

A REPORT TO JOINT ASSEMBLY

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and the Anglican Church of Canada

The Joint Anglican-Lutheran Commission, 2007-2013

Lutheran Members (during the six year term):

Michael Pryse (Co-Chair)	Allan Jorgenson
Ilze Kuplens-Ewart	Jim Halmarson
Brita Chell	Pamela Harrington
Judy Kochendorfer	Doug Reble (NCC)
Paul Johnson (Staff) (2007-2009)	André Lavergne (Staff) (2010-2013)

Anglican Members (during the six year term):

Peter Wall (Co-Chair)	Colin Johnson
Richard Leggett	Natasha Klukach
Eunice McMahon	Dale Gillman
Terry Dance	Mary Conliffe
Cynthia Haines-Turner (COGS)	
Alyson Barnett-Cowan (Staff) (2007-2009)	Bruce Myers (Staff) (2012-2013)

Ecumenical Partners: Sandra Beardsall (UCC)
Gerald Hobbs (UCC)
Mark Lewis (PCC)
Jon Perez (LECC)

The members of the Joint Commission are particularly pleased to be able to offer this report to our first Joint Assembly – ***Together For the Love of the World!*** This very gathering is one of the ‘fruits’ of the work which the commission does, and we are so excited that our two churches, continuing to live into their full-communication relationship, are meeting together.

The Joint Anglican Lutheran Commission was established as part of the Waterloo Declaration, signed 12 years ago this month (July 2001). The Commission exists to: *nurture our growth in communion, to coordinate the implementation of this (Waterloo) declaration, and to report to the decision making bodies of both our churches.* As the Commission comes to the end of its second six-year mandate, we look forward to the work which lies ahead and share the pride of both our churches in all that has been accomplished.

Members of the Commission are deeply moved by and indebted to the outstanding leadership given to our work and to both our Churches by our national leaders: Bishop Susan Johnson and Archbishop Fred

Hiltz. Not only are the National Bishop and the Primate close friends and colleagues, offering mutual support and prayer for each other; they also share a strong commitment to our full-communion relationship and model the kind of collaboration and cooperation which serve both our churches, and the world we serve, so well.

Since 2007, the Commission has met eleven times (once by teleconference) and has both welcomed and sent members to the Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee (LECC), which serves a similar function with The Episcopal Church (TEC) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). We have been pleased to welcome Jon Perez, an Episcopal priest serving a joint Episcopal-Lutheran parish in California, as our 'regular' partner at our Canadian meetings. During the last triennium, in particular, we have also recognized the time pressures of those cross-appointees serving on the National Church Council and on the Council of General Synod, and have included them as 'corresponding' members of the Commission, with the hope that each will attend one Commission meeting in each biennial or triennial cycle.

We have been very well served by a number of staff members, several of whom have moved to other positions. Both Bruce Myers (ACC) and André Lavergne (ELCIC), our current staff support members, bring great wisdom and deep experience to our table. Former staff members have gone on to serve as the Anglican Communion's Director for Unity, Faith and Order (Alyson Barnett-Cowan); (Lutheran) Dean of St. John's Cathedral, Diocese of Rupert's Land (Paul Johnson); and Program Executive for North America, World Council of Churches (Natasha Klukach). Our churches have been well served, indeed.

The work of the Commission focuses both on local expressions of our relationship as well as involving itself in national and international matters. We have followed with interest the work of the Anglican Lutheran International Commission (ALIC), of which our Primate, Archbishop Hiltz, has been the Anglican Co-Chair and we are very pleased that our own Bishop Michael Pryse, Lutheran Co-Chair of our Commission, has been appointed by the Lutheran World Federation as Lutheran Co-Chair of the next ALIC. Our work together reflects the Commission's membership from across the country, ordained and lay, including representation from our theological colleges.

We would underscore the following **ten** highlights of the Commission's life over these past years:

- 1. Celebration of the 10th Anniversary of Full-Communion:** 2011 marked the tenth anniversary of the signing of both *The Waterloo Declaration (Canada)* and *Called to Common Mission (USA)*. A joint celebration took place in Fort Erie, Ontario, and in Buffalo, New York, involving the leadership of the four heads of North American Lutheran and Anglican churches: Presiding Bishop Jefferts Schori and Archbishop Hiltz of TEC and the ACC, respectively; and National Bishop Johnson and Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson of the ELCIC and ELCA, respectively. It was a true cross-border, concurrent, full-communion celebration with Canadian and American preachers and presiders *and* Anglican and Lutheran preachers and presiders at each service.
- 2. Regular Meetings of the Four Heads of Churches:** December of 2013 will mark the fourth annual meeting between the heads of the ELCIC, the ACC, TEC, and the ELCA. These meetings are important conversations between executive heads of our churches and have resulted in

specific suggestions and challenges to both JALC (Canada) and to LECC (USA). We are very pleased that these conversations have been initiated and encourage our leaders to continue them.

- 3. Waterloo Directory:** We have produced a comprehensive directory of *Waterloo* congregations and parishes across the country. Some of these are joint Anglican-Lutheran parishes; some are Lutheran parishes being served by Anglican clergy, and vice-versa; some are two congregations sharing one building, still others are multi-denominational congregations in which Lutherans and Anglicans are a part. As well, there are new congregations, emerging from Lutherans and Anglicans praying, learning, and walking a pilgrimage together in new and exciting ways. This resource is an invaluable aid to those who are involved in these ministries and also provides helpful advice and contact information. It is available on-line and through both national offices.
- 4. Confirmation Guidelines:** The Commission continues to work with the churches at different levels on matters of ministry and practice. Regular meetings of the Anglican House of Bishops and the Lutheran Conference of Bishops (meeting together once a year) hear from the Commission as do the national Faith, Worship and Ministry Committee (ACC) and the Programme Committee for Worship (ELCIC). During these past years, we have been developing guidelines for Confirmation in both churches and, while our practices and understandings differ, we continue to work on ways of handling these and similar issues in parishes and congregations, and look forward to having agreed upon guidelines in the near future.
- 5. Calendars/Cycle of Prayer:** We have developed and put into use a national Sunday full-communion Cycle of Prayer, inviting members of both churches to pray regularly for each other and for our churches' respective ministries. Work is also underway for inclusion of the Lutheran calendar of saints and festivals in the Anglican Desk Diary in 2014 and also for a fully inclusive wall calendar for 2015.
- 6. Ecumenical Dialogues:** The Anglican Church of Canada is in a formal dialogue with the United Church of Canada. The Anglican membership on that dialogue is five people, one of whom, Gordon Jensen, is a member of the ELCIC. We believe that if we are in active conversation with another church, then our full-communion partner should be present. The Commission strongly lauds this approach to our lives together and works with church leadership to ensure that we live into this relationship fully. The ELCIC also has a partner on the Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue of Canada in the person of Matthew Anderson.
- 7. Cross-border work with LECC:** We have strengthened our bonds with our American brothers and sisters and the Lutheran Episcopal Coordinating Committee. We have sent representatives to their meetings, with one of our Co-Chairs attending their meeting in January 2008 in Washington, D.C., and three of our members attended their 2012 meeting in Chicago. As well, Fr. Jon Perez of LECC has attended several of JALC's meetings. In February of this year, we were pleased to welcome all the members of LECC to Niagara Falls, Ontario for a fully joint meeting

of our two bodies. We look forward to meeting, again as a whole group, in January of 2015 in the US.

- 8. Joint Meeting of COGS/NCC:** In March of 2011, a joint meeting of the Council of General Synod and the National Church Council took place in Mississauga, ON. Long a dream of the Commission, this meeting brought together executive members of both churches to meet each other, to work together and to do their separate work as well. It was a very successful meeting and the Commission looks forward to more of the same. It also laid the groundwork for this exciting Joint Assembly.

- 9. Full-Communion Visit to Jerusalem:** At the urging of international bodies and at the invitation of the local churches, the Primate and the National Bishop, along with the Commission Co-Chairs, travelled to Jerusalem in May of 2012 to meet with representatives of both Lutheran and Anglican churches of the area and to encourage and assist with the establishment of a Commission to develop a deeper relationship between our churches in that land. It was a highly successful visit, and we are gratified to report that the Commission has been established in Jerusalem and the Holy Land and that we are receiving regular updates on their work.

- 10. Joint Assembly 2013:** We indeed are gathered in Ottawa *together for the love of the world* and we on the Commission could not be happier. A significant commitment of The Waterloo Declaration is *'to hold joint meetings of national regional, and local decision-making bodies wherever practicable.'* Thus, we are pleased indeed that this important joint assembly is taking place, is witnessing to the world, and is changing each of us. This marks a singular achievement for both our churches and for the Church as one.

Signs for the Future:

We are excited about the future for our churches and for the Commission. We note with great interest and pride that the Synod Office of the Diocese of Rupert's Land and the Synod Office of the Manitoba Northern Ontario Synod of the ELCIC have moved into shared offices together. We applaud this commitment to Waterloo and look forward to encouraging others across the land to consider initiatives like this. We on the Commission also hope that our churches' national offices will perhaps look at similar possibilities. We are encouraged by the meetings of the Four Heads of Churches and look forward both to supporting those gatherings and to receiving advice and perhaps even some 'marching orders' from the four involved!

We know that the work of full-communication is, first and foremost, *relational* and *local*. Thus we are strongly committed to helping Anglicans and Lutherans across the country reach out to local congregations and parishes and to find ways to work easily and well together. The continued use of on-line resources, from Bible study and prayer guidelines through to the effective use of the *Waterloo Directory* all can help to sow the seeds of flourishing local relationships of growth and nurture. We are much aware of the pressures affecting both our churches in terms of resources – we believe that we can find new and exciting ways of *being* the church in this new world, and by being the church *together*.

There is a tendency, we note, amongst institutions such as ours to look *inward* in tough times; our task as Christians is to keep looking *outward* – this must be our focus. The ways in which we can work together and the witness to God’s mission that we can live out together are nothing short of miraculous.

Using the original commitments in *The Waterloo Declaration* as our foundation, the Commission commits, in our future work, to:

- **Support and strengthen** our work together in advocacy, social justice, and government relations.
- **Continue to find ways** to share resources – local offices, joint staff ventures, shared print material.
- **Encourage and strengthen** the joint work already being done by Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR) and the Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF).
- **Support and encourage** the continued collaborative relationship as lived out in the National Worship Conference and the Canadian Lutheran Anglican Youth gathering.
- **Support** both churches in restructuring and reallocation of resources through the best ways of working together, knowing that together we are stronger than apart, and acknowledging our common affirmation of the Lund Principle.
- **Encourage** the ongoing work in both churches (particularly through the *Conference of Bishops* and the *House of Bishops*; through *Faith, Worship and Ministry* and the *Programme Committee for Worship*) in further developing our understanding of the ministry of all the baptized.
- **Continue** the work being done towards a common understanding of diaconal ministry.
- **Strengthen** our significant relationship with the Lutheran Episcopal Coordinating Committee of the USA, and **support** the important continuing relationship between the four Heads of Churches.
- **Maintain and strengthen** the *Waterloo Directory*, ensuring that it is a current and comprehensive resource for our church.
- **Encourage** our churches, at all levels, to embrace the new ‘norm’ which calls us to work together with our partners in every way possible.
- **Support** the deepening friendship and close working relationship between the National Bishop and the Primate and encourage this as a model for regional and local leadership.
- **Encourage and develop** joint pastoral letters, study materials, and reflections for use in both (indeed in all four) churches.
- **Encourage and advocate** for another Joint Meeting of the Council of General Synod and the National Church Council during the coming triennium **and** to look ahead for another full joint assembly as soon as can be made possible within our different frequency of national gatherings.

- **Acknowledge and encourage** deep understanding that our full-communion relationship is but one facet of Christian unity and that we need to model this in our relationships with other faith communities as well.
- **Encourage** and provide resources for the development of meaningful relationships between local parishes and congregations.

Resolution for Joint Assembly: *That this assembly confirm and support the work of the Joint Anglican Lutheran Commission and affirm its continued work, with both the size and membership to be determined by each church.*

We are mindful of, and grateful for, the deep companionship and commitment which so many have demonstrated as we work together: for the staff of both our national offices, for the leadership of Bishop Susan and Archbishop Fred, for our fellow commissioners and their good humour, dedication, and willingness to work so hard. We are excited about the next phase of our work, and look forward to continuing on the journey—**together for the love of the world.**

Respectfully submitted by Co-Chairs:

Bishop Michael Pryse

Dean Peter Wall