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Anglican-Lutheran International Conversations

R E P O R T

of the Conversations 1970-1972 authorized  
by the Lambeth Conference and the Lutheran World Federation

Foreword

On behalf of the participants in the recent Anglican-Lutheran Conversations, we submit the following report for the attention of the authorities which commissioned us. Our report is unanimous.

The Commission owed much to its secretaries Canon Robert M. Jeffery and the Rev. Michael Moore and especially to Dr. Günther Gassmann who was responsible for much of the final drafting.

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I. INTRODUCTION

- (1) In spite of occasional contacts and a common awareness of great areas of affinity in doctrine, worship and church life, Anglican and Lutheran Churches have in the past lived largely in separation and in relative isolation from one another. One painful manifestation of their separate existence has been the absence of communio in sacris between Lutheran and Anglican Churches (apart from that enabled by regulations concerning different grades of intercommunion between the Church of England and various Scandinavian Lutheran Churches).
- (2) A new situation has been created by more frequent encounters in recent times, both between Churches and individual members of the two Communion; the recognition of new, converging tendencies in their biblical and theological thinking; the realization of their common task of mission and service in the modern world; more frequent but still responsible acts of intercommunion; and the encounter of Lutheran and Anglican Churches in union negotiations.

- (3) This situation demands not only better mutual knowledge and understanding and closer cooperation. It calls at the same time for a reconsideration of the official relationships between Anglican and Lutheran Churches leading to more appropriate expressions of our common faith, witness and service.
- (4) This new situation, and in particular the involvement of Lutheran and Anglican Churches in union negotiations, led to the proposal of official conversations between the Lutheran World Federation and the Anglican Communion.
- (5) In 1963 the LWF Commission on World Mission passed a resolution requesting the setting-up of a study committee for the preparation of world-wide Anglican-Lutheran conversations. This proposal received the endorsement of the LWF Commission on Theology in the same year.
- (6) After further deliberations and following a decision of the Executive Committee of the LWF in 1967 contacts with the Archbishop of Canterbury were established which resulted in the appointment of an ad hoc Anglican-Lutheran Committee by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the General Secretary of the LWF. This Committee met in Berlin (November 1967) and elaborated a "Memorandum". This Memorandum proposed that the Lambeth Conference and the Executive Committee of the LWF should authorize "the appointment of a representative 'Anglican-Lutheran Commission'". This recommendation was accepted by the Lambeth Conference 1968. The Executive Committee of the LWF, meeting shortly after the Lambeth Conference, considered the Memorandum too and arrived at the same decision.
- (7) In the Memorandum of 1967 it was stated that the "Anglican-Lutheran Commission" should
  - (a) conduct a world-wide Anglican-Lutheran dialogue;
  - (b) consider other contacts and areas for practical cooperation;
  - (c) report regularly to their respective appropriate authorities".

This was accepted by the Lambeth Conference and by the LWF Executive Committee in 1968.

- (8) The Lambeth Conference recommended (taking up a suggestion of the Memorandum) that the "conversations should begin by discussing the general mission of the Church in the world and only afterwards proceed to questions of doctrine and order, though major issues should be faced as soon as possible". The Lambeth Conference asked also that these conversations "should be held on four occasions over a two-year period".

The LWF Executive Committee concurred in this recommendation. Because of these limitations of time the conversations had to be concentrated upon some fundamental doctrinal points, but always in the context of the general mission of the Church in the world.

- (9) After four meetings (at Oxford, September 1970; Løgumkloster, Denmark, March-April 1971; Lantana, Florida, January 1972, and Munich, April 1972) our group completed its work in so far as it was possible in the time given to us. We submit our report including its recommendations to our respective authorities. We are aware of its limitations. We have not attempted to say everything that should or could be said in common.
- (10) We have attempted to articulate lines of thought which are already accepted in much of the past and present thinking of our Churches. This implies that we tried to be as representative as possible of the traditions and present developments in our Churches. We hope that the articulation of current tendencies may itself advance and extend our ecumenical unity.
- (11) We are aware, that in every ecumenical conversations the delegates from both sides develop an increasingly friendly relationship; understanding develops, deep spiritual fellowship grows, and with it a strong desire to express the maximum agreement possible. Those they represent are not going through the same experiences, and there is always a danger that both sides, or at least one, will prove to be so far ahead of their constituency, that little good will come of the encounter.
- (12) This is particularly true in the matter of language. Phrases have come into currency and have worked their way into the life and thought of Lutheran and Anglican Churches. In some cases the words correspond to those used on the other side and mean much the same thing. Sometimes the words sound similar, but mean something different. Sometimes the very words are strange and foreign in the ears of another tradition in the life of the Church.
- (13) In conversations like ours each side becomes familiar with the language of the other. Sometimes particular phrases become expressive of particular points of agreement or disagreement, and thus a special language makes articulate to the participants the spiritual or intellectual processes in which they have been engaged. Their constituencies have not become familiar with this language.
- (14) We therefore think that our report needs a positive effort of understanding on the part of both our Churches and we have tried to initiate this process by adding to the report personal statements written by

the two chairmen of the delegations. We believe that all that we are saying and recommending in our report will only be relevant if our Churches make serious attempts to grow closer together at all levels of church life.

- (15) Our conversations were not held in an ecumenical vacuum. Our Churches are involved in conversations and negotiations with other Churches. We trust that our work will contribute to the comprehensive movement toward greater unity which is apparent among all Christian Churches.
- (16) Our report is now submitted to the authorities which have appointed us and we hope that those authorities will transmit our report to the individual Churches for their consideration and action. We ask all who receive this report to base their decisions not only on the human efforts which we have made but on their trust in the One, living Lord of the Church, who wills our unity and who will judge us one day according to our obedience to His will and command.

## II. THEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

### A. Sources of Authority

#### a) Scripture

- (17) The Anglican and the Lutheran Churches hold that it is Jesus Christ, God and Man, born, crucified, risen and ascended for the salvation of mankind, in whom all Scriptures find their focus and fulfilment. They are at one in accepting the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the sufficient, inspired, and authoritative record and witness, prophetic and apostolic, to God's revelation in Jesus Christ.
- (18) Both Churches hold that through the proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments, based on the same Scriptures and empowered by the Holy Spirit, Christ is speaking to us and is active amongst us today, calling us to live and serve in His name.
- (19) Both Churches hold that nothing should be preached, taught or ordered in the Church which contradicts the Word of God as it is proclaimed in Holy Scripture.
- (20) Within both Churches different attitudes exist concerning the nature of inspiration and the ways and means of interpreting the Scriptures, and these attitudes run across the denominational boundaries.

- (21) Both Churches agree in stressing the need and responsibility for a continuing interpretation of the biblical texts in order to communicate the Gospel of Salvation to all men in different times and changing circumstances.
- (22) They teach that the whole Church, and especially the Ministry of the Church, has received the responsibility for guarding all proclamation and interpretation from error by guiding, admonishing and judging and by formulating doctrinal statements, the biblical witness always being the final authority and court of appeal.

b) Creeds

- (23) The Anglican and the Lutheran Churches are at one in accepting officially the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. These Creeds are used regularly in their worship and in their teaching. They recognize the Athanasian Creed as giving a true exposition of the Trinitarian faith.
- (24) They believe that these Creeds are authoritative summaries and safeguards of the Christian faith. Their authority is established in the first place by their faithful witness and interpretation of the biblical message, and in the second place by their acceptance and use in the Early Church. They, therefore, hold a unique place among all confessional documents.
- (25) The acceptance of these Creeds implies agreement between both Communions on the fundamental Trinitarian and Christological dogmas.

c) Confessional Formularies

- (26) The Lutheran and the Anglican Churches developed and accepted a number of confessional documents at the time of the Reformation. There are a great number of direct historical and theological connections and similarities between these documents.
- (27) They did not regard these confessions as "foundation documents" of a new Church, but rather as means of safeguarding and witnessing to the faith of the Church of all times.
- (28) They regarded these confessions as expositions of their final authority, namely Holy Scripture. The confessions were aimed at a renewal and reformation of the Church making it as inclusive as possible, but guarding against certain errors and misguided developments in late medieval Roman Catholicism on the one hand, and against "enthusiastic" and extreme reforming movements on the other.

- (29) On the Lutheran side the confessions of the Reformation still occupy officially a prominent place in theological thinking and training, in catechetical teaching, in the constitutions of the individual Lutheran Churches and at the ordination of pastors. They serve as a link between the Churches of the Lutheran family.
- (30) On the Anglican side the 39 Articles are universally recognized as expressing a significant phase in a formative period of Anglican thought and life. The significance attached to them today in Anglican circles varies between Anglican Churches and between groups within Anglican Churches. On the other hand the Book of Common Prayer has for a long time served as a confessional document in a liturgical setting. Though liturgical revisions vary among Anglican Churches, the influence of the Prayer Book tradition is still evident.
- (31) Since confessional formularies are not a mark of the Church their significance lies in their expression of the living confession to the living Lord. Different approaches to the authority of these formularies are possible between Communion so long as they share a living confession which is a faithful response to the living Word of God as proclaimed in Holy Scripture.

d) Tradition

- (32) The Anglican and the Lutheran Churches are at one in regarding tradition as a normal element in the life of the Church.
- (33) By the word "tradition" is meant the way in which the apostolic witness (i.e. "Tradition") has been transmitted from one generation to the next, from one culture to the other. By the word "traditions" are meant the ways in which the Churches have developed their thinking, worship, common life and attitudes to the world.
- (34) Both Churches agree that all traditions are secondary to Tradition and that they, therefore, have to be tested by that Tradition. If they are in accordance with and expressions of this ultimate standard they are to be regarded as important means of continuity. In order to serve this purpose they should never become petrified, but remain open for change and renewal.
- (35) The attitude toward the tradition, especially over against the tradition of the Early Church has found within both Churches different expressions at different times and in different schools of thought.

- (36) Anglicans do not make frequent use of the word "tradition" except in a phrase like churches of the Anglican tradition, which is virtually a synonym for the "Anglican Communion". But during the Reformation period (which for Anglicans extend from 1534 to 1662) they called on the teaching of the Early Fathers in their apologies against both Roman Catholics and Puritans.
- (37) A positive appreciation of the Patristic tradition, already apparent in the sixteenth century, became more marked in the seventeenth, and made its influence felt in Anglican spirituality, ecclesiology, and liturgy - the Scottish liturgy of 1637 is an example of this. The Oxford Movement of the nineteenth century saw a further phase in the appropriation of both patristic and medieval traditions, and a new sense of the unbroken continuity of the Church's history.
- (38) At all times, however, there has been a sharply critical attitude to tradition if this implied an additional source for historical data supplementing the history given in the Gospels, or a source for a "secret" doctrine additional to that given in the scriptural witness.
- (39) In modern times there has appeared a desire to sit lightly to "the traditions of men" if they were felt to obscure "the good news for the new age".
- (40) Lutheran theology in the sixteenth century considered ancient church tradition as a kind of contemporary source of Christian truth and as a proof for its own continuity. At the same time the Reformation demand for a scripturally-based critical study of the Fathers was the starting point for a naissant patrology.
- (41) Within Lutheran Church and theology in later centuries Early Christianity was not primarily of dogmatic relevance but was studied rather as an important ethical authority witnessing to the practice of the Christian life.
- (42) Lutheran theology always tried to evaluate the patristic tradition in the light of the biblical witness as it was interpreted in different periods and schools of thought.
- (43) In modern times the tradition of the Lutheran Churches has become subject to a highly critical examination calling for continuous reformation and renewal.
- (44) Modern scholarship (Exegesis, Patristics) has in many ways served as a means of convergence between different denominations. This also applies to and has consequences for our evaluation of early tradition. But even if there remain a number of different emphases in this field, they are certainly not of fundamental importance,



but rather expressions of different histories, ways of thinking and life, which should be a source of mutual enrichment and correction.

e) Theology

- (45) Within the Anglican and the Lutheran Churches the position, function, and character of theology have developed in a number of different ways.
- (46) Both Communion stress the importance of theological reasoning, and both look back to a rich tradition of theological work.
- (47) The different emphases in Anglican and Lutheran theological studies arise from different historical situations, from different backgrounds in philosophy and general thinking, and from different forms of theological training, church order, and church life. The lack of closer contacts between the two Communion in the past may also have contributed to these different developments.
- (48) The stronger lines of communication within the field of theology, which have developed during the last decades, have led to increasing contacts and mutual sharing between theologians all over the world. The result is a convergence of theological thinking which is marked by mutual enrichment, as well as by a widespread development of similar new theological schools very often crossing all denominational barriers.
- (49) Both Communion, therefore, are much more closely connected in the field of theology today than ever before. Part of this closer relation grows out of the fact that they face the same problems and tensions within their theological thinking.
- (50) Thus, remaining marked differences in the function and emphasis of theology should be welcomed as an expression and sign of a legitimate variety within the one People of God.

B. The Church

- (51) The Anglican and the Lutheran Churches adhere to the traditional Nicene characterization of the Church as one, holy, catholic, and apostolic, and they believe that they are expressions of this Church. This position was reaffirmed by each Church at the Reformation and been continuously maintained as a specific definition of what the Church is called to be in the world.

- (52) Because of different historical circumstances after the Reformation theologians within the two Churches have formulated their teachings about the Church differently. Nevertheless, there have been distinctive ecclesiological attitudes in each Church that were present also in the other Church and there have always been areas of agreement or approximation in their ecclesiological thinking.
- (53) Both traditions agree that the unity of the Church, God's gift and our task, must be manifested in a visible way. This unity can be expressed in different forms depending upon the particular situation. Accordingly there can be various stages in the mutual recognition of Churches, in the practice of intercommunion and in the reciprocal acceptance of ministries. The goal should be full "altar and pulpit fellowship" (full communion), including its acceptance by the individual members of the Churches, and structures that will encourage such fellowship and its acceptance.
- (54) The two traditions confess with one accord the holiness of the Church as a gift of God's grace separating the Church to Himself as a beloved and forgiven people, which by the power of His Spirit is inspired and called to a life and mission which reflects among men God's own holiness. Within each tradition and between the traditions there have been and are differences of emphasis and interpretation concerning the practical expression of this holiness in the Church's life and mission. Such differences are not mutually exclusive and need not prove divisive in the life of the Church.
- (55) In maintaining the catholicity of the Church Anglicans and Lutherans confess together, that the fullness of the truth of the Gospel is committed to the Church. Further they recognize together the universal outreach and inclusiveness of the Church, extending to every nation, race and social group. Finally they seek to comprehend the wholeness of human life in all its aspects under the dominion of Christ. Both Churches, however, are aware of the danger of particularist claims within their denominations. "Catholic fullness" and "the pure doctrine of the Gospel" may be misinterpreted to represent the exclusive privilege of particular groups or parties. Fullness, universality and wholeness belong only to the one body of Christ.
- (56) In the concept of apostolicity there is common ground in so far as all teaching, life and ministry of the Church have to be in continuity with the fundamental apostolic witness and commission to go out into the world. It is the role which the succession of bishops plays within this wider concept of apostolicity which is one of the main controversial points between the two traditions. Consequently, section D. in this report will consider the apostolic nature of the Church and its ministry.

- (57) Today, there is a growing agreement about the way we speak of the Church. This is based on a renewed interest in Biblical theology and ecclesiology and this has coincided with a new awareness on part of the Church of its situation and task in the contemporary world. Particular emphasis has fallen on a dynamic concept of the Church as the People of God. This implies that all thinking about the Church must start from and find its criteria in the enabling presence and action of the triune God.
- (58) As the People of God growing out of the Old Covenant the Church lives in the New Covenant and is sent by Christ to serve mankind. As the Body of Christ, the Church lives in an intimate relationship with Him, the Head of the Body. Despite its frailty and failures, it is sustained by the faithfulness of its Lord. At the same time, the Church is constantly built up, renewed and strengthened by Christ's actual presence and action, through Word and Sacrament, in the Holy Spirit.
- (59) The Church, therefore, is the recipient of grace, a community and royal priesthood of the People of God responding to this gift in corporate praise and thanksgiving to God, and responding simultaneously as an instrument for proclaiming and manifesting God's sovereign rule and saving grace. Because the Church is sent into the world to continue Christ's service and to witness to His presence among all mankind in liberating men from fear and false idols, in meeting human need, and in fighting against injustice and discrimination, the nature and mission of the Church belong inseparably together. Mission and service presuppose an authentic fellowship of the reconciled. A fellowship without mission is disobedient to the commandment of its Lord.
- (60) The fellowship of the Church calls for a deep mutual sharing of the spiritual and material gifts of God. Being a fellowship of those who are at once sinful in themselves but made righteous in Christ, the Church is, nevertheless, a first fruit of the Kingdom and, therefore, it prophetically witnesses to the final joy of mankind which is to lose itself in wonder, love and praise of the Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier. So the Church is a pilgrim people, exposed to God's judgment and nourished on its way by His grace which exceeds both our achievements and our desires or deserts.

C. The Word and the Sacraments

a) Relation of Word and Sacrament

- (61) Both our Communion affirm in virtually the same words (Conf. Aug. VII; Art. XIX) that the right proclamation of the Word and the proper administration of the Sacraments are essential and constitutive to the ongoing life of the Church. Where these things happen, there we see the Church.
- (62) To be obedient to the will of Christ the Church must honour both Word and Sacrament and must avoid emphasizing one to the neglect of the other.
- (63) While there is some difference in the mode of Christ's action in Word and Sacrament, both Word and Sacrament are occasions of His coming in anamnesis of his first advent and in anticipation of his parousia. The Word imparts significance to the Sacrament and the Sacrament gives visible embodiment to the Word.

b) Baptism

- (64) Baptism, administered with water and the threefold Name, is the effective means by which God brings a person into the covenant of salvation wrought by Christ and translates him from darkness and bondage into the light and freedom of the Kingdom of God. The baptized are grafted into the Church, adopted as children of God, brought into a relation with Him which means justification, the forgiveness of sins and exposure to the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit in the believing, witnessing and serving community.
- (65) Faith is necessary for the right receiving of the Sacrament. Infant baptism, though not certainly attested in the New Testament, is conformable to its doctrine and in particular to the emphasis on the divine initiative in man's redemption. The faith of the parents, sponsors and the whole community, is a pledge that the baptized infant will be brought to respond in faith to what God did for him in baptism.
- (66) The practice of infant baptism necessitates the provision of opportunity for personal profession of faith before the congregation. In both our traditions this has been associated with confirmation in which the bishop (in Anglicanism) lays hands upon the candidate or the parish pastor (in Lutheranism) lays hands upon the candidate or otherwise blesses him. We note the debate within each communion about precise aspects of the theology and practice of confirmation, including its relation to admission to communion. Since the points so debated cut across denominational lines, they ought not be barriers to communion between us.

c) The Lord's Supper

- (67) In the Lord's Supper the Church obediently performs the acts commanded by Christ in the New Testament, who took bread and wine, gave thanks, broke the bread and distributed the bread and wine. The Church receives in this way the body and blood of Christ, crucified and risen, and in Him the forgiveness of sins and all other benefits of his passion.
- (68) Both Communion affirm the real presence of Christ in this sacrament, but neither seeks to define precisely how this happens. In the eucharistic action, including consecration<sup>1)</sup> and reception the bread and wine, while remaining bread and wine, become the means whereby Christ is truly present and gives himself to the communicants.
- (69) Both traditions affirm that Christ's sacrifice was offered once and for all for the sin of the whole world. Yet without denying this fundamental truth both would recognize that the Eucharist in some sense involves sacrifice. In it we offer our praise and thanksgiving, ourselves and all that we are, and make before God the memorial of Christ's sacrifice. Christ's redemptive act becomes present for our participation. Many Anglicans and some Lutherans believe that in the Eucharist the Church's offering of herself is caught up into his one offering. Other Anglicans and many Lutherans do not employ the concept of sacrifice in this way.

d) Of the Number of the Sacraments

- (70) Both our traditions recognize the uniqueness of the two gospel sacraments. Of these alone is there in the New Testament a recorded command of Christ to perform specific actions with material things, and to these alone is attached a specific promise of his own action and gift annexed thereto.
- (71) In both Communion there are those who would extend the term sacrament to other rites (e.g., absolution and ordination among Lutherans, and the other five of the traditional "sacraments" by Anglicans). This

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1) i.e., the setting apart of the elements, the recitation of the thanksgiving with the words of institution and the invocation of the Holy Spirit, whether explicit in the liturgical words or not.

is largely a matter of nomenclature. Under the stricter definition there can only be two sacraments; under a wider definition there can be others, but when the wider definition is used the preeminence of Baptism and the Lord's Supper is still maintained.

- (72) Within both Communions some provision is made for the other "five commonly called sacraments" according to need and local variation. Where unction is practised it is not understood as extreme unction but as a means to healing.

D. Apostolic Ministry

a) Apostolicity and Apostolic Succession

- (73) The apostolicity of the Church is God's gift in Christ to the Church through the apostles' preaching, their celebration of the Gospel sacraments, and their fellowship and oversight. It is also God's sending of the Church into all the world to make disciples of all nations in and through the apostolic Gospel. Thus apostolicity pertains first to the Gospel and then to the ministry of Word and Sacraments, all given by the risen Lord to the apostles and through them to the Church. Apostolicity requires obedience to the original and fundamental apostolic witness by reinterpretation to meet the needs of each new situation.
- (74) The succession of apostolicity through time is guarded and given contemporary expression in and through a wide variety of means, activities and institutions: the canon of scriptures, creeds, confessional writings, liturgies, the activities of preaching, teaching, celebrating the sacraments and ordaining and using a ministry of Word and Sacrament, the exercising of pastoral care and oversight, the common life of the Church, and the engagement in mission to and for the world.

b) The Ministry

- (75) In confessing the apostolic faith as a community, all baptized and believing Christians are the apostolic Church and stand in the succession of apostolic faith. The apostolic ministry which was instituted by God through Jesus Christ in the sending of the apostles is shared in varying ways by the members of the whole body.
- (76) The ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament is essentially one, though it assumes a diversity of forms which have varied from New Testament times, and which still vary according to local conditions and historic influences down to the present.

(77) We feel ourselves called to recognize that all who have been called and ordained to the ministry of Word and Sacrament in obedience to the apostolic faith stand together in the apostolic succession of office.

(78) It is God who calls, ordains and sends the ministers of Word and Sacrament in the Church. He does this through the whole people, acting by means of those who have been given authority so to act in the name of God and of the whole Church. Ordination to the ministry gives authority to preach the Gospel and administer the Sacraments according to Christ's command and promise, for the purpose of the continuance of the apostolic life and mission of the Church. Ordination includes the prayer of all the people and the laying on of hands of other ministers, especially of those who occupy a ministry of oversight and unity in the Church.

c) Episcopacy

(79) "Episcopate" or oversight concerning the purity of apostolic doctrine, the ordination of ministries, and pastoral care of the Church is inherent in the apostolic character of the Church's life, mission and ministry. This has been embodied and exercised in the Church in a wide variety of forms, episcopal and non-episcopal. Both Communion have continuously held and exercised oversight in accordance with their respective understandings of Church order.

(80) In the Lutheran Communion episcopacy has been preserved in some parts in unbroken historic succession, in other parts in succession of office, while in other parts oversight has been exercised in non-episcopal forms. In all forms it has experienced the blessings of the ministry in the Church.

(81) In the Anglican Communion episcopacy has been preserved in a succession unbroken at the time of the Reformation and, rightly or wrongly, important deductions have been drawn from this in relation to the organic continuity and unity of the Church.

(82) Both Communion are open to new forms in which episcopate may find expressions appropriate to the needs and conditions of the situation and time.

d) Particular Convictions and Perspectives of Each Communion

Statement of the Anglican participants:

- (83) Anglicans treasure the historic episcopate as part of their own history and because of their belief in the incarnational and sacramental character of God's involvement with the world and His people. As God acts now in and through words spoken, in and through bread and wine, and in and through the reality of human community, so too He acts in the laying on of hands in historic succession, providing for the ministry of Word and Sacrament in the one Church.
- (84) They believe that the episcopacy in historic continuity and succession is a gift of God to the Church. It is an outward and visible sign of the Church's continuing unity and apostolic life, mission and ministry. They hold this belief while recognizing that episcopacy has been and may be abused in the life of the Church, as have been the other media of apostolic succession.
- (85) Anglicans do not believe that the episcopate in historic succession alone constitutes the apostolic succession of the Church or its ministry. The participants wish to declare that they see in the Lutheran Communion true proclamation of the Word and celebration of the Sacraments. How we are able to make this statement while maintaining our adherence to the importance of the historic episcopate we hope the Anglican personal note (see p.22ff) will make clear. The Anglican Communion has been much influenced and blessed by God through the Lutheran Communion's faithfulness to the apostolic Gospel. We, therefore, gladly recognize in the Lutheran Churches a true communion of Christ's Body, possessing a truly apostolic ministry.
- (86) Such recognition, if reciprocated by the Lutheran Churches, implies, according to the mind of the participants, official encouragement of intercommunion in forms appropriate to local conditions.
- (87) The Anglican participants cannot foresee full integration of ministries (Full Communion) apart from the historic episcopate, but this should in no sense preclude increasing intercommunion between us, which would give fuller and more joyful expression to our unity in Christ, recognize and deepen the similarities which bind us together, and provide the most appropriate context for our common service of the One Lord.



Statement of the Lutheran participants:

- (88) The Lutheran Churches have practised full fellowship with each other regardless of the forms of episcopate (or even of the episcopate). With ecumenical developments this freedom for fellowship has allowed Lutheran Churches to enter into fellowship with non-Lutheran Churches with various forms of church government.
- (89) Since full fellowship has been retained between some Lutheran Churches which have not preserved the office and name of a bishop and other Lutheran Churches which have retained the historic episcopate in a form similar to the Anglican and since the particular form of episcopate is not a confessional question for Lutherans, the historic episcopate should not become a necessary condition for interchurch relations or church union. On the other hand, those Lutheran Churches which have not retained the historic episcopate are free to accept it where it serves the growing unity of the Church in obedience to the Gospel.
- (90) The Lutheran participants in these conversations recognize the Churches of the Anglican Communion as true apostolic churches and their ministry as an apostolic ministry in unbroken succession, because they see in them true proclamation of the Gospel and right administration of the sacraments. As would be true for any Church which proclaims the Gospel in its purity and administers the sacraments properly the participants regard the historic episcopacy as it has been retained in the Anglican Communion as an important instrument of the unity of the Church.
- (91) The Lutheran participants in these conversations recommend to the member Churches of the Lutheran World Federation that they work for a still closer fellowship with the Churches of the Anglican Communion, including at the present time intercommunion. Where it is expedient for furthering the mission of the Church and where it can happen without disturbing already existing relations with other Churches, Lutheran Churches must be free to manifest a mutual recognition of ministries through the exchange of ministers or through full church union.

E. Worship

- (92) Our conversations have given the participants renewed opportunities to enter into each other's traditions of worship and spirituality. Both sides have been impressed with the similarity between their respective heritages of liturgical worship and also with the close similarity

between the movements for liturgical reform in both Communion. The deep reverence and liturgical care with which their common services of the Eucharist have been conducted remain among the most cherished memories of the experiences which the delegates have gone through together.

- (93) Both traditions emerged after the Reformation from the same matrix of medieval Catholic worship. In both a similar course of events influenced the development of liturgical tradition. In later Lutheran developments the main Sunday service became frequently a purely preaching service while in Anglicanism a separation between eucharistic and non-eucharistic worship services took place.
- (94) Now, in both Churches, the Holy Communion is coming back into the centre of the picture as the principal worship service of each Sunday. In the Lutheran Churches there is a marked re-appropriation of traditional liturgical forms of worship and in Anglicanism there is a noticeable tendency to re-integrate word and sacrament, particularly by the use of the sermon in many more celebrations of the Holy Communion. Both traditions use increasingly spontaneous and informal modes of prayer and praise in the setting of traditional liturgical frameworks.
- (95) Is it fanciful to see in these contemporary movements a stirring of the Spirit, whereby our two Communion may more obviously glorify God with one heart and one mouth?

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS

#### A. Intercommunion and Fellowship

##### a) Intercommunion

- (96) The degree of mutual recognition of the apostolicity and catholicity of our two Churches indicated in the report justifies a greatly increased measure of intercommunion between them. Both Anglican and Lutheran Churches should welcome communicants from the other Church and should encourage their own communicants to receive holy communion in Churches of the other tradition where appropriate and subject to the claims of individual conscience and respect for the discipline of each Church.

- (97) An anomalous situation exists in Europe. The Church of England should no longer make a distinction in the intercommunion arrangements made for various Lutheran Churches, but should extend the arrangements for Sweden and Finland to include all Lutheran Churches in Europe. The many years of contact with Sweden and Finland have made a useful introduction to the communion and fellowship which would thus be extended and which should be reciprocal.

b) Joint Worship

- (98) In places where local conditions make this desirable, there should be mutual participation from time to time by entire congregations in the worship and eucharistic celebrations of the other Church. Anniversaries and other special occasions provide opportunity for members of the two traditions to share symbolic and ecumenical worship together.

c) Integration of Ministries

- (99) In those countries where Anglican and Lutheran Churches are working side by side for the spread of the Gospel, or where there are Churches with close relationships with our two Communion (we have Africa and Asia especially in mind) there is felt a need for more rapid movement towards organic union. We endorse this. It is our hope that our report, with its encouragement of intercommunion and its recognition of the apostolicity of both Churches and their ministries, might facilitate progress towards a true integration of ministries. Whatever steps may be taken towards such integration, nothing should call in question the status of existing ministries as true ministries of word and sacrament.

B. Organizational Contacts

a) Continuation Committee

- (100) Our authorizing bodies should appoint a small continuation committee to follow up our conversations by making regular reports to them on reactions to our present report and on implementation of its proposals; by stimulating further developments; and by preparing a full report for the parent bodies after not more than four years on possibilities for further steps towards closer unity.

b) Staff consultation and observers

- (101) The Lutheran World Federation and the Anglican Consultative Council should encourage regular contacts between their staff members, and arrange attendance of observers at each other's assemblies, liturgical commissions, and conferences where appropriate.

C. Ministries and Exchanges Abroad

a) Chaplains

- (102) Clergy serving their own nationals abroad should realize their importance as ecumenical ambassadors and do their best to make contact with Churches and Christians of other traditions among whom they are living. The local Churches should welcome such clergy into their fellowship. While the existence of Churches for the benefit of ethnic and linguistic groups is fully understood, the development of Churches within foreign populations by proselytization should be discouraged.

b) Tourists and Travellers

- (103) The vast increase in tourism and all kinds of international travel, and the probable entry of Great Britain into the European Economic Community, provide an opportunity for greatly increased fellowship between Christians of our two traditions. Special pastoral provision should be made and an educational programme embarked upon to prepare Church people to avail themselves of opportunities for spiritual fellowship with Christians of other countries. Specialized chaplaincies (e.g. Seamen's missions) also provide occasions for international spiritual fellowship.

c) Theological Exchanges

- (104) More frequent exchanges of theologians and scholars should be much encouraged. Theological students and younger clergy can learn much and give much by spending a period of their early ministry and study in the context of a Church other than their own.

D. Joint Local Mission and Social Witness

a) Shared Facilities and Ministries

- (105) In areas where the presence of one or more Churches is very small one ministry might serve more than one communion by incorporating smaller groups into the parish life of larger, although in various ways allowing the smaller groups to remain in touch with their own Communion. Isolated clergy of any Communion should be welcomed into meetings of clergy of larger Churches so that the clergy of many Churches might meet as one body. Sharing of buildings and pastoral services may provide good opportunities for mutual service and fellowship.

b) Social Witness and Evangelism

- (106) Joint action for mission, social witness, and education is recommended wherever relevant and possible. This might include the inter-confessional running of educational institutions such as colleges or schools for the handicapped, and cooperation wherever possible; joint work for the alleviation of illiteracy; joint preparation and publication of Christian literature; and the sharing of facilities on university campuses, for youth centres, and in new industrial areas and housing estates.

c) Discussion and Dialogue

- (107) There should be in all regions some form of continuing interchurch discussions by official joint delegations and local groups on the various ways in which our two traditions may move closer together and on the forms of unity into which God may be calling us. These should include consideration of the theological convictions which may still tend to separate us (e.g. the proclamation of the Gospel, the historic episcopate).
- (108) It is our hope that our present discussions will have elucidated many of the issues relevant to our relationships. We submit our report in the hope that it may be made available to all our member Churches and contribute to closer fellowship among us in Christ our Lord.

#### IV. PERSONAL NOTES BY THE TWO CHAIRMEN

##### A. Personal Note by the Anglican Chairman

However close and intimate has been the fellowship in a joint consultation such as ours - and it has indeed been close - the time comes when the joint report has to be submitted to each constituency separately. In order that its message may be clearly understood and fairly considered the highlights of the report can be pointed out, and in this note I am trying to do that for Anglicans, using the language and idioms to which they have become accustomed.

In the report, an attempt is made to widen the scope of the phrase, and hence of the meaning of "apostolic succession". Anglicans would not, if asked, have imagined that the only meaning of that phrase was succession of ministers by ordination of bishops in the "succession". They would have wanted to include faith in the apostolic gospel (expressed in the Creeds), acceptance of the scriptures (which anchored the patristic church to the apostolic church) and the acceptance of the gospel sacraments. But as a fact of history these other forms of continuity (focussed in the Lambeth Quadrilateral) have been taken as marks of "catholicity" rather than of "apostolicity". The adjective "apostolic" happens to have been attached to the continuity of the ministry. It can only be widened in its application by a conscious effort to merge apostolicity into catholicity, and vice versa.

In Anglican relations with Lutherans special importance has been placed on the presence or absence of episcopal succession in various branches of Lutheranism. Much common ground in other matters has always been recognised. But since 1662 at least the Anglican Churches have normally insisted on episcopal ordination as a necessary basis for communio in sacris. See e.g. the Preface to the Ordinal, 1662: "No man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful Bishop, Priest, or Deacon in the Church of England, or suffered to execute any of the said functions, except he be called, tried, examined, and admitted thereunto, according to the form hereafter following, or hath had formerly Episcopal Consecration or Ordination." There have been all kinds of exceptions and variations, but the basic norm has not been in doubt. So it has happened that the Church of England (for instance) gradually entered into full communion with the Church of Sweden in the sense that from 1828 to 1954 successive steps were taken until, in the latter year, communicants of the Swedish Church were given an unqualified right of entry to Anglican communions in England. Members of the Church of Finland received virtually the same permission in 1935 (with some limitations in the decisions of the Lower House of the Canterbury Con-

vocations). Denmark, Norway and Iceland (not having "the succession") were given in 1954 what may be called "hospitality rights" - rather different in kind from rights springing out of the status of the home church concerned.

The theology and ecclesiology underlying Anglican thought and practice in these matters has become the subject of many inevitable questions. A few can be mentioned.

(a) It is seen more and more to be an accident of history (i.e. something that depended upon the availability or otherwise of Reformed Bishops in good standing with their monarchs in the sixteenth century) that in modern times Sweden and Finland find themselves on one side in the matter of the succession, and the other Lutheran Churches on the other. Neither the Churches of Sweden and Finland, nor those of the other countries concerned, wish this one matter to be decisive in their relations with us. They rather stress their common obedience to the Gospel as they saw it in the sixteenth century, which led to them all having a Reformed ministry, whether episcopal or otherwise.

(b) The extent of "the spread" of the succession in Lutheran Churches is very difficult to define. It is fairly easy to assert which Churches possess it. It is not nearly so easy to assert which Churches do not possess it.

(c) It is clear that owing to the size and theological self-confidence of the Lutheran Churches any kind of "bargaining" on behalf of Anglican views of episcopacy is inappropriate and would certainly be unfruitful. Oecumenical relations have to be settled between the churches as they are. This does not preclude either church from observing tendencies already at work in the other, which may indicate a likely growing together and mutual sharing of theological insights and historical benefits.

(d) A clearer understanding of the pluralist nature of New Testament Christianity (especially in relation to the ministry) makes all claims to exclusiveness embarrassing to maintain. Hocker's objection to presbyterian exclusiveness in the sixteenth century can easily be turned on Anglicans, if they press their views of episcopacy with the like rigidity.

There is a great difference between setting up "a united church" and setting up new relations with existing churches, which in many parts of the world (not in all) are geographically and nationally separated. The rules for courteous and Christian relationships are not identical with those which must govern organic union. A greater flexibility is possible in the former situation than in the latter.

The acceptance of the possibility of full inter-communion (a phrase which itself is capable of many gradations of meaning) with churches which have varying degrees of attachment to the apostolic succession in the traditional

Catholic or Anglican understanding of those words, need not imply the slightest retreat on the Anglican side from a firm attachment to it. Among Anglicans there are, and will be, variations in the theological understanding of "the succession", but as an agreed rule of practice it is still universal in the Anglican world. Anglicans will retain it, in the hope that one day it will be acceptable to all Christians, and as a means of grace which they, for their part, intend, with God's help, never to lose. They need not, however, make it the sole touchstone of ecumenical fellowship with churches holding a different set of priorities. Detailed questions as to the exact implications of inter-communion will demand different answers in different circumstances. Conscience must always be respected, and by both sides. But our delegation was clear that we ought now to greet the Lutheran churches as real sister-churches in the family-life of Christ's universal Church. This is the call and challenge of our Report.

April, 1972.

Ronald Leicester.

B. Personal Note by the Lutheran Chairman

In conversations between separated Churches statements about points of agreement and points of disagreement have often played an important role.

This comparative method may help the participants in such conversations to a better understanding of the historic background and particular tradition of other Churches. But this method is not sufficient in any genuine ecumenical conversation. For in order to be properly evaluated on both sides all points of agreement and disagreement must be examined and judged in the light of a supreme authority accepted by both parties. Only if the points of agreement are examined and judged in the light of such a common, supreme authority will the two Churches be able to decide whether those agreements manifest their common faith in the same Lord or only conceal a basic disunity. And only if the points of disagreement are examined and judged in the light of that same supreme authority may the two Churches decide whether those disagreements are only "adiaphora" which do not preclude a growing unity between them, or whether they are manifestations of an essential disunity which presents a permanent obstacle to any complete unity between the two Churches. Expressed in the traditional Lutheran language: The only necessary condition to full Church fellowship is agreement on the truth of the Gospel (CA VII).



In this report Lutherans and Anglicans have together stated that both Churches are at one in accepting the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the sufficient, inspired and authoritative record and witness, prophetic and apostolic, to God's revelation in Jesus Christ, and that Jesus Christ, God and man, born, crucified, risen and ascended for the salvation of mankind is the living Word of God in whom all Scriptures find their focus and fulfilment. This statement is not to be understood as expressing only one point of agreement among many others, but it describes that basic criterion, accepted by both Churches, which alone makes their conversation possible and meaningful, not only when "agreements" are stated, but also when remaining "disagreements", e.g. concerning the historic episcopate, are expressed.

To Lutherans this fundamental unity about the "sources of authority", expressed in the use of the same Scriptures and Creeds and in the recognition by both sides of the heritage from the sixteenth century Reformation, not only in theology, but above all in worship, is of decisive importance.

The fact that points of disagreement as to the meaning and importance of the historic episcopate still persist cannot diminish the value of that fundamental unity, but it may lead the Lutheran Churches to reconsider their traditional conviction that all questions of Church order, including the historic episcopate, are "adiaphora", of secondary importance. If this is so, does it necessarily mean, that all forms of Church order equally serve the Church's witness to the truth of the Gospel? Is the absence of the historic episcopate in some Lutheran Churches only motivated by faithfulness to the Gospel, or have other motives been at work? In considering such questions the Lutheran Churches do not abandon their conviction that the true preaching of the Gospel and the right administration of the sacraments cannot be linked up with one specific type of Church order, but they submit the conviction to a re-examination in the light of the Gospel, expecting that the Anglican Churches will do the same with regard to their traditional conception of the historic episcopate.

Among various possible ways in which the distinctive doctrines of the two Churches may be reexamined, Lutherans should be committed to continuing conversations with Anglicans as one way. In such conversations the commitment to the Gospel also needs further exploration. Although the present conversations affirm the importance of justification and forgiveness of sins, future conversations should say more clearly and fully that the Gospel proclaims the unmerited grace, whereby God declares men righteous through faith in Jesus Christ. By elucidating the doctrine of the Gospel the authority of the Scriptures

will become understood more specifically and differences in teaching will be judged more accurately.

If both Churches maintain their fundamental unity in the recognition of the same supreme authority, then all unsettled disagreements remain only to be overcome through fresh obedience to that supreme authority. By no means should they be allowed to remain, unchallenged and undisputed, as permanent obstacles to that growing unity which both Churches recognize as the will and command of their one Lord.

April, 1972.

Gunnar Hultgren.