

Guidelines for Common Worship for Lutherans and Anglicans in Canada

revised (spring 2003) by the National Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and the Council of General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada

A. Introduction

In July 2001, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and the Anglican Church of Canada signed the Waterloo Declaration establishing a relationship of full communion between them. These guidelines have been prepared by the Joint Anglican Lutheran Commission of Canada to assist those who are preparing for occasions when Lutherans and Anglicans are worshipping together in this new relationship of full communion.

B. Principles of Common Planning

As both of our churches are rooted in the liturgical heritage of the West and in the Reformation, and are active participants in the liturgical movement, there is a great deal which we have in common in our present worship patterns. We both stress the centrality of both Word and Sacrament. There is a common shape to our eucharistic liturgies. We both use the Revised Common Lectionary. Nevertheless, we do have different traditions, and it will be important for worship planners to be sensitive to these differences. What is comfortable and familiar to one community may feel uncomfortable and unfamiliar to another.

It is important that a spirit of graciousness and mutuality mark the planning of shared worship. Planning should take place well in advance and should include both lay and ordained leadership from both churches. Ample time should be given to build community in the group so that people are comfortable naming their concerns and seeking to understand the tradition of the other. Similarly, resources prepared for the congregation should enable everyone to feel at home in the liturgy. A spirit of hospitality should prevail.

Proclamation of the Word of God is at the heart of our full communion. Ample opportunity to read, sing, preach and hear the gospel should be included in every experience of shared worship. Proclamation through preaching on biblical texts shall be central.

According to the definition of full communion “communicant members of each church [are] able freely to communicate at the altar of the other, and there [is] freedom of ordained ministers to officiate sacramentally in either church.”¹ There is also “freedom to use each other’s liturgies²”, subject to normal approval processes in each church. Thus, from now on, there is general approval of both churches for the standard worship books of each to be used in the other (*Book of Common Prayer*, *Book of Alternative Services* and *Supplementary Eucharistic Prayers*; *Lutheran Book of Worship* and *With One Voice*). Each church will consult with the other before authorizing future standard liturgical texts.

¹ *Waterloo Declaration* Preface para. 7

² *Ibid.*



In the Anglican Church of Canada, standard texts which will be used for the whole church are normally prepared by the Faith, Worship and Ministry Committee, vetted by the House of Bishops, and brought to the General Synod for approval. Eucharistic liturgies used on particular occasions would need approval from the diocesan bishop, but even texts approved by the General Synod need to be authorized by the diocesan bishop for use in that diocese. Thus, while there is general approval for the ELCIC standard worship books, in Anglican practice the diocesan bishop reserves the right of approval in their diocese. In the ELCIC, the national church has responsibility for developing the worship life of the church, providing or recommending service books and other material for congregational and personal use, while pastors have primary responsibility for liturgy at the local level.

There will be several different contexts for this joint worship. There will be local, regional, or national services which are held in common. There will be special occasions when one congregation hosts another, and there will be some congregations in which Lutherans and Anglicans worship together all the time ('shared ministries'). Each of these situations raises particular questions for worship planners. Suggestions for these contexts, and for particular kinds of rites (services of word and prayer, Eucharist, Baptism, and the renewal of baptismal vows) are given below.

C. Contexts and Occasions

1. In a parish context

There are many occasions in the year when common worship in a parish setting may be appropriate. At the parish level, one congregation may invite another to join them for worship at any time. The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity has already become a traditional opportunity, but there are many others. Congregations may celebrate some of the Holy Week liturgies together. They may share in Advent or Lent mid-week services and in Advent or Christmas carol services. They may jointly celebrate All Saints' Day, with its emphasis on one communion and fellowship in the Body of Christ. In some places they share all or part of the Easter Vigil, the ancient Easter Eve liturgy of light, word, baptism, and eucharist. Some congregations may worship together when one of them is without its usual leadership, for instance during the summer or holiday season. Sometimes, the opportunity is suggested by the visit of a delegation from another church or country. Worship together may also take place in situations of pastoral care, when members of the two churches are to be married, or at the funeral of a member of one congregation whose spouse belongs to another. Sometimes in isolated areas, the ordained leader of one church may provide such ministry for members of the other.

When a congregation of one tradition invites a congregation of the other tradition to worship, normally the liturgy of the host church shall be used. Leaders from both congregations shall participate as an expression of mutuality and full communion.



2. Special Joint Worship

During conferences, study days, and special celebrations involving members of both churches, worship together is encouraged as a sign of full communion.

At regional worship events or special joint worship services, planners shall take great care to adapt existing liturgies in a way that reflects the common structure of the eucharist and also respects the integrity and sensibilities of each tradition. The service used in Waterloo on July 2001, "*A Celebration of Full Communion for Anglicans and Lutherans*", is commended as a model for such a joint service.

3. Shared Ministries

In shared ministries where Lutherans and Anglicans form one congregation or share a minister, there will be agreement between the two bishops as to which liturgies are normally permitted. New liturgies that may be developed shall reflect the common structure of the eucharist and the integrity and sensibilities of each tradition and are subject to the approval of the diocesan and synodical bishop as required. Further guidelines may be developed for such situations by the Joint Commission.

D. Roles of Leadership

When Anglicans and Lutherans worship together:

1. All services should have full active participation of a variety of ministers, lay and ordained. All should vest according to their own tradition.
2. Ministers shall exercise their liturgical function according to the rubrics of the liturgy being used. When there is a joint liturgy, ministers from each tradition shall exercise their ministries according to the role they have in their own tradition.
3. There shall be one presider, who at eucharistic services must be an ordained pastor, priest or bishop. Normally the preacher will be from the other tradition.
4. When bishops of both churches are present, it is only appropriate for one bishop from each church (the one who has jurisdiction) to use a pastoral staff. An Anglican and a Lutheran bishop may give the closing benediction together.

E. Guidelines for Specific Liturgical Celebrations

1. Celebrations of the Eucharist

In most cases, it is appropriate to use the liturgy of one or other of the churches involved in the celebration of the eucharist. In a few cases, it may be better to develop a rite based on existing liturgical forms, reflecting the traditional structure of the eucharist.³

³ The structure in this section is based on The Anglican-Lutheran International Commission, [Guidelines for Anglican-Lutheran Worship](#) (London, UK: The Anglican Communion Office of Communication, 1993), §6.2.



Gathering

Greeting
(Hymn of Praise)
Prayer of the Day

The Word of God⁴

(Old Testament Reading)
(Psalm)
(New Testament Reading)
Gospel

Homily

(Apostles' or Nicene Creed)
Intercessions, Thanksgiving, Petitions
The Exchange of the Peace

The Holy Communion (Meal)

Preparation of the Table
The Great Thanksgiving
The Lord's Prayer
Breaking of the Bread
Communion

Commissioning (Sending)

Thanksgiving for Communion and Prayer for Mission
(Blessing)
Dismissal

The two churches have different traditions on confession and absolution. A penitential rite may precede the service or may precede the exchange of the peace. Alternatively, confession and prayer for forgiveness may be included in the intercessions.⁵

Local worship planners should determine the recipient of the offering, giving particular consideration to shared mission possibilities. The offering may include money and other gifts such as food for a local pantry or blankets for a shelter.⁶

⁴ Readings may be taken from the lectionaries of the two churches or chosen for the occasion. While both traditions expect at least a reading from the gospels to accompany the celebration of the eucharist, it is appropriate to precede the reading of the gospel by another reading.

⁵ The Anglican-Lutheran International Commission, *Guidelines for Anglican-Lutheran Worship* (London, UK: The Anglican Communion Office of Communication, 1993), §6.2.

⁶ www.elca.org/ea/Relationships/episcopalian/guidelines.html (accessed 4 February 2002).



Sufficient quantities of the eucharistic elements shall be brought to the table, either by placing them on the table or by having assisting ministers, lay and ordained, standing in close proximity to the table, hold the elements to be consecrated.

Regarding the elements themselves, “Lutherans traditionally use bread and wine in the celebration of the Lord’s Supper. In certain circumstances grape juice is used.”⁷ It is not, however, the practice of the Anglican Church to use grape juice as an alternative to wine in the eucharistic celebration: “The Bread shall be the best and purest wheat bread, whether leavened or unleavened, and the Wine pure grape wine, wherewith a little water may be mingled.”⁸ While communicants in both churches normally receive from the loaf and the cup, both traditions affirm that under certain circumstances “the reception of only one element is acceptable.”⁹

While practices vary in our churches, “a loaf of bread and the common cup are rich biblical symbols of the unity of the church.”¹⁰

Assisting ministers (ordained or lay) may stand with the presider during the eucharistic prayer but should not participate in the recitation of the words of the Great Thanksgiving or in gestures related to the blessing of the elements.

When the eucharist is celebrated together, the sacrament is offered to all the baptized present. All those welcome at the table in their own churches should be welcomed in a shared service, subject to the eucharistic practices of the churches from which visitors may come.¹¹

“The elements are offered for the celebration of the Lord’s Supper have been set aside for a special purpose. Leftover elements are consumed by those present, or disposed of in an appropriate manner.”¹² “Any remaining consecrated bread and wine, (unless reserved for communing of persons not present) is consumed at the end of the distribution. This is appropriately done at the credence table or in the sacristy.”¹³

⁷ Statement on Sacramental Practices (Winnipeg, MB: Division for Parish Life of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, 1991), §6.15.

⁸ Book of Common Prayer, Anglican Church of Canada (Toronto, The Anglican Book Centre, 1959).

⁹ Statement on Sacramental Practices (Winnipeg, MB: Division for Parish Life of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, 1991), §6.16.

¹⁰ Statement on Sacramental Practices (Winnipeg, MB: Division for Parish Life of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, 1991), §6.17.

¹¹ www.elca.org/ea/Relationships/episcopalian/guidelines.html (accessed 4 February 2002).

¹² Statement on Sacramental Practices (Winnipeg, MB: Division for Parish Life of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, 1991), §6.22.

¹³ Book of Alternative Services, Anglican Church of Canada. Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1985, p. 184.



2. Celebrations of the Word and Prayer¹⁴

When Congregations join for celebrations of the Word and prayer, normally the rite of the host church is used. If, however, the occasion warrants the use of a common rite, a structure such as the following may be used:

Gathering

Greeting
Canticle or Hymn of Praise

The Word of God¹⁵

Psalm
Reading
(Hymn, Canticle, or Anthem)
(Reading)
Gospel Canticle or Hymn¹⁶

Prayers

Intercessions, Thanksgivings, and Petitions
Collect
Lord's Prayer

Dismissal

Hymn
Blessing

The service books of both traditions contain material which may be used within this structure. Hymns should be drawn from the traditions of both churches. Liturgical material should be chosen which is suitable for the time of day and the season of the church's year. The prayers should reflect concern for the cultures and contexts of the participants, for their local communities and concerns, but also for the world context and for global issues of justice and peace.

Guidelines for Baptism, Renewal of Baptismal Vows, Marriage, and Funerals, installations/celebrations of new ministry, and other occasions will be developed later by the Joint Commission. Until further guidelines are developed, it is recommended that the liturgy of the host church or the presider be used.

¹⁴ The guidelines in this section are based on The Anglican-Lutheran International Commission, [Guidelines for Anglican-Lutheran Worship](#) (London, UK: The Anglican Communion Office of Communication, 1993), §6.1.

¹⁵ The readings may be chosen from the lectionaries of one of the churches or chosen for their appropriateness to the occasion.

¹⁶ The Gospel canticles are the Song of Zechariah (*Benedictus*), the Song of Mary (*Magnificat*), and the Song of Simeon (*Nunc dimittis*).



F. Resources commonly used

Anglican:

Book of Common Prayer

Book of Alternative Services

Occasional Celebrations

Supplementary Eucharistic Prayers

and Services of the Word

Common Praise

Book of Common Praise 1938

Lutheran:

Lutheran Book of Worship

LBW Minister's Desk Edition

LBW Manual on the Liturgy

With One Voice

Occasional Services

ELCIC Statement on Sacramental Practices

Hymnal Supplement 1991

Gathered for Worship

Service Book and Hymnal

G. Conclusion

These guidelines have been approved by the ELCIC National Church Council and the ACC Council of the General Synod.

