

A Comparison of the Porvoo, Waterloo, and Called to Common Mission Agreements from the Perspective of Transitivity

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The *Porvoo Declaration's* (1992/96) Wider Ecumenical Commitment section emphasises the implications of this regional agreement for global Anglican-Lutheran relations: “This pursuit will involve... deepening relationships within and between our two world communions and supporting efforts towards closer communion between Anglican and Lutheran churches in other regions, especially in relation to agreement being developed in Africa and North America”. In North America the Porvoo agreement inspired and nurtured ecumenical processes which resulted in bilateral “full communion agreements” between Lutherans and Episcopalians in the United States of America (*Called to Common Mission* 1999), and in Canada between Lutherans and Anglicans (*Waterloo Agreement* 2001).¹

Although the Porvoo Declaration influenced the later documents, regional bilateral ecumenical agreements are not automatically interchangeable. The concept of “transitivity” describes the relationship of two ecumenical agreements with each other and the possibility of applying an agreement in other regions. In the case of these (full) communion agreements it should first be noted that the respective Anglican churches already belong to the Anglican Communion, and the Lutheran churches to the Lutheran World Federation communion of churches. Anglicans and Lutherans recognise the ordained ministries of fellow member churches of these communions. Yet the Lutheran churches differ in their understanding of ordained ministry, especially concerning the offices of bishop and a deacon. Not all Lutheran churches have bishops; nor do all have deacons.

The Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) is one of the instruments of unity of the Anglican Communion.² Resolution 15.13 of the ACC in 2015, concerning the *Anglican-Lutheran International Commission*, “...commend[s] to the churches the appendix on Transitivity” of the Anglican-Lutheran International Commission’s report *To Love and Serve the Lord* (2012). Resolution 15.16 also affirmed the report on Transitivity and commended it to the member churches of the Communion, inviting them where appropriate to implement its recommendations on “Laying foundations for transitive relationships”.³ In this article I aim to offer an analysis of the current ecumenical situation and the presuppositions and implications of full communion agreements in general and individually, and to examine communion-wide guidelines to identify possible next steps and the grounds on which all three “full communion” agreements could become mutually transitive.

1. The Anglican-Lutheran (Full) Communion Agreements

¹ The term “full communion” is typical of the American ecumenical agreements, but the Porvoo Common Statement does not use the term. It nevertheless describes “the nature of communion and goal of unity”, and what “the fullness of communion” (II B para. 28) would look like. It also describes the agreement as a “form of visible unity” (V C para. 60).

² The other instruments of communion or unity are Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lambeth Conference, and the Primates’ Meeting.

³ Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) ACC-15 Resolutions.

In addition to full communion agreements, there are other kinds of communions and ecumenical agreements. Our focus here is on full communion agreements. The Inter-Anglican Standing Commission for Unity, Faith and Order (IASCUFO) prepares ecumenical matters to be endorsed at the level of the Anglican Communion as a whole by the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) in its resolutions. IASCUFO's paper *Communion in Ministry and Mission*, Appendix 1, lists the three Anglican-Lutheran agreements which include (full) communion, including full interchangeability of ministries. These are, as mentioned above: 1) the Porvoo Agreement (1992); 2) Called to Common Mission (1999/2000); and 3) Waterloo or Called to Full Communion (2001).⁴

Regarding the understanding of "full communion", the paper *Receiving One Another's Ordained Ministries* describes its content in Anglican understanding as follows:

Anglicans, generally understand (full) communion as a relationship between two distinct Churches or Communions, in which each maintains its own autonomy while recognising the catholicity and apostolicity of the other. They believe the other to hold the essentials of the Christian faith, which makes it possible, for communicant members of each church to receive Holy Communion, and for ordained ministers to officiate sacramentally in either church. Full communion brings about transferability of members; mutual recognition and interchangeability of ministries; and participation in each other's ordinations and installations of clergy, including bishops. It should also involve the establishment of structures for consultation to express, strengthen and enable common life, witness, and service, to the glory of God and the salvation of the world. As noted earlier, in areas where Churches minister within the same territory, full visible (or organic) unity should be explicitly named as the aim of their developing relationship.⁵

Such an understanding of full communion is concretised in the Porvoo Declaration and the North American agreements. From the perspective of Anglican-Lutheran relations the essential new steps in these agreements were the transferability of members, mutual recognition and interchangeability of ministries, and participation in each other's ordinations and installations of clergy, including bishops. This became possible based on the ecumenical dialogue regarding ordained ministry and the ministry of bishop as a sign which serves the apostolicity of the whole church as a witness to Christ in mission and ministry. The Niagara Report (1987) paved the way for the Porvoo Common Statement (1992) among others.⁶

⁴ *Communion in Ministry and Mission*, Appendix 1, 17.

⁵ *Receiving One Another's Ordained Ministries*, 4–5. In 2016 the Anglican Consultative Committee adopted Resolution 16.19: Receiving One Another's Ordained Ministry, in which the Anglican Consultative Council receives IASCUFO's report, *Receiving One Another's Ordained Ministry*, as a resource to assist member Churches of the Anglican Communion in recognising and receiving ordained ministry in their relationships with ecumenical partners; and commends it for study and action in the provinces of the Anglican Communion as they seek to order their ecumenical relationships.

⁶ Cf. Eckerdal 2017, 61 concerning the importance of the Niagara Report: "The Niagara Report... widened the discussion about ordained ministry and apostolic succession, which is understood in relation to the whole church and the substantive understanding of apostolicity". Eckerdal 2017, 65: "The problems after Niagara were left to the regional dialogues. The two most substantial contributions were the Meissen Agreement (1988) and the Porvoo Common Statement (PCS). The North American agreements were based on narrower material, which also reflected their historically shorter background." For the PCS, especially from the

Classically, the stumbling block in many Anglican-Lutheran relations was the question of the historic episcopate and Anglicans' understanding of it as a prerequisite for full communion.

2. The Historic Episcopate as a Pillar of Unity

In the classical Anglican understanding of unity, as formulated in the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral (1888), the “historic episcopate” is the fourth pillar of visible church unity, with the 1) Holy Scriptures, 2) the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds, and 3) the sacraments of baptism and the eucharist. The Quadrilateral, although it is less authoritative than the historic Anglican documents, has consequences for the preconditions of visible unity and the mutual recognition of ordained ministry. The historic episcopate is not a precondition for ecumenical rapprochement, but agreement about the historic episcopate is a precondition for the full interchangeability of ordained ministries. The IASCUFO paper *Receiving One Another’s Ordained Ministers* therefore concludes:

Because Anglican teaching sees the authority of the priest/presbyter as rooted in that of the ordaining bishop/episcopal minister, interchangeability of presbyteral ministers is not possible without an agreement on the interchangeability of episcopal ministers. This should include explicit commitment to the ordination/consecration of future episcopal ministers within the historic episcopate. It should also include explicit recognition that, though they may retire or otherwise no longer hold a position of oversight, they remain episcopal ministers. Similarly, there should be clear agreement that future presbyteral ordinations will be conducted only by episcopal ministers. Mutual interchangeability of both ministries and ministers is therefore only possible for Anglicans with another Church if that other Church has, or is taking steps to receive, the sign of the historic episcopate.⁷

It was essential for the North American ecumenical development that the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America and Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, which did not traditionally have the historic episcopate, were open to the value of the ministry of oversight for church unity, apostolicity, mission, and spiritual leadership, and for collegiality between church leaders. It was also essential that the Anglicans did not make it a precondition that the Lutheran understanding of episcopal ministry be identical to the traditional Anglican understanding. It was enough that they were ready freely to “take steps to receive the sign of the historic episcopate”. It is therefore not against the spirit of “full communion” if the episcopal ministry in a church has yet to be fully adopted, but the process is intentionally underway.

3. The Guidelines for the Transitivity between the Full Communion Agreements

perspective of apostolicity and episcopal ministry, see as background information *Together in Mission and Ministry: The Porvoo Common Statement with Essays on Church and Ministry in Northern Europe* 1993, and from the research perspective Eckerdal 2017 and 2019, 229–246, and Root, Michael, “Anglican-Lutheran Relations: Their Broader Ecumenical Significance”. *One in Christ* (1) (1994): 22–33. For the relationships between Porvoo and the North American agreements see also Root 2006, 296–315.

⁷ *Receiving One Another’s Ordained Ministries*, 3. For the Anglican understanding of unity see, for example, Rusama 2009, 202–203.

If ecumenism is to function and be beneficial for the church's mission, it cannot mean uniformity but unity in diversity.⁸ However, the preconditions of unity in Faith and Order discussions are clear: a shared apostolic faith; mutual recognition of sacraments; and mutual recognition of ordained ministry. Anything that hinders the proclamation of the apostolic gospel is divisive, but an enriching diversity in which various and valuable gifts are shared is manifested in the church's catholic character. The enriching side of ecumenical encounter is especially highlighted today in receptive ecumenism.

In local and regional ecumenical agreements unity in diversity means these outcomes are always contextual. Yet despite different contexts, the Anglican-Lutheran (full) communion agreements are not formulated arbitrarily. They were agreed in consultation with the respective global communions. In the context of global exchange in the world of highly developed communication, travel, immigration, and diminishing human resources there is therefore also more need for an interchange of clergy. The international Anglican-Lutheran dialogue report *To Love and Serve the Lord* (2012) urges us to take seriously the agreements reached in other contexts as expressions of serious ecumenical work:

In the case of clergy, ALIC invites all member churches of the Lutheran World Federation and the Anglican Communion to honour the work that has been done in those regions which have entered into relationships of communion.⁹

The ALIC III report also offers recommendations regarding hospitality and exchange for Anglican-Lutheran pastoral relations in churches in full communion agreements. Concerning presbyterial exchange, the report encourages the full interchange of priests within the context of the various full communion agreements:

Ordained Lutheran pastors from churches with which Anglican churches have (full) communion agreements should be recognised in other Anglican churches in areas where there are full communion agreements in the same way as priests from other Anglican provinces. Similarly, Anglican priests from churches with which Lutheran churches have (full) communion agreements should be recognised by other Lutheran churches in areas where there are (full) communion agreements

⁸ For example, the convergence text *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* (TCTCV) 2013, 17, footnote 14 refers as follows to the treatment of legitimate diversity in ecumenical dialogues: "The Anglican-Orthodox dialogue, for instance, notes the wide diversity in life of the local churches: 'As long as their witness to the one faith remains unimpaired, such diversity is seen not as a deficiency or cause for division, but as a mark of the fullness of the one Spirit who distributes to each according to his will.' The Church of the Triune God: The Cyprus Statement Agreed by the International Commission for Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue 2006, London, Anglican Communion Office, 2006, 91." TCTCV 2013, 22, footnote 2 refers to the Porto Allegre 2006 unity statement: "Our churches have affirmed that the unity for which we pray, hope, and work is 'a koinonia given and expressed in the common confession of the apostolic faith; a common sacramental life entered by the one baptism and celebrated together in one eucharistic fellowship; a common life in which members and ministries are mutually recognized and reconciled; and a common mission witnessing to the gospel of God's grace to all people and serving the whole of creation.' Such koinonia is to be expressed in each place, and through a conciliar relationship of churches in different places," in 'Called to Be the One Church', §2, Growth in Agreement III, 606–607."

⁹ ALIC III, 52.

in the same way as ordained pastors from other Lutheran churches. They should be invited to participate in the laying on of hands at ordinations of pastors and priests as appropriate in local custom. Subject to their qualifications for a particular appointment, they should be eligible for positions in ministry.¹⁰

The Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) endorsed this recommendation in Lusaka in 2016, concluding in Resolution 16.18 concerning Anglican-Lutheran relations:

The Anglican Consultative Council

1. recognizes the relationships that already exist between Anglicans and Lutherans globally; and
2. commends the steps being taken by North American, British and Irish Anglican churches, to bring the three regional agreements of Communion into relationship with each other; and
3. encourages Anglican Churches in other regions to explore deepening relationships with churches of the Lutheran World Federation in a formal theological way following the guidelines offered in the 2012 Anglican-Lutheran International Commission report *To Love and Serve the Lord*.¹¹

The next meeting of the ACC in Hong Kong in 2019 received a report on how the resolutions from Lusaka 2016 had been implemented, and it noted the intention to make the North American full communion agreements transitive. The report says:

UFO [unity, faith and order] has monitored developments in the four North American Lutheran and Anglican churches, who are working towards a full communion relationship between the Anglican Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, and The Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.¹²

In the North American process *Churches beyond Borders*, which aims to make the two Anglican/Episcopal-Lutheran agreements transitive, the Memorandum of Mutual Recognition remains to be approved by The Episcopal Church's (TEC) General Convention to be held in July 2022 in Baltimore, having been approved by the other three.¹³ The first step towards transitivity between the regional agreements has thus (almost) been taken.

4. Towards Transitivity between the North American and Porvoo Churches?

These North American Churches have shown signs of willingness to proceed with making the North American agreements and the Porvoo Declaration transitive. One of the factors behind

¹⁰ ALIC III, 53.

¹¹ ACC-16.

¹² ACC-17.

¹³ Notes of the Lutheran Episcopal Coordinating Committee Meeting – 26 and 27 May 2021. See the prepared ECUSA resolution: https://www.vbinder.net/resolutions/92/original_text?house=HD&lang=en and the approval of the Memorandum of Mutual Recognition by the ELCIC in July 2019 and by the ELCA in November 2019: <https://www.anglicanjournal.com/general-synod-expands-full-communion-recognition/>; https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/CC96_Nov_7-10_2019_Actions.pdf

this interest is the formalised partnership between the American Episcopal Church and the Church of Sweden (2015).¹⁴ Based on the international Anglican-Lutheran recommendations, and given the practical questions and problems regarding the transitivity of especially ELCA pastors in the Anglican churches in the Nordic countries, the Porvoo Contact group raised this issue at its meeting in Riga in October 2016. It concluded: "...were the matter to result in a decision, such a decision could be made only in consultation with the Primates".¹⁵

Given the progress regarding transitivity in the North American churches, it seems timely for the Porvoo Communion churches to examine these agreements more closely and consider the possibility of preparing a Memorandum of Mutual Recognition between the North American communions and the Porvoo Communion for discussion, evaluation, and decision making.

4.1.From BEM and Niagara to Porvoo, Called to Common Mission, and Waterloo

In his article *Sign of Unity and Continuity: The Ministry of Bishop in Lutheran-Anglican Agreements* (2006) Bishop Matti Repo maintained that both the Porvoo Agreement and the North American agreements Called to Common Mission (1999/2000) and the Waterloo Agreement (2001) had harvested the fruits of Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (BEM 1982) and the Anglican-Lutheran Niagara Report (1987). From the "white waters of Niagara" three agreements arose which draw on the impulses given by BEM.¹⁶

Each agreement places the ministry of bishop in the service of the apostolicity of the church. They underline the call of the whole church and the priesthood of all believers. Apostolicity is seen within the context of the *missio Dei*. The church's continuity is expressed in many ways, especially in the apostolic scriptures, ecumenical creeds, and the celebration of baptism and the eucharist. The ministry of the church serves its God-given mission. Episcopate is practised personally, collegially, and corporately. The ministry of the bishop has a special function in the service of apostolicity and church unity. Ordination to the episcopal ministry in historic succession is a "sign, not a guarantee" of the apostolic continuity of the church.¹⁷

4.2.The Acknowledgements and Commitments of the Three Agreements

The Porvoo Joint Declaration contains six acknowledgements (58 i–vi) which have near equivalents in Called to Common Mission (CCM) and the Waterloo Agreement (WA). However, the North American agreements make no direct reference to a common ecclesiological basis in the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ.

In the Porvoo Declaration, based on the achieved "common understanding of the nature and purpose of the Church, fundamental agreement in faith and our agreement on episcopacy in the service of the apostolicity of the Church, contained in Chapters II–IV of The Porvoo

¹⁴ Cf. <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/ecumenical-interreligious/church-of-sweden/> See also: <https://www.episcopalnewsservice.org/2015/11/20/church-of-sweden-episcopal-church-celebrate-partnership-and-common-mission/>

¹⁵ PCG minutes 2016.

¹⁶ Repo 2006, 326.

¹⁷ Repo 2006, 326.

Common Statement, [the member churches] make the following **acknowledgements and commitments**:

- i we acknowledge one another's churches as churches belonging to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ and truly participating in the apostolic mission of the whole people of God [cf. CCM 5];
- ii we acknowledge that in all our churches the Word of God is authentically preached, and the sacraments of baptism and the eucharist are duly administered [cf. WA Ack. 1; CCM 27];
- iii we acknowledge that all our churches share in the common confession of the apostolic faith [cf. WA Ack. 2; CCM 4];
- iv we acknowledge that one another's ordained ministries are given by God as instruments of his grace and as possessing not only the inward call of the Spirit, but also Christ's commission through his Body, the Church [cf. WA Ack. 4; CCM 7]
- v we acknowledge that personal, collegial and communal oversight (episcopate) is embodied and exercised in all our churches in a variety of forms, in continuity of apostolic life, mission and ministry [cf. WA Ack. 3; CCM 7]
- vi we acknowledge that the episcopal office is valued and maintained in all our churches as a visible sign expressing and serving the Church's unity and continuity in apostolic life, mission and ministry [cf. WA Ack. 5; CCM 10]"

There are ten commitments in the Porvoo Declaration (58 b i–x). The basic elements of full communion agreements are found in the various commitments each of these agreements makes:

- b We commit ourselves:
 - i to share a common life in mission and service, to pray for and with one another, and to share resources [cf. CCM 29];
 - ii to welcome one another's members to receive sacramental and other pastoral ministrations;
 - iii to regard baptized members of all our churches as members of our own;
 - iv to welcome diaspora congregations into the life of the indigenous churches, to their mutual enrichment;
 - v to welcome persons episcopally ordained in any of our churches to the office of bishop, priest or deacon to serve, by invitation and in accordance with any regulations which may from time to time be in force, in that ministry in the receiving church without re-ordination [cf. WA com. 1; CCM 14 and 19];
 - vi to invite one another's bishops normally to participate in the laying on of hands at the ordination of bishops as a sign of the unity and continuity of the Church [cf. WA com. 2; CCM 19];
 - vii to work towards a common understanding of diaconal ministry [cf. WA com. 4];
 - viii to establish appropriate forms of collegial and conciliar consultation on significant matters of faith and order, life and work [cf. WA com. 5; CCM 2];
 - ix to encourage consultations of representatives of our churches, and to facilitate learning and exchange of ideas and information in theological and pastoral matters [cf. WA com. 6; CCM 2];

x to establish a contact group to nurture our growth in communion and to co-ordinate the implementation of this agreement. [cf. WA com. 7; CCM 23]”

Called to Common Mission makes no mention of working towards a common understanding of diaconal ministry. Yet since the beginning of 2020 the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has officially had the practice of ordaining deacons for the ministry of word and service. This ministry combines three previously lay ministries.¹⁸

4.3. TEC’s Understanding the ELCA Installation as an Ordination

A bigger question from the perspective of the preconditions of transitivity concerns how the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) installs its bishops. Yet despite the terminology, the service *de facto* seems in its current form to meet the criteria of an ordination. CCM states:

14. The two churches will acknowledge immediately the full authenticity of each other’s ordained ministries (bishops, priests, and deacons in The Episcopal Church and pastors in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America). The creation of a common and fully interchangeable ministry of bishops in full communion will occur with the incorporation of all active bishops in the historic episcopal succession and the continuing process of collegial consultation in matters of Christian faith and life. For both churches, the relationship of full communion begins when both churches adopt this Concordat.¹⁹

The incorporation of the active ELCA bishops into the historic episcopal succession means that in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, following the adoption of this Concordat and in keeping with the collegiality and continuity of ordained ministry attested to as early as Canon 4 of the First Ecumenical Council (Nicaea I, A.D. 325), at least three bishops already sharing in the sign of the episcopal succession will be invited to participate in the installations of the Presiding Bishop and the synodical bishops through prayer for the gift of the Holy Spirit and with the laying on of hands. These participating bishops will be invited from the churches of the Lutheran communion which share in the historic episcopate. In addition, a bishop or bishops will be invited from The Episcopal Church to participate in the same way. Synodical bishops elected and awaiting installation can similarly be installed at the same service with the next Presiding Bishop if they wish. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has also agreed to make a constitutional and liturgical provision that a bishop should regularly preside and participate in the laying on of hands at the ordination of all clergy.²⁰

The American Lutherans emphasise that a bishop is a priest. The bishops are elected for a period of six years, but in the light of CCM the ELCA bishops will be installed for the pastoral service of the gospel with the intention of entering the ministry of the historic

¹⁸ https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Ordination_Ministers_Word_Service-pdf.pdf.

The rationale behind the change is here:

https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/ERDG_Recommendation.pdf?_ga=2.51343215.71229612.1642488843-2045755840.1636353036.

¹⁹ Presentation of the Church of Sweden as a full communion partner on the TEC website.

²⁰ CCM 19.

episcopate. They will be understood by The Episcopal Church as having been ordained into this ministry, although the term “ordination” is not explicitly mentioned. The installation of a bishop until the change included a prayer for the gift of the Holy Spirit without the laying on of hands. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has further agreed to revise its rite for the “Installation of a Bishop” to reflect this understanding and thus freely to accept the historic episcopate.²¹

The reciprocal interchangeability of clergy was already possible in the light of the agreement before all bishops were in the historic episcopate, because The Episcopal Church (TEC) pledged in this case to continue the process for enacting a temporary suspension of the seventeenth-century restriction that “no persons are allowed to exercise the offices of bishop, priest, or deacon in this Church unless they are so ordained, or have already received such ordination with the laying on of hands by bishops who are themselves duly qualified to confer Holy Orders” (“Preface to the Ordination Rites”, The Book of Common Prayer, p. 510). This action thus permitted the full interchangeability and reciprocity of all the ELCA pastors as priests or presbyters within The Episcopal Church without any further ordination or reordination or supplemental ordination whatsoever, always subject to a canonically or constitutionally approved invitation.²²

4.4. The Revision of the Bishop’s Installation as Ordination by the Canadian Lutherans

The Canadian Lutherans and Anglicans reached an agreement concerning interim eucharistic sharing in 1995. During the interim the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) decided to change its understanding of the bishop’s installation, interpreting it as and calling it ordination. The ordination aims for life-long service, although the bishop’s office in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada is limited to certain terms. This change made it possible for the Anglican Church of Canada directly to understand the Lutheran ministry of bishop as separate from the ministry of a priest. Based on the Waterloo Agreement, full communion and interchangeability of ministries became effective immediately.²³

²¹ CCM 18. See also Repo 2006, 327. Cf. the ELCA South-Eastern Synod installation prayer (<https://www.elca-ses.org/files/documents+%26+brochures/bishop+installation/bishop+installation+bulletin+2019-10-5.pdf>): *Three bishops in historic succession join in the laying on of hands in conformity with the canons of the Council of Nicaea. The presiding bishop then lays both hands on the head of the bishop-elect. Pour out your Spirit upon N.N. to empower and enlighten his ministry as a bishop in your church. Sustain him as a shepherd who tends the flock of Christ with love and gentleness and oversees the ministries of the church with vision and wisdom. Uphold him as a faithful steward of your holy word and life-giving sacraments and a strong sign of reconciliation among all people. Give courage and fortitude to sustain him in this ministry. We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Savior and Lord, through whom all glory and power and honor are yours in your holy church, both now and forever. Amen.*

The presiding bishop continues. The office of bishop is now committed to you in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

²² CCM 16. See also Repo 2006, 328.

²³ Cf. ELCIC ordination of a bishop (2008): https://www.elcic.ca/worship.ca/text/Bishop_Ordination.pdf. The ordination prayer with invocation of the gift of the Holy Spirit and the laying on of hands: “32. The presiding bishop and other bishops place their hands upon the head of the bishop-elect.

PB We ask you now to send your Holy Spirit upon _____ to make her/him a bishop of your church, ordained to serve you. O Loving God, C give to this your bishop, power in her/his preaching and wisdom in feeding your

In the Called to Full Communion agreement Anglicans affirm that the Canadian Lutheran bishops are ordained bishops, and the pastors ordained priests:

The Anglican Church of Canada hereby recognizes the full authenticity of the ordained ministries of bishops and pastors presently existing within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, acknowledging its pastors as priests in the Church of God and its *bishops as bishops and chief pastors exercising a ministry of episcopate* over the jurisdictional areas of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada in which they preside.²⁴

In the ELCA the bishops are “*chief pastors, exercising a ministry of episcopate*” before entering the historic episcopate, and a transitional phase is therefore needed from the Anglican perspective.²⁵

5. Ecumenical and Practical Conclusions: Are the Communion of Porvoo Churches and the North American Anglican-Lutheran Communion Ready for a Memorandum of Mutual Recognition?

In the Anglican-Lutheran *Memorandum of Mutual Recognition of Relations of Full Communion* (2018) between the US and the Canadian communions the initiative is based on the recommendations made by the Anglican Lutheran International Commission (ALIC III 2012) and the endorsement of ALIC’s guidelines by the Anglican Consultative Council in 2016. It encouraged “steps in North American, British and Irish Anglican churches to bring the three regional agreements of Communion into relationship with each other.”²⁶

According to the Memorandum these North American churches agree to:

- Give thanks for and affirm the theological basis for full communion established by theological dialogue between members of the Lutheran and Anglican traditions around the world;
- Rejoice in the gifts given to the churches by their bilateral full communion relations;
- Treat the churches of the other agreement as also churches with which a relationship of full communion exists on the basis of these agreements and this experience;
- Establish policies and procedures to facilitate exchange of ministry between The Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, and between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Anglican Church of Canada. This

people on Christ, the Bread of Life. Strengthen her/his leadership to call your church to faith, unity and discipleship. Form her/him to follow Christ in joyful service and courageous trust.

33. The presiding bishop, hands upraised once more, prays:

PB All this we ask you, O God, through Jesus Christ our Saviour, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. C Amen.”

Cf. also ELCIC Orders of Ministry 2019: <https://elcic.ca/faithorderdoctrine/OrdersofMinistry.cfm>.

²⁴ Waterloo Declaration.

²⁵ Repo 2006, 328.

²⁶ Memorandum of Mutual Recognition.

will be informed by the experience and resources of the existing full communion agreements, including mandating complete continuing exchange of information about ministerial conduct, duly honoring that such exchanges are subject in each case to approval by sending and receiving bishops;

- Continue to seek conversations with other members of the Anglican Communion and the Lutheran World Federation that would commend further mutual recognition of (full) communion agreements, where they exist, and encourage churches without such agreements to move toward living into such relationships.²⁷

The Lutheran Churches of the Porvoo Communion are already in communion with the Canadian and US Lutheran signatory churches. In the light of the essentially joint theological and ecumenical rationale of the Porvoo Agreement and CCM and the Waterloo Agreement, which is based on the work already undertaken in BEM and the Anglican-Lutheran Niagara Report, there seems to be no theological and ecumenical hindrances to the recognition of these two North American Anglican churches by the Lutheran Porvoo signatories. Given the general Anglican minimum prerequisite regarding recognition of episcopal ministry is that a church is “taking steps to receive the sign of the historic episcopate”, the ELCA could also be included in the mutual recognition. It seems plausible that in turn the North American churches could also recognise the signatory churches of the Porvoo Declaration.

The principal mutual recognition of ordained ministries between these communions would mark a significant step forward. However, there are also legal frameworks which differ from one country and church to the other. This requires further elaboration to make the interchangeability as extensive as possible in practical terms. The three agreements recognise this. They all contain clauses according to which the churches recognise episcopally ordained bishops, priests, and deacons and commit themselves to receiving them into service “in accordance with any regulations which may from time to time be in force”. All remaining questions concerning requirements for someone being employed by another church need to be tackled separately. The Porvoo Declaration formulates this commitment (58 b v) as follows:

v to welcome persons episcopally ordained in any of our churches to the office of bishop, priest or deacon to serve, by invitation and in accordance with any regulations which may from time to time be in force, in that ministry in the receiving church without re-ordination [cf. WA com. 1; CCM 14 and 19].

During this period of ecumenical resignation, isolation, and exhaustion caused by the Covid-19 pandemic it would be encouraging to have a more concrete vision and model of a transatlantic ecclesial communion. It could function as another sign of hope and inspiration for the churches to combine forces in continuing reconciliation and common witness and service. It would provide an experience and expression of Christian unity as a network of local communions. It would incorporate mutual support and enrichment in the joint proclamation of the apostolic gospel beyond boundaries in word and deed.

²⁷ Memorandum of Mutual Recognition.

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