

January 2022. This proposed agreement has been authorized for further consideration across our churches by elected leaders in the Moravian Church in Canada, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and the Anglican Church of Canada. For additional information about this document, contact

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Moravian Church
in Canada



The Anglican Church of Canada

One Flock, One Shepherd: Lutherans, Anglicans, and Moravians — Called to Walk Together in Full Communion

Introduction

1. In John 17, Jesus, the Good Shepherd of the faith, prays that all those who believe in the Gospel will be completely one. By so praying, he teaches those who follow in his way that it is through the witness of their diversity in unity, and unity in diversity, that the world may come to know God's love more deeply, and to perceive Christ's message of reconciliation and peace more visibly. In recent decades, many churches have begun to see renewed signs of the fulfillment of Jesus' words as they unite in common witness and loving service in response to the joys, hopes, challenges, and needs of local, regional, and global communities.
2. The Moravian, Lutheran, and Anglican traditions are each historic communities of faith in Jesus Christ which have their roots in the ancient common tradition of the apostolic Church. They were also each shaped in many ways by the reforming impulses of 15th and 16th century Europe. At various times in their early histories, they found important points of contact and collaboration. The proto-reformers John Wycliffe and Jan Hus had many similar convictions about the need to root out corruption in the Church and renew its evangelistic witness, and they would mutually impact later reform movements in the British Isles, Bohemian lands, and elsewhere. The work of both figures would influence the thought of a young Martin Luther, who would carry it further. Luther saw the early Moravian Brethren as close colleagues, and there was a considerable exchange of ideas and support between both groups in the 16th and 17th centuries. Under persecution, Moravians would later seek refuge in reformation-era England, and the Church of England of that time undertook several campaigns to provide these exiled Moravian communities with ecclesial and material support as recognized protestant-episcopal siblings in Christ. Other interesting intersections between the three churches would occur in subsequent centuries and up to the present.
3. Today, Moravians, Lutherans, and Anglicans find themselves as neighbours in various parts of their respective global communions. The largest concentrations of the three are in Tanzania, South Africa, parts of Central America, England, and North America. In Canada, the Moravian Church in North America, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, and the Anglican Church of Canada have congregations that live and minister alongside of one another in the greater Edmonton area, the greater Calgary area, West Toronto, and the east coast of Newfoundland and Labrador. Local ministry collaborations have developed between these communities to varying extents and degrees, and increasingly so in recent years.
4. These emerging grassroots connections, along with a growing sense of the need for churches to walk faithfully together as disciples into an uncertain future, have raised to our shared ecumenical consciousness a call to seek full communion and deeper ministry partnerships together according to the prayer of our common Savior.

5. We do not hear this call alone. In several places in recent decades, the Lutheran, Moravian, and Anglican traditions have already found ways to enhance and formalise their relationships as a result of several decades of thorough dialogue on key theological issues. The 1995 *Fetter Lane Common Statement* enabled the Church of England and the Moravian Church in Great Britain to mutually recognize one another as churches holding the apostolic faith, and to formally covenant together to share in sacramental life and common mission and witness as fully as possible.¹ In 1999, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America established a relationship of full communion with the Northern and Southern Provinces of the Moravian Church in North America through the declaration *Following Our Shepherd into Full Communion*.² These provinces of the Moravian Church also came into a full communion partnership with the US-based Episcopal Church through the affirmation of *Finding Our Delight in the Lord* in 2011.³

6. The Anglican Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada have been in full communion since 2001 through the *Waterloo Declaration*.⁴ Since that time, the two churches have grown closer together and pursued an increased sharing of common life, witness, and ministry at all levels. In 2019, the two *Waterloo* churches were able to take further steps with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the US-based Episcopal Church, expanding their relationships into a cross-border full communion partnership that has since come to be known as *Churches Beyond Borders*.⁵ This cross-continental Anglican-Lutheran relationship continues to enlarge the horizons of ecumenical imagination, including the possibility of Canadian Anglicans and Lutherans deepening connections with the full communion partners of our American Lutheran and Episcopal friends. In Canada, it is the same Northern Province of the Moravian Church in North America which has oversight, through a Canadian District, for the Moravian congregations that live and minister here.

7. Commitment 9 of the *Waterloo Declaration* calls on the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and the Anglican Church of Canada to draw on their full communion relationship as a basis to “continue to work together for the full visible unity of the Church of God.” This ecumenical commitment is consistent with Moravian convictions about the centrality of seeking the unity of the Church as found in the foundational document known as *The Ground of Unity*.⁵ In a spirit of thanksgiving for what God has already accomplished in each of our churches in drawing us towards this vision of unity, and with confidence and hope for what God has prepared for the whole Church, we believe it is time to take another step along the path where our One Shepherd desires to lead us – into a future of communion that becomes ever more full.

8. Therefore, we, the Anglican Church of Canada, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, and the Moravian Church in North America proceed to state the following acknowledgments, affirmations, declarations, commitments, and vision.

Acknowledgments

9. Building upon on the foundations of existing covenants and full communion agreements between the Church of England, the Moravian Church in Great Britain, The Episcopal Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and Moravian Church in North America, and drawing on the content of these and other international dialogue texts between our three churches, we acknowledge the following:

¹ “The Fetter Lane Common Statement,” in *Anglican-Moravian Conversations* (Church House Publishing, 1996).

² “Following Our Shepherd into Full Communion” (1999), accessible at: http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Following_Our_Shepherd_To_Full_Communion.pdf

³ “Finding Our Delight in the Lord” (2011), accessible at: https://www.episcopalchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/07/eir_finding_our_delight_official_text.pdf#:~:text=participated%20in%20this%20dialogue%20that%20Finding%20Our%20Delight,The%20Episcopal%20Church,%20the%20Northern%20Province%20of%20the

⁴ “Called to Common Mission: The Waterloo Declaration,” accessible at <https://elcic.ca/What-We-Believe/Waterloo-Declaration.cfm> 5
“Memorandum of Mutual Recognition of Relations of Full Communion,” accessible at <https://gs2019.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/Memorandum-of-Mutual-Recognition-JALC-LECC-Rev.-Feb-26-2019.pdf>

⁵ *The Ground of Unity*, accessible at: <https://www.moravian.org/bcm/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/05/New-Ground-of-the-Unity-Layout-2020-85x11.pdf>

- a. That in each church the Word of God is preached and looked to as containing all things necessary for our salvation, even as our respective reception of the Gospel always requires renewal and reform.⁶
- b. That our churches share in the common confession of the apostolic faith as summarized in the Nicene Creed and witnessed to in our subsequent foundation and confessional texts.⁷
- c. That the sacraments of Baptism and the Supper of the Lord/Holy Communion are carried out in each church in manners that stand in accordance with the institution of the Lord Jesus.⁸
- d. That the whole people of God are called to participate in God’s mission.⁹
- e. That personal, collegial, and communal oversight (episcopate) is embodied and exercised in our three churches in a variety of forms; and that the episcopal office is valued and maintained in each of our churches as a visible sign expressing and serving the Church’s unity and continuity in apostolic life, mission, and ministry.¹¹
- f. That one another’s ordained ministries are given by God as instruments of divine grace and as possessing not only the inward call of the Spirit, but also Christ’s commission through his Body the Church; and that these ministries are the gifts of God’s Spirit to equip the whole people of God for the work of ministry.¹⁰

Affirmations

10. In the light of the above acknowledgments, we make the following affirmations:

- a. All three churches affirm one another’s baptisms as sacramental signs of the washing away of sins and incorporation into the One Body of Christ.
- b. We affirm one another’s celebrations of Holy Communion as the means of remembrance and participation in Christ and a sharing in the grace of his life, death, and resurrection.
- c. We affirm one another’s expressions of the ministry of all the baptized in the power of the Holy Spirit, seeing this as the fundamental basis of the Church’s witness and mission. We give thanks for the diverse ways that different kinds of lay ministries build up the Body of Christ in each of our respective traditions.
- d. The Anglican Church of Canada affirms the full authenticity of the ordained ministries of bishops and presbyters/pastors presently existing within the Moravian Church in North America. We recognise its presbyters as priests and pastors in the Church of God, ordained to ministries of Word and Sacrament. We recognise its bishops as signs of continuity and unity in apostolic faith, ordained for life service to a ministry of episcopate and the historic episcopate on behalf of regional and local churches within their church and for the whole Church of God.

⁶ *The Fetter Lane Common Statement*, 28a, 55a.ii; *Following Our Shepherd into Full Communion*, I.1, IV.B.1; TEC Resolution 2003-A087, Explanation 3.

⁷ *The Fetter Lane Common Statement*, 28b-c, f, g-h, 55a.iii-iv; *Following Our Shepherd into Full Communion*, I.1; TEC Resolution 2003-A087, Explanation 3.

⁸ *The Fetter Lane Common Statement*, 28d-e, 55a.ii; *Following Our Shepherd into Full Communion*, I.2, IV.B.3; TEC Resolution 2003-A087, Explanation 3.

⁹ *The Fetter Lane Common Statement*, 28i; *Following Our Shepherd into Full Communion*, IV.C.3; *Finding Our Delight in the Lord*, 14-15. 11 *The Fetter Lane Common Statement*, 28j, 34-48, 55a.vi-vii; *Following Our Shepherd into Full Communion*, I.3, IV.C.3; *Finding Our Delight in the Lord*, 20-29).

¹⁰ *The Fetter Lane Common Statement*, 28i, 29-31; *Following Our Shepherd into Full Communion*, IV.C.1-3; *Finding Our Delight in the Lord*, 16-19).

e. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada affirms the full authenticity of the ordained ministries of bishops and presbyters/pastors presently existing within the Moravian Church in North America. We recognise its presbyters as priests and pastors in the Church of God, ordained to ministries of Word and Sacrament. We recognise its bishops as signs of continuity and unity in apostolic faith, ordained for life service to a ministry of episcopate and the historic episcopate on behalf of regional and local churches within their church and for the whole Church of God.

f. The Moravian Church in North America affirms the full authenticity of the ordained ministries of bishops and presbyters/pastors presently existing within the Anglican Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. We recognise their priests and pastors as priests and pastors in the Church of God, ordained to ministries of Word and Sacrament. We recognise their bishops as signs of continuity and unity in apostolic faith, ordained for life service to a ministry of episcopate and the historic episcopate over the jurisdictional areas of the Anglican Church of Canada and Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada in which they preside and for the whole Church of God.¹¹

g. All three churches affirm one another's expressions of diaconal ministry as a sign of the Church's vocation to Christlike servanthood and the role of prophetic witness in the world and to the Church. We thus understand that deacons of each of the churches are ordained for service to their communities as a distinct vocation in ministry.¹²

Declaration

11. On the basis of these acknowledgments and affirmations, we joyfully declare the Anglican Church of Canada, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, and the Moravian Church in North America to be in full communion, and extend to one another the requisite reciprocity and relationship which this entails.

Commitments

12. As churches in full communion, we now commit ourselves:

- a. To welcome members of our churches to receive as appropriate the pastoral and sacramental ministrations of one another's churches with complete hospitality.
- b. To welcome persons ordained in any of our churches to the office of presbyter/priest/pastor to serve, by invitation of the local ordinary 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.
- c. To work towards a common understanding of diaconal ministry, and with collaboration in diakonia to the fullest extent possible in accordance with any regulations which may from time to time be in force.

¹¹ Moravian bishops do not have geographically defined episcopal jurisdictions in the way that Lutheran and Anglican bishops do. In that sense, every Moravian bishop is a bishop for the entirety of the global communion ("the worldwide Moravian Unity"). This means that not every region where there are Moravian congregations would have a bishop who is proximately resident in that area. In practice, however, the Moravian communities in a particular place would typically have a pastoral relationship with a particular bishop or bishops, and would be visited by that bishop or bishops as needs and circumstances in the local context call for.

¹² Diaconal ministry is an area where there is diversity among us. For example, the Anglican and Lutheran churches understand diaconal ministry as a ministry of the Word and service, whereas Moravian deacons are ordained to preside in a ministry of Word and Sacrament. Lutherans ordain pastors directly, and normally ordain deacons to permanent offices of that distinct ministry. Moravians and Anglicans retain the practice of sequential ordination to the diaconate prior to ordination to the presbyterate. Some Anglican deacons are ordained to permanent offices of that distinct ministry. While these kinds of diversity of understanding and practice entail that a complete transferability of diaconal ministers and ministries between the three churches is not possible at this time, deacons of each church could and should still be invited by appropriate authorities to share those many aspects of their ministries and gifts within the other partner churches according to the full extent that existing provisions in those other churches allow.

- d. To invite one another's bishops to attend and participate as appropriate in the laying on of hands at the ordination of bishops as a sign of the unity and continuity of the Church, and, as far as practically possible, to invite the members and clergy of one another's churches to attend and participate as appropriate in the ordination services of each church.
- e. To consult with one another regarding developments in our understanding of the ministry of all the baptized.
- f. To encourage as appropriate consultation and collaboration among members of our churches at all levels and to facilitate learning and exchange of ideas and information on theological, pastoral, and mission matters.
- g. To establish a Trilateral Commission, with appropriate Lutheran, Anglican, Moravian and Indigenous membership, to nurture our growth in communion, to coordinate the implementation of this Declaration, and to report to the decision-making bodies of each of our churches.¹³
- h. To continue to work together for the full visible unity of the whole Church of God.

Vision

13. In addition to these specific areas of commitment, we also raise the following elements of a future vision of the fruits of full communion.
- a. In consultation and relationship with Indigenous expressions of faith in Jesus and the Gospel, to draw from the strength of our partnership and rededicate our churches to the ongoing responsibility of seeking further healing and reparation in relationships with First Nations, Inuit, and Metis peoples in wider Canadian society, and to the related work of systemic decolonisation in the three churches.
 - b. To recognize and respond to the way that the reconciliation of past separations between churches is both interconnected with and a calling to deeper commitment in the wider mending of relationships across other lines of human division, exclusion, and hostility.
 - c. To embrace together a common effort to promote transformative discipleship that empowers our members to join courageously and faithfully in God's transforming mission for the life of the world.
 - d. To encourage the formulation of local ministry covenants for common work in mission and ministry between trios of Moravian, Lutheran, and Anglican congregations in geographically proximate places.
 - e. To endeavor to undertake no new initiative in ministry on our own without first exploring ways that it could be done more faithfully together in at least a tripartite or bipartite partnership.

Conclusion

14. We rejoice in our Declaration as an expression of the visible unity of our churches in the one Body of Christ. We are ready to be co-workers with God in whatever tasks of mission serve the Gospel and the Ministry of Reconciliation. We give glory to God for the gift of unity already ours in Christ, and we pray for the fuller realisation of this gift in the entire Church.¹⁴

¹³ The existing Joint Anglican Lutheran Commission (JALC) is replaced the Trilateral Commission.

¹⁴ Although not directly indicated throughout, numerous elements of this declaration explicitly draw upon forms and phrasing from the 2001 *Waterloo Declaration*. This is done intentionally create a family resemblance between both agreements, and to witness to their continuity.



**Moravian Church
in Canada**



The Anglican Church of Canada

A Family Reunion

1. All those who are baptized into Christ become members of one Body (1 Corinthians 12:13). This is a process of sanctification and transformation by which the Holy Spirit of God draws diverse people and groups together as fellow children of God and common co-heirs of a spiritual ‘Kin-dom’ that is not bound to the worldly divisions that otherwise try to keep them apart (Romans 8:15-17). In other words, the Creator of all chooses to make us relatives, siblings, and a family in faith – even when other powers and principalities of our time might try to have us think and act otherwise.
2. Like many relatives, things like distance and time can sometimes cause us to forget that we are members of one another. Differences and disagreements may even lead to estrangement and separation. However, through the graces of truth-telling, confession, taking responsibility, and forgiveness, sometimes these family rifts can be healed.
3. The branches of the family tree of Jesus Christ which today bear the names of Moravian, Lutheran, and Anglican know something of this experience. Although the divisions of these communities may not have had a dramatic moment of broken relationship among them in the same way as they have with certain others, still the casual indifference or apathetic ignorance that has grown up between them over centuries means they have lived much of their histories at arms-length – perhaps not overtly hostile, but neither enjoying the full blessings of sibling companionship.
4. Family reunions are a time to get together and re-tell the old stories that have served to knit people together in love; they are occasions to tell each other where we have been and what we have been up to in the years that have intervened. As the various expressions of the Moravian, Lutheran, and Anglican traditions begin to take steps to intentionally walk together as relatives once more in this country known today as Canada (and indeed across the undivided continent known to many Indigenous and First Nations Peoples as Turtle Island), there is a need to do the same.
5. What follows here are a series of historical snapshots of where these three churches have come from in the past and what they look like today. They are designed to remind us of our common ancestry even after generations of partly losing touch, and to inspire us with the possibilities before us as we prepare to share our gifts together as siblings in Christ once again.

The Early Moravian Story

6. The Moravian Church, also known as the *Unitas Fratrum*, or Church of the Brethren, traces its origins to Czech lands during the 14th century, and specifically to the early reformer Jan Hus (1372-1415). Inspired by the spirit of their founder, the “Hussites” sought to call the Catholic Church of their time to greater faithfulness and holiness. In this regard, they shared many of the same convictions as their fellow reforming movements in other parts of continental Europe and England with regard to Scripture,

ministry, grace, justification, sacramental worship, and the nature and mission of the Church. All of this came, however, at a cost. Huss himself was burned at the stake as a heretic followed his condemnation by the Council of Constance in 1415, and further persecutions of those who followed his teachings during the lead up to the wider Reformation era in Europe meant that the Moravians were largely exiled from the lands of their emergence and almost disappeared entirely during the mid-1600s. The almost century between this and the early 1700s is known as the period of the “hidden seed” in Moravian history – a time when the Moravian bishops were put in jail and the ordained ministry was suppressed almost entirely, and when prayer, bible study, and singing according to the spiritual tradition of the Brethren was only really possible ‘underground’ within families and in homes.

7. The movement received a particularly important lifeline in 1722 when a small remnant of Moravian believers was invited to establish a community on the lands of Saxon Count Nicholas von Zinzendorf (1700-1760), a German pietist pastor who would eventually become a Moravian bishop. This community of Herrnhut came to serve as a rallying point, with other dispersed Moravians moving there over time. Zinzendorf also worked from Herrnhut as a home base to establish a new network with other Moravian communities in surrounding areas, as well as friendly connections with neighbouring Lutheran, Calvinist, and other Protestant church leaders. The year 1735 represents the founding of the “Renewed Moravian Unity”, from which the present-day global Moravian Church and its ministerial leadership descend.

8. After this, the Moravian Church took its place alongside the various Protestant expressions of early-Modern Europe. Though relatively small in numbers compared to some other churches, its influence was certainly significant. Moravian emphases on spiritual simplicity, collegiality in ministry, peace witness, the importance of the domestic church, and contemplative prayer were all quite widely known by Christian communities of other names. Yet, perhaps most visible of all, was the Moravian commitment to evangelisation and global mission, as, from the mid-18th century onwards the community would establish ministries in other parts of Europe, the British Isles, the Caribbean, and North America. Although surely not without some of their own misguided notions from this period about the nature of Christian missionary activity with respect to Indigenous cultures and spiritualities, the Moravians generally engaged in mission activity without the same kinds of attachments to colonial empires – a fact which gave their witness to Christ a particular form in comparison to some other established churches of the time. It is this feature of the story that has served to give the Worldwide Moravian Unity today its distinctive shape.

9. There is, of course, so much more that could be included in this sort of historical review. This small picture, however, offers the first of the outline sketches to the family portrait we are seeking to draw together again. A look at Moravians in the present will come farther along.

The Early Lutheran Story

10. The ecclesial biography of Lutheranism usually begins in the early 16th century with Martin Luther (1483-1546). In fact, the tale goes back at least as far as Jan Hus mentioned above, and the English proto-reformer John Wycliffe (1328-1384) who we will get to below. Luther gave a German voice to a long building and widespread dissatisfaction with various abuses and distortions in the Western Catholic Church. That he lived when and where he did, and had some of the academic and aristocratic connections which he had, allowed the Augustinian monk and theologian to push the movement for reform to another level. At the heart of Lutheran convictions were the emphasis on Scripture as the

normative authority in the Church, the priority of grace, justification by faith, the right administration of the sacraments instituted by Jesus, the importance of the ministry of all the baptized, and, in comparison to some other Christian communities, quite heavily conciliar and synodal expressions of church order and governance.

11. Luther's own personality and convictions, as well as the wider social and political situation within Germanic lands and in relation to the Holy Roman Empire at the time, gave what would eventually come to be called the Lutheran tradition its own special momentum and unique character. While efforts made to establish a synthesis and alliance between the dominant form of the German Reformation and other reforming movements on the European Continent and in England were largely unsuccessful, there was without a doubt a large degree of cross-pollination between the impulses that would eventually lead to the Lutheran, Moravian, and Anglican churches. Of course, this fact must also be held in tension with the fact that there were forms of inter-Protestant persecution taking place in different regions as well for long periods of time. All of this has left a mark on the history of Lutheranism as we know it today.

12. Although Luther's personal break with Roman ecclesial authority is usually marked with the Diets of Augsburg and Worms in 1518 and 1521, it would take several more decades (many of them at war) before you could speak of anything like the existence of a Lutheran Church. Yet even after the Peace of Augsburg (1555), there would still be religious and political strife between Catholics and Protestants and Protestants and Protestants for almost another hundred years. The *Augsburg Confession* (1530) and *Book of Concord* (1580) were designed to bring doctrinal unity to the Lutheran tradition which had continued to see arguments between various schools of thought and regional factions. Though not without continued points of dispute at various points since, these texts have continued to exercise an important guiding and unifying role.

13. Through the 16th and 17th centuries, Lutheranism was carried throughout central, northern, eastern, and western Europe alike. This continued into the 18th century, through colonization, evangelisation, and immigration, to North America, Africa, Asia, and South America. The way that the Lutheran tradition has come to be expressed among different people and places, and the shape of the Lutheran churches there, has of course, varied due to historical, cultural, and other influences.

14. As for many churches, the philosophical and societal shifts during the Enlightenment and Modernism, as well as the European wars of the early 20th century, have deeply impacted the continuing development of Lutheranism up to more recent times. In some cases, this has been accompanied by the splintering of churches into alternative jurisdictions claiming to be more authentic in their Lutheranism, and in other cases, it has led to unions (as in the case of the formation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada). To a large degree, mainstream Lutheranism has continued to retain its strong prophetic impulse, the emphasis on grace and its power to liberate, a special attentiveness to the cause of justice in the world, and a relatively flat (as opposed to hierarchical) and inclusive approach to the structuring of Christian community and leadership have remained deeply rooted convictions all along.

15. Again we have only been able to outline a little glimpse of the evolution of Lutheranism in centuries past, but we hope enough context for Moravians and Anglicans to see the lines of both familiarity and difference. More attention to where the Lutheran branch of the family stands today is yet to come further on in the text that follows.

The Early Anglican Story

16. John Wycliffe, a theologian of the 14th century Church of England, has sometimes been described as the “Morning Star of the Reformation” because of the way many of his writings anticipate issues that would become central themes during the debates of the 16th-century church and beyond. Wycliffe advocated Scripture and liturgical translation into the vernacular, challenged the way authority was exercised in the Church (including the papacy), and challenged aspects of the sacramental theology of the Catholicism of his day as corrupt and unhelpful to the life of faith. Jan Hus was influenced by the thought of Wycliffe, as was Martin Luther. In each case, these reformers sought not to create their own new churches, but rather deeply believed in the need for a return to the sources of Scripture and the apostolic Church – so much so that they were willing to face substantial opposition to the cause and to themselves.

17. It is important to begin the Anglican story with someone like Wycliffe so as to challenge the historical distortion that makes the emergence of a separated Church of England little more than the result of the whims of a petulant King wanting a new wife. Indeed, Wycliffe himself did not arrive at his conclusions in a vacuum in the 1300s, but rather was giving voice to certain tensions and disputes related to local cultural adaptation of the Catholic Church in England and the desired jurisdiction of the Church and Bishop of Rome. As with Luther’s era, the wider political and social climate during the reign of Henry VIII made space for certain critical and renewal impulses to gain their traction, drawing considerable inspiration from other leaders and movements from the continent. To some extent, a uniquely central focus of the English Reformation were matters of relative authority between the local, regional, and universal expressions of Church, and the degree of contextual freedom which should be possible in adapting liturgy and practice to the needs of a particular people and place.

18. In many ways it is accurate to say that these latter discussions within the Church of England never really came to an end over the next few centuries following the 16th. Periods of civil war, post-war restoration, an evangelical revival, and movements for catholic renewal saw many of the same issues reframed and refined in successive fashion. One might even suggest that they have remained unresolved to the present day – a fact which, arguably, is the source both of some of Anglicanism’s greatest weaknesses and its greatest strengths.

19. The colonial expansion of the British Empire brought the Church of England to virtually every corner of the globe during the 18th and 19th-centuries. For a church which itself began in connection with a dispute over the importance of local inculturation of the Gospel rather than mandating the forms of people and place as necessary for others, what would become the worldwide Anglican Communion has had a very poor track record of respecting the cultures and spiritualities of the people met by its missionary efforts. In many places, including Canada, its complicity in what were effectively acts of spiritual, cultural, and even material genocide represents a horrendous legacy that continues to wreak destruction and pain to the present day.

20. The establishment of churches in the many nations touched by British expansion has given the Anglican Communion today its diverse global nature in contemporary times. In the 20th century, fully more than half of those who claimed to follow Jesus in an Anglican-influenced way were not people from Western Europe, but rather the Indigenous Peoples of the regions of Africa, India, North America, the Caribbean, Asia, the Pacific Islands, and Central and South America. This demographic change

seems likely only to continue. Despite the many great failures in this regard for successive generations, it may be that now, through the leadership of these Anglican churches, that the true reflection of what it means to seek to be a ‘reformed catholic church in the language of the people’ will finally emerge, with a promise of healing and renewal for all.

21. Once more we have just barely scratched the surface on uncovering the where and what and why and who of the early narrations of Anglicanism-past. God willing, there will be better stories to come on the road ahead – a topic to which we will turn below in due course.

Plots Twisting Together Along the Way

22. Although there are parts of these three stories that certainly unfolded in distinction – if not near isolation – from one another, there were also many interesting points of connection and overlap at various points as well. It is not possible to enumerate all of them here. But a sampling of several key moments of Moravian, Lutheran, and Anglican intersection will illustrate this well, showing how certain anticipations of a family reunion have been part of each respective plot throughout.

23. In the early days of reaction to Martin Luther, it was not uncommon for him to be described as a “Bohemian” or a “Saxon Hus.” Luther had certainly read some of Jan Hus’ writings, and the 1520s through 40s saw regular communication between Lutheran and Brethren leaders. While there were certainly expressions of critique and suspicion in both directions as each group sought to define itself in relation to Roman Catholic and other Protestant detractors, there is also evidence of the way that Lutheran and Moravian convictions and points of emphasis helped each other to clarify. For example, Lutheran questions about Moravian sacramental understanding pushed the Brethren to more reflection and specificity in this regard. Moravian emphasis on discipleship and the role of the Christian community in personal holiness were taken up by Luther and Melanchthon in their catechetical and spiritual writings. Confessional documents of the Moravian Brethren show obvious interest in establishing affinity if not consensus with Lutheran statements such as the Augsburg Confession and the Smalcald Articles, and the coherence between them was recognized by Luther himself in 1535 when he wrote: “We ought also to congratulate both them [the Brethren] and ourselves that we who have been far apart from each other have been brought together, now that the well of suspicion, by which we seemed to each other to be heretics, has been removed, and that we have been led into one fold under one Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, who is blessed forever.” While the visible manifestation of this effusive statement from Luther about enjoying communion with Moravians in one fold has only taken place in recent decades, the seeds were certainly planted much earlier.

24. Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf was from Saxon lands and raised in the Lutheran tradition. His baptismal sponsor was Jacob Spener (1635-1705), the Lutheran Pietist leader, and the movement of German pietism – with its goal of bringing renewal to Lutheranism, especially in terms of promoting personal relationship to Christ and transformation of individual holiness – had a major influence on him. In the early days of Moravian settlement on his family’s estate at Herrnhut, Zinzendorf made arrangements for Lutheran pastoral ministry to serve the community with Word and Sacrament, and then in time took on this role himself. One of the reasons why today the Moravian expression of episcopal ministry has bishops who do not have a geographical jurisdiction but rather a spiritual and pastoral oversight is because of Zinzendorf’s desire not to have the Moravian Unity interpreted as a separate church in competition with the legally established Lutheran, Reformed, and Roman Catholic churches in Germany. Throughout his ministry he kept this proto-ecumenical conviction, believing that

he was not a bishop and leader of a church, but a fellow working alongside of other expressions or “tropes” of the one Church of Christ which had names like Lutheran, Reformed, Mennonite, Anglican, and so on. This spirit was often continued among the Moravians in other parts of the world, especially with regard to encouraging ecclesial cooperation in responding to the pastoral needs of German-speaking settlers in colonies such as Georgia and Pennsylvania rather than perpetuating the confessional divisions that existed between Protestant denominations in Europe. Again, we see anticipations of fruit that would begin to be more widely borne out at a future time.

25. A unique kinship between the Moravian Church and the Church of England can be identified at least as early as the 1640s. As mentioned above, this was a particularly challenging time for the Moravians, as they were being heavily persecuted in their historic homelands. Many of their leaders were forced into exile, including the Czech Moravian bishop Jan Amos Comenius (1592-1670). Comenius spent around 9-months living in England during 1641-42 and developed a longstanding relationship with a number of Anglican bishops and Archbishops. Financial support for the Moravian church in exile was undertaken in subsequent years, and many English dioceses made donations. A quote from Comenius sums up the sentiment well: “... [T]o you, our friends [the Church of England]... Take up the case of [our church] now in our stead, whether God will deem her worthy to be revived in her native land, or let her die there and bring her to life again elsewhere. Even in her death, which now seems to be approaching, you ought to love her, because in her life she has done before you, for over two centuries, with examples of faith and patience.” In the decades that followed, many future Moravian bishops and other leaders would be given scholarships to study theology at Oxford colleges and elsewhere. This allowed for several generations of episcopal friendships between the two churches, including bishops of London, and Archbishops of Canterbury and York. Such inter-church fellowship in the midst of change and uncertainty has repeated itself in later years.

26. After the Hernhutt establishment in the 1720s and following, both Zinzendorf and David Nitchmann, the first bishop consecrated for the Renewed Moravian Unity, spent time in England cultivating partnerships in mission and ministry and seeking to build up understanding and recognition of their episcopacy and orders. In the mid-1730s, then Archbishop Potter of Canterbury told Zinzendorf that he esteemed the Moravian church as among its closest ecclesial relatives – ‘our brethren (sic), and one Church with our own.’ By 1749, an Act of Parliament was issued which described the Moravian tradition as ‘an ancient Protestant Episcopal Church’ much like the Church of England, with the bishops in the House of Lords also strongly in support. Although efforts in the 18th century to see the Moravian movement in England effectively as a kind of mission branch in communion with the Church of England did not succeed, this at least tacit or partial recognition of Moravian orders was part of what made it possible for a group of Moravian 14 evangelists to be authorized (by the Crown, not the Indigenous Peoples living there – which is itself another matter) to establish a mission centre on the coast of Labrador a few decades later, and for them to receive support in this work from Church of England dioceses and parishes. Such a degree of ecumenical collaboration was certainly ahead of its time, and seems to bear renewed attention once again.

27. We can see God’s hand at work at various times within the separate ecclesial stories seeking to reveal and enact that the Creator’s dream for all the people of God is that we not remain separate at all. Seemingly without great intention, but surely not by accident, each of our traditions has found inspiration in the others at points along the way, and even relied on the others to endure challenges, navigate complexities, and clarify confusions. In this, invitations to a family reunion were being prepared. It seems they are being delivered to the people who make up these branches – Moravian,

Lutheran, and Anglican – now. Who, where, and what are these communities today? And, more importantly, where might they be headed together next?

Moravians Today

28. The Worldwide Moravian Unity is a truly global Christian communion with approximately 1.2 million members today. A Moravian presence yet remains in Central Europe, and has spread to parts of South Asia, North America, and Central and South America. However, of these adherents, over 900,000 now call the continent of Africa their home. By far the largest numbers of Moravians today live in Tanzania – approximately 700,000.

29. The Unity is organized into a series of Provinces, of which there are currently 24 (plus an additional 5 Mission Provinces and 13 Mission Areas). America is divided into a Northern and a Southern Province. The Northern Province includes the Northern United States as well as the Moravian congregations in Canada, with the exception of those in Newfoundland and Labrador which continue as a part of a Mission Province under the umbrella of the British Province.

30. Every seven years the Moravian Unity convenes the Unity Synod, the structure of conciliar oversight and decision making for the global communion. The Unity Synod has the authority to decide matters of faith and order which are binding on all provinces, and serves to promote unity, cooperation, and sharing. It also oversees and coordinates Moravian cooperation in mission and development ministries, and is responsible for the creation of new Provinces and Mission Areas. In between Synods, the executive functions are carried out by the Unity Board, which is made up of delegates from each of the Provinces, and which is headed by a Chairperson assisted by an Executive Committee.

31. Each of the Provinces also meet for consultation both with Regional Conferences and in Provincial Synods, which also have their elected and appointed representatives and leaders. Most matters of ecclesial life within a Province are overseen by the Provincial Synod and its elected and appointed authorities.

32. Moravian bishops play an important and influential part in the work of these councils of the church through their spiritual leadership and ministry of unity, but are not necessarily the ultimate governing authorities within them, nor do they exercise any kind of ‘veto’ function at any level of the governance system.

33. The Canadian District of the Moravian Church comes under the leadership of the Northern Province, and also has its own elected District Board. Depending on how exactly you count, there are somewhere in the neighbourhood of 20 expressions of Moravian ministry in Canada today. Of these, about three-quarters are congregational ministries, and the others could be classified as emerging ministries, missions, and camp ministries. In Alberta, where there are 7 congregations, most of the members come from European backgrounds, having come directly from Europe as immigrant settlers, or via Moravian communities in the United States. There is 1 congregation in the city of Toronto, which has a significant Caribbean community as part of its membership. In Labrador, the Moravian presence is primarily within communities of people from the Indigenous Inuit and Innu Nations.

34. The Moravian motto is “In Essentials Unity; In Non-Essentials Liberty; In all Things Love.” This simple phrase still serves well to characterize what is distinct and beautiful about the gifts God shows forth in this part of the family of Jesus Christ. There are some core elements of faith that draw Moravians together – the priority of God’s love for us expressed through grace, salvation in Jesus Christ, and the presence and transforming work of the Holy Spirit in us. Yet this seems a deliberately short list, likely meant to emphasize the fact that it is not so much what Christians believe but rather what they do and how they live that matters most. This allows for a generous outlook towards other communities of faith in Christ and a willingness to find ways to serve Jesus and to serve the world together rather than apart. Things like polity and worship style and forms of spiritual devotion are by no means unimportant to this, but what is important about them is that they lead to love – love of God and love of neighbour. This final focal point of radical love expresses itself for Moravians today in the ways in which they are very often at the forefront of ministries of community engagement, and by living a commitment to the causes of social justice – social, racial, economic, ecological, and more.

Lutherans Today

35. Those among the baptized followers of Christ who bear the name Lutheran number around 80 million today. Most of these, including the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, are affiliated with the Lutheran World Federation, which is a global communion of national and regional Lutheran church bodies. Around half of these live in central or northern Europe, in places which have historically been Lutheran heartlands. Yet there are Lutherans living in every continent of the world, with some of the largest concentrations now in places like Ethiopia, Tanzania, India, Indonesia, America, and Brazil.

36. The Lutheran World Federation now counts 148 member churches in 99 countries. While it does not have a formalized jurisdictional authority, the LWF certainly exercises an important measure of moral leadership and vision, and also a major coordinating function to support and enhance Lutheran engagement in mission, justice, and development work, political and humanitarian advocacy and activism, and ecumenical and interfaith relations. The highest decision-making body of the Federation is the Assembly, which convenes every 6 or 7 years to help direct the global work as well as to elect a President, members of an executive Council, and other officers. Each member church names its representatives to the Assembly according to its own processes. Member churches also gather as part of geographically proximate Regions, and often engage in other kinds of pairings and partnerships with member churches in other areas of the globe.

37. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada was formed in 1986 through the joining of several predecessor bodies in the Evangelical Lutheran tradition. The ELCIC is further organized into five synods, each of which elects a bishop. The National Bishop of the ELCIC exercises a presiding function among the synod bishops, and gives leadership and coordination to the national expression of the church. The Office of the National Bishop also supports various staff roles to provide leadership over aspects of ministry and general operations.

38. The National Convention is the highest conciliar structure with responsibility for the governance of the ELCIC as a whole. It meets every three years and is chaired by the National Bishop. Each synod also has a Synod Convention which functions similarly within the five jurisdictions. Executive bodies of both the National Convention (National Church Council) and the Synod Conventions (Synod Councils) carry out the work in between the larger gatherings, and are all comprised of elected and appointed members.

39. Recent census data records about 95,000 members of the ELCIC and approximately 500 or so congregations in Canada. With the exception of the Atlantic Provinces and much of the Arctic North, which have a smaller Lutheran presence, the ELCIC population is spread across the nation of Canada. Many Lutherans in Canada have some connection to European ancestry, but increasingly Lutherans from other parts of the world who have come to call Canada home are also members of the ELCIC. Because of a different history of connection to civil authority in Canada as compared to certain other churches in Canada (Anglican, United, Roman Catholic), Lutheran participation in the evangelization, colonization, and attempted assimilation of Indigenous Peoples into the dominant European cultural expressions of English and French Canada was less direct, leading to a relatively small number of Indigenous communities who have a historic association with the ELCIC.

40. In 2017, Lutherans around the world, together with other Christian communities, had the occasion to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the typical date of the beginning of the European Reformation under Luther's inspiration. The theme chosen for the various initiatives was "Liberated by God's Grace." It was carefully not called a celebration given that it is now widely understood to have been caught up in a tangled web of both Divine blessing and human brokenness. Nevertheless, it was an important moment to reflect on what it meant, so many centuries later, to follow Jesus in a Lutheran way. What did Luther's 95 Theses and the challenge he raised to the Church catholic of his time, that justification was by grace through faith and not through something that could be paid for or earned, have to say in the modern world?

41. Significantly, one phrase that came to encapsulate much of the broad thinking that was done on that question by Lutherans in different places was "Not For Sale." For the Lutheran movement today, it was still important to emphasize that salvation is not for sale; it is not a formula that can be patented and marketed; it is not something we can commodify and treat as a product; it is not a reward for certain kinds of people. And more than that, these truths called to Lutherans today in the areas of human rights, modern slavery, ecological and economic justice, and the like. The liberating word of Jesus which Martin Luther heard in 1517 is still free, and is meant to set humanity and creation free from all the ways we try to hold it, others, and ourselves in bondage to systems that rob and oppress – both in the Church and in the world. While there are many things that Lutheranism in 2022 is all about, perhaps this is an especially fitting way of summarizing the spirit, holding up a vision, and framing the tangible commitments which the LWF and the ELCIC seek to live out in their missional witness today.

Anglicans Today

42. The Anglican Communion is the third-largest global Christian communion with over 85 million members. It is a truly worldwide church with an organised presence on every continent and the large majority of nation-states. The Communion currently has 41 autonomous Provinces, 5 extra-provincial churches in the Anglican tradition, and is in communion with various other national churches as well. The Church of England remains numerically the largest Province, but some of the Anglican churches of central and east Africa are catching up quickly and continue to grow. Like the LWF, churches in the southern hemisphere represent about half of the members today.

43. The Communion is not a single church but rather a communion of churches. There are four "instruments of communion" which are responsible for encouraging Anglican unity and coordinating Anglican collaboration in witness and service. These include: 1) the Anglican Consultative Council,

which is comprised of elected representatives from the Provinces of the Communion to help decide and steer its work in areas such as mission, discipleship, development, justice, faith and order, ecumenical and interfaith relations, and so on; 2) the Lambeth Conference, which gathers the bishops of the world roughly every ten years for prayer, relationship building, and common council; 3) the Primates Meeting, which brings together the presiding bishops of each Province; and 4) the Archbishop of Canterbury, who serves as the first among equals for all Anglican bishops, is a focal point of unity, and who either directly convenes and presides or else takes a leading role in each of the other three instruments. None of these instruments possesses binding legislative power over the Provinces of the Communion, but they do exercise considerable authority to the extent that the member churches willingly agree to have their ecclesial lives informed and shaped by them.

44. The place of the Anglican Church in Canada is not the same as that of the Church of England. It is not and has never been a state church or an established church. It was, however, a church that often received a certain privilege by what we might call the establishment in Canada, for both good and ill. While there was a time when the Church of England was without a doubt the dominant religious entity in the country, as of 2017, it is suggested that now just 1% (around 350,000) of Canadians remain engaged in some form as Anglican Christians, which shows a legacy of substantial decline even just in the last 50-60 years. Projections are that this challenge will continue in the coming decades, likely necessitating some radical changes. Still, for now, this number makes the Anglican Church the third largest Christian denomination in Canada, behind the Roman Catholic and United Churches.

45. Although there were Anglican dioceses and ecclesiastical provinces established in Canada for many decades prior, the General Synod Anglican Church of Canada was not formed until 1893. Before that time, Anglican presence was officially that of the Church of England in Canada. Because of this historical particularity distinctive to the Canadian setting, the resulting relationship which exists between local dioceses and the national structures of the Church are atypical as compared to many other Provinces of the Communion. The existent dioceses of the time agreed to divest some of their local powers to the national expression of church (liturgical texts, theological education and standards for ordination, ecumenical and interfaith relations, etc.). However, because they were not created by synod but rather created the synod itself, much was retained under diocesan purview. This means that the General Synod of the ACC has relatively minimal jurisdiction, and exercises mainly a convening and coordinating function to serve and support the work of the dioceses rather than mandating or directing it from above.

46. In addition to being the name of the corporate entity of the Anglican Church in Canada, General Synod also refers to governing body of the Anglican church national – i.e., the triennial convocation of the elected, appointed, and ex officio members which gathers in a different place each time to carry out business of national import, and to promote unity and collaboration between the diocesan expressions of church. Between gatherings of the General Synod, an executive body known as the Council of General Synod typically meets two times a year. Its work includes both helping to implement the decisions and monitor the progress of actions taken during the previous General Synod meeting, as well as discerning and defining priorities and initiatives that will be discussed and taken on at the next.

47. Visible and spiritual leadership of the Anglican Church of Canada is carried by the office of the Primate. The Primate, who bears the title Archbishop, and is elected from among the active bishops in Canada by lay and clerical members of the General Synod, does not have a geographic see, nor do they exercise most of the powers of a local Anglican bishop. Instead, they serve as the president of the

General Synod and of Council of General Synod, convene and chair the meetings of the House of Bishops, are the chief executive officer of the corporate entity that is the General Synod, and represent the ACC in international Anglican affairs. In many ways, this mirrors the diocese-to-General synod relational dynamic in another form.

48. The jurisdictional map of the Anglican Church of Canada presently outlines 30 dioceses or diocesan-like ministry areas. It is at the level of the dioceses where most of the authority for decisions related to the congregational life and ministry are made, including the appointment and discipline of clergy. Every diocese is lead by a bishop who is elected by the lay and clerical members of the diocesan synod, and the governance is shaped by a “bishop-in-synod” model known in some form or another across the rest of the Anglican tradition. In practice, this means that the bishop, while the ultimate authority, does not work as an autocrat, but rather administers oversight of the affairs of the dioceses according to canonical regulations and in partnership with all the baptized. Each of these also belongs to 1 of 4 ‘ecclesiastical provinces’ which are regional configurations of several dioceses in particular parts of the country’s vast geography (the Provinces of Canada, Ontario, Rupert’s Land, and British Columbia and Yukon), and these meet in provincial synod usually every 2-3 years.

49. A quite recent and highly significant Canadian reality that adds complexity to this picture is the emergence of an Indigenous expression of the Anglican way of following the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Such an ecclesial body is understood to be at the same time “self-determining”, while also preserving membership and partnership with other structures of church life in the wider Anglican Church of Canada. The National Indigenous Archbishop, together with the Sacred Circle and the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples, are presently undertaking the work of articulating how this vision will work in practice, and are thus contextually inculturating certain canonical and governance forms within the Anglican Church of Canada to be a more authentic reflection of and servant to the particular and unique realities that exist in Indigenous communities. This can be compared to similar kinds of Gospel impulses which were behind calls for linguistic and liturgical and governance adaptations for followers of Jesus from England in the 16th century in the face of Roman cultural dominance, but which the colonizing Anglicans of subsequent centuries tragically failed to recognize and therefore very harmfully ignored.

50. Efforts like these named above are related to an ongoing journey towards truth-telling and justice-making which the colonial European expressions of Anglicanism must walk in pursuit of learning from and making amends for their past sins of spiritual and cultural abuse of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. This includes the Indian Residential Schools system, as well as other forms of forced assimilation in which the churches participated. There can be little doubt that this process of embracing the necessary steps of repudiating the ways that colonization and white supremacy were justified by distorted versions of Christian teaching will be the most important Gospel-inspired discipleship tasks for the Anglican Church in Canada for many generations to come.

A New Way Forward Together

51. The unity which Jesus prays for in John 17 is not uniformity. It is, rather, a oneness like that of the communion of God (John 17:20-23) – i.e., a diversity in unity. In the providence of God, people and communities who follow Christ have been raised up with certain prophetic convictions and insights to be expressed for the sake of the renewal of the Church during times of challenge and change. The Moravian, Lutheran, and Anglican expressions of the Jesus Movement are examples of these –

particular traditions and distinct ways of being which have their own special and God-given uniqueness and gifts, which, nevertheless, were always intended for the church as a whole. Full Communion is always about holding up both these truths – the goodness of existence of diverse branches of believing and living in and through Christ, and the Divine dream that they can be shared together as part of a larger family tree.

52. Moravians, Lutherans, and Anglicans in Canada need one another. Each community still has things to teach the others, and each has things to learn. The hard and careful work of our predecessors in both the farther and more recent past has laid the groundwork for this recognition and this call. Our task is to simply embrace it and find ways to make it live on this land. And this blessing of full communion is never an end in itself but is always meant to spill out and overflow as a source of blessing to be shared with others until all know themselves to be related, just as the Creator of all intends.