ELKB, we do not know to what new, recovered, or continuing tasks of
367 mission this relationship of full communion will lead our churches, but we give thanks to
368 God for leading us to this point, and entrust ourselves to that leading in the future,
369 confident that our full communion will be a witness to the gift and goal already present
370 in Christ, “so that God may be all in all” (1 Corinthians 15:28).

371

372 **Actions and Commitments**

- 373 39 We, The Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria, declare
374 ourselves to be in full communion. Together,
375 a. We commit ourselves to continue and deepen our common life in mission and service,
376 to pray for and with one another and to share resources as appropriate in Bavaria,
377 recognizing that TEC is a very small minority there. We encourage regular collaboration 7
378 and consultation among members of our churches at all levels as appropriate.
379 b. We commit ourselves to offer sacramental and pastoral ministry to members of one
380 another's churches.
381 c. We commit ourselves to receive those who formally leave one church to move to the
382 other with the same status (for example baptized, communicant, confirmed) that they
383 held in their previous church.

²⁸ CA VII; 39 Articles Art. XIX.

- 384 40 The declaration of full communion between our two churches implies the immediate
385 recognition of currently serving bishops and pastors/priests of the one church by the
386 other. ²⁹ TEC fully recognizes the ordained ministry of bishops and pastors currently
387 existing within the ELKB, acknowledging its pastors as ordained ministers in the Church of
388 God and its bishops and regional bishops as bishops exercising a ministry of personal
389 *episkopé*. Likewise, the ELKB fully recognizes the ordained ministry of bishops and priests
390 currently existing within TEC, acknowledging its priests as ordained ministers in the
391 Church of God and its bishops as bishops exercising a ministry of personal *episkopé*.
- 392 41 With full communion, interchangeability of ministries is given. We therefore commit
393 ourselves to welcome persons ordained in either of our churches to the office of
394 priest/pastor to serve, by invitation and in accordance with any regulations which are in
395 force, in that ministry in the receiving church without re-ordination. We affirm that
396 bishops may be invited to carry out in the other church, as appropriate, those ministries
397 which they exercise in their own, such as confirmation.
- 398 42 We commit ourselves, as a sign of the unity and continuity of the Church, to invite
399 a. one another's bishops regularly to participate in the laying on of hands at the
400 installation/ordination of bishops, with the expectation that a bishop from the other
401 church will be present at the ordination of the bishop of the Convocation and the
402 installation of the *Landesbischof*;
403 b. one another's pastors and priests to participate in the laying on of hands at the
404 ordination of pastors or priests in one another's churches;
405 c. one another's lay people, including both those who share in the exercise of *episkopé*
406 and members of local congregations, to participate in our churches'
407 ordinations/installations in ways which celebrate the ministry of the whole people of
408 God.
409 Such mutual invitations are understood as a call for the deepening of the lived
410 experience of our communion.
- 411 43 We commit ourselves also to continue our practice of inviting representatives of other
412 churches, representing the worldwide church, to participate at the
413 installation/ordination of bishops.
- 414 44 We commit ourselves to ensure that at the ordination/installation of bishops, the whole
415 church be visibly present through the involvement of lay people as assistants in the
416 ordination/installation and to work to include in our installation/ordination rites an
417 affirmation that the bishop will exercise *episkopé* in conjunction with the synodical
418 government of the church.
- 419 45 We commit ourselves to invite a representative of TEC to attend the synod of the ELKB
420 and a representative of the ELKB to attend the Convention of the Convocation of the
421 Episcopal Churches in Europe, and to keep one another informed about developments in
422 our two churches.

²⁹ Deacons are not explicitly mentioned in this agreement. The *Jerusalem Report* of the Third Anglican Lutheran International Commission concluded that the church's expression of its diaconal character is context specific, so that different understandings of and practices with relation to the diaconate are to be expected and are therefore not communion dividing.

