

1 **Memorandum of Mutual Recognition**
2 **of Relations of Full Communion**
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4 Between the Churches of *Called to Common Mission*
5 (The Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America)
6

7 And
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9 The Churches of *Called to Full Communion: The Waterloo Declaration*
10 (The Anglican Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada)
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12 **Background**
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14 In 1987, building on ecumenical agreements both local and global, the Anglican-Lutheran
15 International Continuation Committee met in Niagara Falls, Canada, for a consultation on
16 *episcopate*.¹ Consideration of recommendations to churches from the *Niagara Report*
17 helped result in *The Porvoo Common Statement* (1992), the basis for the Porvoo
18 Communion now including churches from Great Britain and Ireland, the Nordic region,
19 the Baltic countries and Iberia.
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21 A few years later, continuing theological discussions led first in the United States to
22 *Called to Common Mission* (CCM), adopted by the 1999 Churchwide Assembly of the
23 Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the 2000 General Convention of the Episcopal
24 Church (TEC), and then in Canada to *Called to Full Communion: the Waterloo*
25 *Declaration*, approved by the National Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in
26 Canada (ELCIC) and the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada (ACC) in
27 2001. These agreements establish what are the three principal full communion
28 relationships between member churches of the Anglican Communion and of The
29 Lutheran World Federation: A Communion of Churches.
30

31 The third Anglican Lutheran International Commission (ALIC III), recognizing the
32 contextual specificity of each agreement, acknowledged that it is “difficult to envisage at
33 this stage” how to move toward “a relationship of (full) communion at the global level.”
34 Yet the Commission identified steps forward which could be taken at once; for example,
35 “on the basis of an agreement entered into by a sister church, and reviewed by
36 international bodies, those who come from a church of that region might be considered in
37 communion with all other churches that have the same kind of agreement.”²
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39 Commending ALIC’s guidelines, the Anglican Consultative Council 16, meeting in Zambia
40 in 2016, encouraged “steps in North American, British and Irish Anglican churches to
41 bring the three regional agreements of Communion into relationship with each other.”³

¹Essential texts are collected in Sven Oppegaard and Gregory Cameron, eds., *Anglican-Lutheran Agreements: Regional and International Agreements 1972-2002*, LWF Documentation 49 (2004) and on multiple sites online.

²*To Love and Serve the Lord: Diakonia in the Life of the Church: The Jerusalem Report of the Anglican-Lutheran International Commission (ALIC III)* (2012) 52. <https://www.lutheranworld.org/content/resource-love-and-serve-lord-diakonia-life-church>.

³Anglican Consultative Council Resolution 16.18, “Anglican-Lutheran Relations,” <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/structures/instruments-of-communion/acc/acc-16/resolutions.aspx#s18>.

42 **Rationale**

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44 Taking next steps forward seems particularly achievable and important in the North
45 American context.

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- 47 • Almost twenty years of experience living into full communion has enriched the lives
48 of the four churches in ways from which there is no turning back. While there are
49 of course challenges from sharing geographical territory, the churches of Waterloo
50 and of CCM face together many common cultural realities. Despite their different
51 histories, they increasingly have in common the roles of “minority churches” in their
52 contexts.

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54 As full communion partners, Lutherans and Episcopalians/Anglicans in each
55 country have walked with one another in times of joy and celebration and in times
56 of sorrow and trial. They have collaborated in a wide range of ministries, been
57 enriched when consulting one another’s wisdom, joined together in worship and
58 advocacy, exchanged ordained leadership and established friendships at all
59 levels. There is strong affirmation for the already existing relationships across
60 national borders between TEC and ACC and between ELCIC and ELCA, including
61 the exchange of clergy, and the equally strong relationship between ELCA/TEC
62 and ELCIC/ACC with the sharing of ordained/rostered clergy between
63 Episcopalians and Lutherans in the USA and between Lutherans and Anglicans
64 in Canada.

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66 Furthermore, these four churches are increasingly mindful of the wisdom of
67 Indigenous Peoples who have continually inhabited the land that many call Turtle
68 Island, also now known as North America. These First Peoples are not and have
69 not been divided by national borders established by colonialist power; many hold
70 to the Indigenous principle that “on this land we are all related” – an invitation for
71 all to work toward more responsible, reciprocal, and loving relationships.

72

73 While the shape of shared life is distinctive in each country and embraces great
74 local diversity, both CCM and Waterloo extended invitations to common mission
75 which have borne significant fruits, both expected and unanticipated. As the times
76 of Interim Eucharistic Sharing, practiced in both countries, helped strengthen the
77 hope for full communion, so also the experiences of full communion have
78 strengthened the desire not to remain fixed in what has already been realized.
79 Even more than when full communion relations were established, “We are ready
80 to be co-workers with God in whatever tasks of mission serve the Gospel.”⁴

81

- 82 • Already the deepening relations between the Waterloo churches and between the
83 CCM churches have reached across the national boundary to create relationships
84 and structures among all four churches.

85

⁴Conclusion, *The Waterloo Declaration*. Cf. CCM 98: “Entering full communion ... will bring new opportunities and levels of shared evangelism, witness, and service.”

86 The four heads of churches have established the practice of regular meetings, and
87 annually they cooperate on a seasonal devotional series. The coordinating
88 committees in each country exchange representatives and meet together on a
89 regular basis every few years. In these contexts, it is easy to forget that there is no
90 formal link between the two agreements of full communion.
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- 92 • At the same time, changes brought with easier international communication and
93 travel also push against the limits of the existing agreements. A notable example
94 concerns “orderly exchange” of ministry. Increasingly, each church encounters
95 ministry situations which would welcome procedures for orderly exchange with
96 persons not only from the bilateral partner but from the church of that communion
97 in the other agreement.
98

99 Currently, among the four Waterloo and CCM churches, each church is in full
100 communion with two of the others - but not with the third (not with the church from the
101 other tradition and in the other country). Increasingly, this is experienced as
102 theologically unnecessary, missionally costly, and jarring. It is time for these churches
103 explicitly to recognize one another’s full communion agreements, and on that basis to
104 extend to one another the implications of being in communion.
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106 **Actions**

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108 In order to strengthen shared life and mission and to deepen visible unity between the
109 signatory churches of CCM and of Waterloo, and
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111 In order to offer witness and invitation to other churches of our world communions in many
112 local settings, as appropriate in their contexts, to move toward such sharing of (full)
113 communion,
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115 These four churches commit themselves to
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- 117 • Give thanks for and affirm the theological basis for full communion established by
118 theological dialogue between members of the Lutheran and Anglican traditions
119 around the world;
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- 121 • Rejoice in the gifts given to the churches by their bilateral full communion relations;
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- 123 • Treat the churches of the other agreement as also churches with which a
124 relationship of full communion exists on the basis of these agreements and this
125 experience;
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- 127 • Establish policies and procedures to facilitate exchange of ministry between The
128 Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, and between
129 the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Anglican Church of Canada.
130 This will be informed by the experience and resources of the existing full
131 communion agreements, including mandating complete continuing exchange of

132 information about ministerial conduct, duly honoring that such exchanges are
133 subject in each case to approval by sending and receiving bishops.

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- 135 • Continue to seek conversations with other members of the Anglican Communion
136 and The Lutheran World Federation that would commend further mutual
137 recognition of (full) communion agreements, where they exist, and encourage
138 churches without such agreements to move toward living into such relationships.

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142 Jointly prepared and commended by the members of the Joint Anglican-Lutheran
143 Commission in Canada and the Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee in the
144 United States.

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