



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MONTANA

THE RT. REV. C. FRANKLIN BROOKHART, JR., D. MIN., BISHOP

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We write to you today with news about our dialogue with The United Methodist Church, news about a significant step toward full communion. In January the dialogue team unanimously adopted a draft proposal to establish a full communion relationship between our churches. This draft is entitled *A Gift to the World: Co-Laborers for the Healing of Brokenness (The Episcopal Church and The United Methodist Church, A Proposal for Full Communion)*.

The document is attached to this email and we urge you to study and discuss it. In coming months opportunities for feedback, dialogue and implementation will be offered in regional gatherings, among parishes, clergy and bishops in both denominations. An official resolution will then be presented to our respective legislative bodies.

A Gift to the World: Co-Laborers for the Healing of Brokenness is the product of a long and fruitful dialogue, beginning with the formation of a bi-lateral committee in 2002. The initial years of the dialogue produced the Interim Eucharistic Sharing Agreement which defines our current official relationship. In 2006, a study guide, *Make us One with Christ*, was issued for congregational use. *A Theological Foundation for Full Communion between The Episcopal Church and The United Methodist Church* was published in 2010 establishing the theological basis for full communion and clarifying perceived church-dividing issues.

The relationships formed over these years of dialogue, and the recognition that there are no theological impediments to unity, paved the way for this current draft proposal. These documents, as well as the proposal, are available for your review online at <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/page/united-methodist-episcopal-dialogue>.

I hope you join us in seeing this proposal as cause for celebration, giving us great hope that our churches might soon live into Jesus' command that all of his followers may be one. There is, however, still much work to be done. Participation at all levels of the church is needed to move the process forward. Please study these materials, reach out to United Methodist neighbors and share this important good news. I believe this draft proposal stands as one of the most important current opportunities in our church's mission of unity for the sake of reconciliation in Christ.

Grace and Peace,

+C. Franklin Brookhart, Jr.

Bishop C. Franklin Brookhart, Episcopal Co Chair

On behalf of the Episcopal United Methodist Dialogue Committee