

The Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations

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INTRODUCTION

The responsibilities of the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations are described as follows in Canon I.1.2(n)(3):

- To develop a comprehensive and coordinated policy and strategy on relations between this Church and other churches.
- To make recommendations to General Convention concerning interchurch cooperation and unity.
- To carry out such instructions on ecumenical matters as may be given it from time to time by the General Convention.
- To nominate for appointment by the Presiding Bishop persons to serve on the governing bodies of ecumenical organizations to which this Church belongs by action of the General Convention and to participate in major conferences as convened by such organizations.

Participation in the several ecumenical dialogues continues to be the “bread and butter” work of the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations (SCER). Over the

years, these dialogues have led this Church to an ever-deepening realization of the unity to which Christ calls all his people. At times the dialogues have brought to the General Convention documents and proposals of landmark proportions, such as the ARCIC I *Final Report* and the World Council of Churches Faith and Order report, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, both of which were dealt with by the 68th General Convention of 1985, and both of which will receive major attention at the 1988 Lambeth Conference of bishops.

This 69th General Convention will be asked to consider a document of comparable significance, the report of the Consultation on Church Union (COCU), *The COCU Consensus: In Quest of a Church of Christ Uniting*. While, as the commentary and resolutions which follow indicate, members of the SCER are unable to recommend the Consensus report as "a sufficient theological basis for the covenanting acts and the uniting process proposed at this time by the Consultation" (*The COCU Consensus*, p. 2), the SCER is of a firm mind that the Episcopal Church should continue its ecumenical journey with member churches of the Consultation on Church Union.

Also included in this report to the 69th General Convention are commentary and resolutions emerging from the September, 1987, National Ecumenical Consultation, in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral. The commentary and resolutions endeavor to set a direction for ecumenical activity in the future, and the SCER commends them for careful study.

While continuing progress in the several ecumenical dialogues can be reported, the SCER must acknowledge that to many in this Church the progress can seem painfully slow. During the past triennium, members of the SCER have more than once asked, "How can the ecumenical vision which so stirred this Church 100 years ago, when the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral was adopted, be renewed in our time?" As the Most Reverend Edmond L. Browning, our Presiding Bishop, asked in his sermon at the Eucharist celebrating the Quadrilateral, "Where will we be — just twelve years from now — at the dawn of the third millennium since the advent of Christ?"

Other matters of special interest during the past triennium included: (1) the first in-depth study in many years of the Episcopal Church's participation in the National Council of Churches and in the World Council of Churches, in fulfillment of a November, 1984, Executive Council resolution (the text of the report is included herein); (2) formation of a Province IX Committee on Ecumenism, to give attention to the special ecumenical challenges facing Episcopal dioceses in Latin America; (3) the continuing growth and development of a network of Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers, whose contributions to this Church's ecumenical task have been of immeasurable help to the SCER and to the Church at large; and (4) the addition of an Assistant Ecumenical Officer to the staff of the Ecumenical Office at the Episcopal Church Center.

We begin this report with a commentary and resolution on the National Ecumenical Consultation.

REPORT ON THE NATIONAL ECUMENICAL CONSULTATION

The decision to include the text of the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral in the "Historical Documents of the Church" section of the *Book of Common Prayer* (pp. 876-878), as well as the celebration of its 100th anniversary, has given the Quadrilateral a renewed importance in the catechetical and ecumenical life of the Episcopal Church. In 1982 the General Convention reaffirmed the Quadrilateral as a "statement of essential principles for organic unity with other churches" and explicated the four points in

a document entitled "Principles of Unity" (*Journal of the General Convention*, 1982, pp. C56-57). In 1985 the 68th General Convention approved the SCER's plans for a three-year national ecumenical emphasis which would culminate in a national consultation and celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral. Goals for the three-year emphasis included the involvement of dioceses in celebration of the Quadrilateral and in assessing ecumenical developments during the last decade.

The National Ecumenical Consultation was held in St. Charles, Ill., September 24-26, 1987. It was the third such national ecumenical consultation (the first was in Detroit, Mich., in November of 1978; the second was in Erlanger, Ky., in November of 1981). The 85 invited participants included 15 guests from other communions; members of the SCER and of the Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers (EDEO) Executive Committee; the authors of the papers presented; representatives from the Communication and Education units of the Episcopal Church Center; bishops from the House of Bishops' Ecumenical Committee and those who serve on various ecumenical dialogues; bishops assigned to the Ecumenical Relations section of the 1988 Lambeth Conference; members of ecumenical dialogues and of Executive Council; and Anglican guests from Canada, England, and Pakistan. The Chicago area was chosen as the site for the Consultation since it was in Chicago in 1886 that the House of Bishops adopted the Quadrilateral and in Chicago that the House of Bishops was to meet in September, 1987. On September 26 the Consultation participants joined the House of Bishops at the Cathedral of St. James in Chicago for a Solemn Eucharist in celebration of the centenary of the Quadrilateral.

A report on the Consultation can be found in *Ecumenical Bulletin* 86 (November-December, 1987), available from the Ecumenical Office at the Episcopal Church Center. In addition to the Eucharist at the Cathedral of St. James, highlights of the Consultation included: (1) presentation of, and response to, three papers: "The Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral: Heritage and Vision"¹ by J. Robert Wright of the General Theological Seminary; "Anglican Ambiguity and Authority"² by James E. Griffiss of Nashotah House; and "Strategizing for Ecumenism in Mission"³ by William A. Norgren, Ecumenical Officer; (2) publication by the Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers of the book *Models of Ecumenism*, which was presented at a dinner honoring EDEO presidents past and present, each of whom was presented a medal commissioned by the Presiding Bishop in commemoration of the Quadrilateral's centenary; and (3) the participation of guests from other communions who were reticent neither in their praise nor in their criticism of the Episcopal Church's ecumenical efforts.

Much of the work of the Consultation was done in the context of small working groups. Participants were asked to discuss four issues: primary issues of authority which must be confronted for the future; possible ecclesial structures for "one eucharistic fellowship"; possible new conceptual frameworks for local ecumenism and the development of strategies for discovering the unity that already exists; and a future ecumenical vision. A number of issues and questions were raised during the course of those discussions which suggest the shape of a future agenda for the SCER. There were five primary issues:

1. *The significance of the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral in ecumenical dialogue.* Discussion during the Consultation reaffirmed the continuing significance of the Quadrilateral, to which the Episcopal Church remains committed. It was also noted that the Quadrilateral has been influential as a basis for discussion within the

1. *Ecumenical Bulletin* 80 (November-December, 1986)
 2. *Ecumenical Bulletin* 81 (January-February, 1987)
 3. *Ecumenical Bulletin* 82 (March-April, 1987)

ecumenical movement among a number of other churches, as reflected in the WCC Document, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*. The Episcopal Church was challenged by one ecumenical participant to “embrace the Quadrilateral anew.”

2. *Authority in the Church.* The Consultation called fresh attention to the crisis of authority in the Episcopal Church, as in other churches. We may agree in principle that ultimate authority rests with God and that God’s authority is mediated through Scripture, sacraments, creed and ministerial office, especially the historic episcopate, but the practical interpretations of the Quadrilateral by the Episcopal Church and by its ecumenical partners depend on *persons*, acting individually or collectively with different understandings of the nature of the Church and of their personal or collective authority within the Church. The Consultation called upon Episcopalians to re-examine the Church’s understanding of authority in the context of ecumenical dialogue. The re-examination raised questions about such things as governance, unity and diversity within the Anglican Communion, and the teaching office of bishops.

3. *The relationship of unity and mission.* One of the discussion groups identified the relationship of unity and mission as the most important focus for the Episcopal Church in the next decade. A renewed ecumenical vision must include a theological understanding of mission as an integral part of our search for Christian unity.

4. *The nature of the unity we seek.* One of the goals of the Consultation was to review, and if appropriate revise, the document “The Nature of the Unity We Seek.” It was agreed that a revision was not necessary, but questions were raised about the document. In it the Episcopal Church proposed the vision of “one eucharistic fellowship . . . a communion of Communions” as a model of visible unity. The Anglican Consultative Council document *Steps Towards Unity*, in particular the section “Unity by Stages,” suggested steps and stages towards visible unity. It remains for the Episcopal Church to discuss, determine, and define the criteria which would make each successive stage possible.

5. *Interim Eucharistic Sharing.* The 1982 Agreement with the three Lutheran Churches (now the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) was based on extensive conversation, mutual study, and agreement that “the basic teaching of each respective Church is consonant with the Gospel.” It provides an example of what is possible with other churches as we look to the future. Eucharistic sharing between Episcopalians and Lutherans has enabled these churches to experience such sharing as a means towards unity as well as a goal of the ecumenical journey. Episcopalians and Lutherans have been led to a renewed awareness of life together in the Body of Christ.

In addition to these five points which emerged from the discussions during the Consultation, the Presiding Bishop’s sermon at the Eucharistic celebration suggested four principles on the way to fuller communion: the necessary unity of the people of God in mission, demanded by their “co-discipleship” and established in baptism; the interdependence of all our dialogues in expressing the faith and holding up the image of unity; the need to renew and intensify our participation (especially locally) in dialogue and collaboration; and the need for Christians to pursue together dialogue with people of other living religions. As the Presiding Bishop said, each of these principles “expresses in a different way the integral nature of the Church’s unity . . . Each step we take, however small, creates a new situation, and in turn becomes a starting point for other steps.”

Resolution #A034

Future Ecumenical Agenda

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That this 69th General Convention endorse the following ecumenical agenda for the Episcopal Church in the years ahead:

1. That theological seminaries, education programs for clergy and lay people, and other appropriate agencies be encouraged to include the study of the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral in their curricula in light of its continuing ecumenical significance.
2. That the question of authority in the Church be referred to Episcopal Church delegations to the several ecumenical dialogues for study and report.
3. That the inseparability of unity and mission be a guiding principle in the life of this Church and that program groups focusing on the mission of the Church be challenged to explore ways in which the unity of the Church may shape mission and that the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations focus attention on current theology and practice of mission in the Church.
4. That the vision of unity, "one eucharistic fellowship . . . a communion of Communion," as adopted by the 66th General Convention be reaffirmed; and that the Episcopal Church's delegations to each of the several dialogues be requested to articulate what they believe to be the criteria for entering by stages into a communion of Communion.
5. That the importance of reaching agreement on eucharistic sharing as a step towards unity be encouraged as a guiding principle for the Episcopal Church's delegations to dialogues with the several churches [as specified in the Lutheran-Episcopal Agreement adopted by the 67th General Convention, in 1982].

PROVINCE IX COMMITTEE ON ECUMENISM

The Province IX Committee on Ecumenism was formed in response to a request from the bishops of Province IX to the House of Bishops gathered at the General Convention of 1985. Its purpose is to enable Province IX to deal with ecumenical concerns within its own Latin American context. The bishops of the Province felt the Church in Latin America was several steps behind the achievements of the Episcopal Church in the USA and the Anglican Communion in the rest of the world.

Consisting of bishops and priests from the four regions of the Province (Central America, Mexico, Northern South America, and the Caribbean) the committee has met five times and considered the following issues:

1. *Evaluation of ecumenical relations in the Province IX countries.* As a result of this evaluation it can be said that the main concern of the Province is the need to open dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church. Relationships with the other principal churches are considered to be friendly and therefore a dialogue with them seems not to be needed at this time. It was reported by committee members that because of the power of the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America, it is not so interested in talking with others. It was also said that in such countries as Mexico, Colombia, and Ecuador, the Episcopal Church is suffering religious persecution from the Roman Catholic Church. The committee felt that what worries Roman Catholics in some places is the fact that the Episcopal Church in Province IX is no longer English-speaking.

2. *Education on ecumenism.* The committee is encouraging Province IX dioceses to appoint local ecumenical officers, and to have regional workshops on ecumenism to study and evaluate the present state of the inter-church dialogues.

3. *Translation of ecumenical documents into Spanish.* This is a great concern of the committee because few documents are available in Spanish.

4. *Dialogue with CELAM.* In July 1987, the committee, enlarged by the presence of the Primate and one other bishop of the Episcopal Church of Brazil, met in Panama with representatives of the Latin American Episcopal Council (CELAM) of the Roman Catholic Church. The meeting was very positive because it precipitated a frank dialogue on problems related to both churches. The encounter ended with the setting of a three-year agenda and a joint declaration that expressed the joy and expectations of the group (*Ecumenical Bulletin* 85, September-October, 1987).

Resolution #A035

Translation of Ecumenical Documents into Spanish

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, **That this 69th General Convention encourage a consortium of Spanish-speaking Provinces in their efforts to translate church documents into Spanish, and recommend that such translations include significant ecumenical documents.**

OPINION STUDY ON ECUMENICAL MATTERS

The SCER commissioned an opinion study on ecumenical matters by means of a mail questionnaire sent to all bishops and to all deputies to the 68th General Convention in 1985. A full summary of the results of this study shows an endorsement of the vision of a "communion of Communions" coupled with only mild optimism about significant progress towards this in the next decades.

Episcopal Church leaders perceive convergence in faith in a number of areas with the various churches with which we are in dialogue. The extent of agreement with Lutherans especially testifies to the power of our shared experience with them in the wake of the 1982 Agreement.

Only moderate familiarity with the various dialogues is shown; and, while none has yet come to full consonance with the faith of the Episcopal Church, and areas of special difficulty exist for each, Episcopalians do discover much of their faith in them. At the same time, some inconsistency is perceived among the dialogues, and in particular there is uncertainty whether or not dialogue with the churches in the Consultation on Church Union has been congruent with what we have said in other discussions.

Overall, the survey shows that, if "ecumenism" is seen *solely* as a program of formal dialogue and inter-church diplomacy competing for attention with other program areas, support and interest will be limited. On the other hand, if it means growing together with other churches in faith and practice so as to enrich our common life and mission, the leadership of this Church strongly supports the ecumenical quest.

The SCER commends this study (available from the Ecumenical Office, the Episcopal Church Center) and expresses its gratitude to those who thoughtfully took the time to complete the questionnaire.

OFFICIAL DIALOGUES AND CONVERSATIONS

Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue

The Anglican-Orthodox Theological Consultation (AOTC), the oldest of the Episcopal Church's theological dialogues, worked steadily through the triennium, meeting annually. The liturgy was celebrated alternately between the two traditions. Bishops Peter L'Huillier, of the Orthodox Church in America Diocese of New York

and New Jersey, and Bishop David B. Reed, of the Episcopal Diocese of Kentucky, are co-chairmen.

The Consultation concentrated on the production of an "Agreed Statement on Christian Initiation," an "Agreed Statement on the Eucharist," and discussion questions on the Moscow and Dublin Agreed Statements of the international dialogue. The first two statements, representing significant agreement among the members of the Consultation, have been published but have not been submitted to the several churches for approval. The discussion questions are intended to assist ecumenical groups to study the two international Agreed Statements and to elicit local response.

In addition, the Consultation also studied the ARCIC *Final Report*; the Orthodox members offered a helpful response to the document. The Orthodox also commented on the documents produced by the Consultation on Church Union. In response to a request from the Presiding Bishop, the Consultation discussed the implications of ordaining women to the episcopate. In conjunction with the 1200th anniversary of the Seventh Ecumenical Council, papers were presented on the theology of icons and on the meaning and use of art in the Church.

We take pleasure in noting two significant events touching on Anglican-Orthodox relations:

1. In response to a General Convention resolution in 1985, Episcopalians have increasingly been involved in events surrounding the celebration of the baptism of Prince Vladimir in 988 and the millennium of Russian Orthodoxy. This celebration has provided an opportunity for Episcopalians to study Russian Orthodoxy and the missionary role of Kiev; to study and pray with the Orthodox in this country; and to travel to the Soviet Union. Bishop David B. Reed plans to represent the Episcopal Church at the official "festive events" in the Soviet Union celebrating the millennium anniversary of the Russian Orthodox Church.

2. In December, 1987, His All Holiness Demetrios I, Archbishop of Constantinople and Ecumenical Patriarch, accepted the invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury and paid a formal visit to Canterbury and London. The Patriarch came directly from a similar visit to Pope John Paul II, accompanied by a delegation from the Phanar (the Patriarchal center in Istanbul). He was met by the Archbishop of Canterbury and an Anglican delegation, among them the Very Rev. John H. Backus, of the Cathedral Church of St. Paul in Quincy, Ill., and a member of the AOTC. A Joint Communiqué was issued by the two Primate at the conclusion of the visit (*Ecumenical Bulletin* 87, January-February, 1988). Three points in the Communiqué were of particular ecumenical importance: the Patriarch and the Archbishop reaffirmed their "fullest commitment" to the bilateral dialogue and expressed a determination to reinforce it; they agreed that the dialogue's goal is "visible and sacramental unity"; and they agreed that the ordination of women to the presbyterate and to the episcopate would not be the cause or reason for either church to withdraw from, or downgrade the importance of, the dialogue. On the contrary, they said it was proper and necessary to be able to continue the search for the unity desired by our Lord in "this dialogue of love."

Resolution #A036

Millennium Anniversary of the Russian Orthodox Church

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, **That this 69th General Convention convey to His Holiness Pimen, Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia, to the Holy Synod, and through them to the people of the Russian Orthodox Church, its affection, support and prayers on the occasion of the millennium anniversary of the Russian Orthodox Church, and be it further**

Resolved, That the congregations of this Church be encouraged to observe the Feast of St. Sergius, Abbot of Holy Trinity, Moscow, on September 25, 1988, in celebration of the thousandth-year anniversary of the Russian Orthodox Church, and that since St. Sergius' day 1988 falls on a Sunday the proper for the commemoration of St. Sergius in *Lesser Feasts and Fasts* be commended for alternative readings for this day.

Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue

The meetings of the Second Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC II) have been marked by agreement on fundamental doctrinal principles concerning salvation, justification, and the nature of the Church as *koinonia* (community or fellowship) during the past three years.

In January of 1987 ARCIC II released the Agreed Statement *Salvation and the Church*, on which the Commission had been at work since 1982, the year in which its cycle of dialogues had been initiated by the "Common Declaration" of Pope John Paul II and the Archbishop of Canterbury. *Salvation and the Church* addresses four areas of difficulty between Anglicans and Roman Catholics: the *faith* through which we are justified; *justification* and associated concepts; the bearing of *good works* on salvation; and the role of the *Church* in the process of salvation.

The renewal in our time of biblical and historical studies and the growth in mutual understanding through the ecumenical movement led ARCIC to affirm that these areas of difficulty "need not be matters of dispute between us." Greeting with joy this agreement on the essential aspects of the doctrine of salvation, the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations presents the following resolution:

Resolution #A037

On Salvation and the Church

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That this 69th General Convention receive with gratitude the ARCIC II document *Salvation and the Church*, and commend it to the Episcopal Church for study and reflection.

With this document completed, ARCIC II has a mandate from the "Common Declaration" to focus on the doctrine of the Church as *koinonia* as a means to address outstanding differences still at issue between our two churches, such as authority, the ordination of women, and the recognition of Anglican orders. This study of *koinonia* is consonant with the Episcopal Church's declared vision of visible unity described in 1979 as a "communion of Communions," and this work will be advanced by a number of subcommittees in various parts of the world.

The September, 1987, personal visit of Pope John Paul II to the meeting of ARCIC, then in progress, is regarded as an encouraging sign of the importance of this dialogue. On this occasion the Pope particularly commended the *koinonia* ecclesiology as a way forward to unity. Our two churches now await the official responses to *The Final Report* from the 1988 Lambeth Conference and from the Vatican. It is hoped that these responses will indicate a way forward on questions of authority still unresolved between us.

"Authority" has also emerged as the central issue in the Anglican-Roman Catholic Consultation in the United States (ARC) during the past triennium. During this period ARC has passed through a transitional period of a change of leadership to a new level of energy and determination in addressing difficult issues. Some of these have made

headlines: academic freedom, collegiality and primacy, the ordination of women, and other issues of gender and sexuality. Additional topics have been of a more technical nature and yet all have led inevitably to the question of authority. Therefore, ARC proposes to complete an agreed statement on "Authority in the Church," to be published with supporting documentation.

At its October 1985 meeting, ARC adopted and transmitted to SCER a memorandum expressing concern about the corporate and liturgical dimensions of the Roman Catholic Pastoral Provision for former Episcopalians entering the Roman Catholic Church, specifically the use and modification of Anglican liturgical forms in the Roman Catholic Church and the question of the permanency of these modified liturgies, the provisions for absolute re-ordination of Episcopal priests, and the lack of official consultation with Anglicans on this arrangement. Subsequently, three bishops, on behalf of SCER, met with Cardinal Bernard Law, Archbishop of Boston and administrator of the Provision in the United States, to discuss tensions and issues growing out of the Pastoral Provision in this country. A frank and full exchange of views took place.

The June 1986 and 1987 meetings heard papers on *Apostolicae Curae*, the papal condemnation of Anglican orders in 1896. The first paper, presented from the Episcopal Church delegation, revealed new evidence that half of Pope Leo XIII's commissioners in 1896 recognized the validity of Anglican orders. The second paper, presented by a conservative Roman Catholic scholar, not a member of ARC, maintained that *Apostolicae Curae* holds the status of a definitive or infallible papal declaration and must stand. A subcommittee of ARC has been formed to seek a resolution of these differing points of view.

At the request of the Presiding Bishop, the entire December 1986 dialogue was devoted to considerations of the ecumenical and ecclesiological implications of the ordination of women as bishops in the Episcopal Church. A letter from ARC to the Presiding Bishop stated that "the strains which the ordination of women as bishops in the Episcopal Church might place on our relationship are serious." And yet both sides in this dialogue have expressed an "intention to stay in conversation, should the ordination of women to the episcopate in the Episcopal Church occur."

The ARC study of authority now in progress is one sign of this long-term commitment, and it should provide a context in which to discuss many outstanding issues. Five goals have been set for this long-range study of authority: the nature and function of authority in the Church, with specific reference to unity and diversity; authority, order, and decision-making; authority and the doctrine of the Church; authority and the practice of the Church; and authority and the exercise of discipline.

In 1987, during his second American visit, Pope John Paul II met in Columbia, S.C. with heads of numerous American churches and participated, as one leader with others, in a moving ecumenical service of Christian witness, held in a university stadium.

The ARC experience of the past triennium is best summarized in the realization that our journey to unity can succeed only if it is rooted in candor and prayer.

Baptist-Episcopal Dialogue

During the past triennium there has been only one meeting of the North Carolina Baptist-Episcopal Dialogue. In 1986 a two-day meeting on ecclesiology revealed the vast differences between our two traditions while disclosing the need for further investigation of the topic as it relates to our respective teachings regarding the doctrines of salvation and sanctification. A proposed meeting in 1987 on these subjects was cancelled due

to internal Baptist concerns at the State Convention level. It is hoped that the meeting may be held in 1988.

Consultation on Church Union Background

The 68th General Convention (1985) directed the SCER to initiate and facilitate a study in all the dioceses and seminaries of this Church of *The COCU Consensus: In Quest of a Church of Christ Uniting*. This document represents a theological consensus achieved through a quarter-century process by official representatives of the nine churches participating in the Consultation on Church Union (COCU). Its final form was "approved and commended" by all delegations of those churches at the 16th COCU Plenary meeting in Baltimore in November, 1984. The 16th Plenary also asked "the participating churches, by formal action to recognize in it:

- (1) an expression in the matters with which it deals, of the Apostolic faith, order, worship, and witness of the Church,
- (2) an anticipation of the Church Uniting which the participating bodies, by the power of the Holy Spirit, wish to become, and
- (3) a sufficient theological basis for the covenanting acts and the uniting process proposed at this time by the Consultation."

Over the past triennium the SCER, in cooperation with the Ecumenical Office, the network of Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers (EDEO), and the accredited seminaries of the Episcopal Church, has undertaken to fulfill this commission. The process of reception and evaluation also included the work and report of an ad hoc Theological Committee appointed from SCER membership and other Anglican theological consultants with particular expertise in ecumenical contexts. The "Elucidations" section of this report to the 69th General Convention reflects the painstaking work of SCER's Theological Committee.

In a related matter, the 68th General Convention also directed the SCER (1) to conduct a study of the covenanting process proposed by the Consultation on Church Union in a further document entitled *Covenanting Toward Unity: From Consensus to Communion*; (2) to convey a preliminary evaluation to the Consultation; and (3) to report to the 69th General Convention. The evaluation of *Covenanting Toward Unity*, copies of which are available from the Ecumenical Office, consisted of brief comments on each chapter of the document with some suggestions for future work. The evaluation concluded that the document was *not* a fully satisfactory basis for entering into a relationship of such magnitude.

Even such a brief report foreshadows one of the conclusions reached by the SCER with regard to *The COCU Consensus* document and its attached requests for formal recognition. These conclusions are succinctly stated in the resolutions proposed below by the SCER to this 69th General Convention. At this critical juncture, however, a preliminary rehearsal of prior General Convention actions regarding COCU appears appropriate out of a due regard for our ecumenical partners and in recognition of the fact that the Episcopal Church has participated in COCU from its inception. This chronological overview is presented with a minimum of historical interpretation.

Previous General Convention COCU Actions

The General Convention of 1961 responded positively to an invitation extended by the United Presbyterian Church to join with it in inviting the Methodist Church

and the United Church of Christ to explore the possibilities for an eventual united Church "truly Catholic, truly Reformed, and truly Evangelical" (*Journal*, 1961, p. 421). In further action the Joint Commission on Approaches to Unity [SCER predecessor] was officially reminded "to make the historic position of this Church as defined in . . . several statements [e.g., Chicago version of the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral and the Faith and Order Statement prepared for the Lambeth Conference of 1948 and the General Convention of 1949] the framework for all church unity conversations in which [the Episcopal Church] shall be engaged" (*Journal*, 1961, p. 286).

The General Convention of 1964 confirmed continued participation of the Episcopal Church in COCU through the agency of the (at that time) Joint Commission on Ecumenical Relations. JCER was called upon "to conduct these conversations, as heretofore, on the basis of the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral . . . ; to determine the size and nature of any subcommittee which shall . . . take part; and to regularly report the progress of these conversations to the General Convention for its consideration" (*Journal*, 1964, p. 278).

By 1967 COCU had produced a document entitled *Principles of Church Union* and referred it to the constituent churches. General Convention received the *Principles*, commending them as "a significant advance toward Christian unity in certain matters of doctrine, worship, sacraments, and ministry," and resolved that the document "be made a subject for study and recommendations by an official committee in each Diocese; which committee shall report its findings to the Diocesan Convention, as well as to the JCER for its consideration and use." In other relevant actions, JCER was (1) authorized to participate in COCU's development of a "plan of union for study at all levels of Church life and ultimate consideration by governing bodies of the Churches concerned, but not to negotiate the entry of this Church into such a plan of union"; (2) called upon to prepare a report on COCU for Lambeth 1968 and the next General Convention; and (3) made the authorized agent of the Episcopal Church for all other ecumenical contacts and conversations (*Journal*, 1967, pp. 404-405).

Subject to the usual provisos, the Special General Convention of 1969 authorized "for trial use in special circumstances of ecumenical worship, or for use in special study sessions, that certain document entitled, 'An Order of Worship for the Proclamation of the Word of God and The Celebration of the Lord's Supper'" [published by Forward Movement with copyright by the COCU Executive Committee, 1968] (*Journal*, 1969, p. 213). This "COCU Liturgy" with further texts and requirements sustained repeated trial use authorizations by each subsequent General Convention from 1970 through 1985.

By the time of the General Convention of 1970 COCU had prepared a draft plan of union, and JCER was given authorization to continue participation in its further development, "but not to negotiate the entry of this Church into such a plan of union." A further resolution called upon members of the Episcopal Church "to participate in ecumenical, parochial, and other forms of study of the draft plan of union," reporting resultant suggestions and criticisms to JCER through diocesan ecumenical commissions. Finally, the Executive Council was "authorized and directed to take part in providing designs, materials, and other aids for such study" (*Journal*, 1970, p. 255).

The General Convention of 1973 expressed "a general unreadiness to accept organizational structures as formally proposed by the Consultation on Church Union in *A Plan of Union*," but nevertheless authorized JCER to continue participation in COCU, instructing it also "to continue its emphasis on theologically sound approaches to the problems of Faith and Order as a basis for full communion and organic union, working within the guidelines laid down by the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral, and

to attempt to bring other Christian bodies into conversations with the Consultation" (*Journal*, 1973, pp. 368-369). COCU's proposals regarding the formation of "Generating Communities" and the establishment of "Interim Eucharistic Fellowship" were referred to the House of Bishops for consideration at its next interim meeting after Convention.

By 1976 COCU had prepared and transmitted to member churches a document entitled "Toward a Mutual Recognition of Members: An Affirmation." This was received "with gratitude" by General Convention. A resolution endorsed the document and noted its consonance with traditional Anglican teaching that "the Church is the Body of which Jesus Christ is the Head and all baptized persons are the members." General Convention, however, appended a JCER-drafted preamble and footnotes to the document that interpreted the Episcopal Church's understanding of our common baptism with water and in the Name of the Triune God as carrying an imperative for ecumenical concern and activity. These additions emphasize the distinction between "membership" understood simply as enrollment in a particular congregation of a church, on the one hand, and those aspects or marks of "membership" in distinct ecclesial bodies that, on the other hand, nurture and shape spiritual life. Confirmation in the Anglican tradition was cited as an example of the latter type. Other distinctive membership aspects or marks were recognized among the diverse traditions. While reiterating the Episcopal Church's commitment to the goal of union, the footnotes concluded: "In our opinion a more widespread and frank discussion of and living with these distinctive elements in our several traditions needs to take place before we can make wise and appropriate decisions about the character of a united Church" (*Journal*, 1976, pp. C91-92).

The 1976 Convention also dealt with the COCU proposal for "Interim Eucharistic Fellowship" in an affirmative manner, noting that "a responsible consequence of our Church's commitment to the Unity of Christ's Church requires experience in eucharistic fellowship with others who seek this same unity with us . . ." Under "Guidelines for Interim Eucharistic Fellowship," Convention authorized participation in this COCU-recommended program for local eucharistic celebration among its constituent churches. The following provisos were articulated in the resolution: need for local episcopal authorization, use of the "COCU liturgy," elements of bread and wine, provision for reverent disposal of elements remaining after communion, the presence of an Episcopal priest as concelebrant, and a stated program of frequency and evaluation (*Journal*, 1976, pp. C89-90).

By the General Convention of 1979 COCU had completed a draft theological consensus, *In Quest of a Church of Christ Uniting*. The 66th General Convention received "with thanks" six of the seven chapters, commending them by resolution for a two-year study by the theological schools of the Episcopal Church, diocesan ecumenical commissions, and selected parishes. The resolution also requested the (now) Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations "to receive and collate reports from these groups and present to the General Convention of 1982 a proposed official response from this Church to the Consultation on Church Union." This Convention also designated COCU "as the principal place in which Episcopalians are called upon and enabled to engage in serious dialogue with the nine constituent Church bodies, both predominantly black and predominantly white, which make up such an important segment of our pluralistic American scene" (*Journal*, 1979, pp. C51-52).

The "principal place" theme of the 66th General Convention was formally reiterated by the 67th in 1982, and in a further resolution the Convention expressed gratitude for the "emerging theological consensus" reflected in the document *In Quest of a Church of Christ Uniting*. The Consultation's Episcopal delegation was directed

“to press for re-examination of those portions of the document noted as matters of concern in the *Response* of the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations” (*Journal*, 1982, p. C50). Those items included: the authority of the ecumenical creeds; the understanding of sacramental acts other than baptism and eucharist; the understanding of confirmation; the collegial nature of the presbyterate and episcopate; the divine action in ordination; the meaning of lay and diaconal sharing in ordination rites; and the theology of the Church.

The actions of the 1985 General Convention respecting COCU have been noted previously in setting the context for this brief quarter-century overview. The final form of *The COCU Consensus* was achieved in November, 1984, less than ten months before the 1985 General Convention, which accounts for the fact that Convention called for official response after a further triennium for that study and evaluation which inform the following resolutions.¹

Resolution #A038

The Consultation on Church Union

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, **That this 69th General Convention recognize with deep gratitude the extensive contributions of the Consultation on Church Union over the past twenty-five years in advancing the cause of church unity and for its articulation of significant ecumenical convergences; and be it further**

Resolved, **That, on the basis of studies which the 68th General Convention directed the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations to initiate and facilitate, this 69th General Convention recognize *The COCU Consensus: In Quest of a Church of Christ Uniting* as: (1) “an expression in the matters with which it deals, of the Apostolic faith, order, worship, and witness of the Church,” (2) “an anticipation of the Church Uniting which the participating bodies by the power of the Holy Spirit wish to become,” but (3) *not* “a sufficient theological basis for the covenanting acts and the uniting process proposed at this time by the Consultation;” and be it further**

Resolved, **That this 69th General Convention authorize this Church to continue its participation in the Consultation on Church Union and, through the agency of the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations, to seek with the partner churches in the Consultation on Church Union fresh approaches toward visible unity.**

Resolution #A039

Use of COCU Liturgies

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, **That this 69th General Convention authorize, subject to the approval of the diocesan Bishop, provided that an ordained Priest of this Church is the celebrant, or one of the celebrants at a con-celebrated service; provided the elements used are those used by our Lord himself, namely bread and wine; provided further that any of the blessed elements remaining at the end of the service be reverently consumed; and provided further that the guidelines for interim eucharistic sharing authorized by the 65th General Convention be observed (*Journal*, 1976, pp. C89-90), for trial use in special circumstances of ecumenical worship or for use in special study sessions:**

¹As indicated near the outset of this report, the 16th COCU Plenary of 1984 also produced a draft of *Covenanting toward Unity: From Consensus to Communion*, commending it to the Churches for study and response. Initial evaluation of this latter document through the agency of SCER concludes that it is “not fully satisfactory” and suggests that further work indicating constructive alternatives be undertaken with reference to *Steps towards Unity*.

(1) That certain document entitled *An Order for the Proclamation of the Word of God and the Celebration of the Lord's Supper* published by Forward Movement Publications and copyrighted 1968 by the Executive Committee of the Consultation on Church Union, and previously authorized by the 65th, 66th, 67th, and 68th General Conventions;

(2) That certain document entitled *Word, Bread, Cup* published by the Forward Movement Publications and copyrighted 1978 by the Executive Committee of the Consultation on Church Union, previously authorized by the 67th General Convention and stating preference for Eucharistic Prayers #1 and #2 and excluding #5; and

(3) That certain document entitled *The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper: A New Text* published and copyrighted 1984 by the Executive Committee of the Consultation on Church Union.

Elucidations

The Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations offers the following affirmations and reservations concerning *The COCU Consensus* as a means of elucidating the above resolutions. The SCER affirms and recognizes in the text of *The COCU Consensus* "an expression, in the matters with which it deals, of the Apostolic faith, order, worship, and witness of the Church."

A. Affirmations

In particular and with regard to Chapters I, "Why Unity," and II, "Unity: A Gift to be Made Visible," we affirm the imperative of Christian unity with which the document begins. We find ourselves in agreement especially with such statements as: "For the Church to be a concrete embodiment of Christ's message, some visible expression of unity is indispensable" (I.3), and whatever form this visible unity might take there would still be room, "within consensus, for a great range of theological points of view, practices in worship, and forms of organization" (I.11). We welcome the explicit rejection of the corporate "merger" model not only because, as the document notes, of its historically demoralizing effect on predominantly black churches (I.16a), but also because such a model is untrue to the nature of the Church.

With regard to Chapter IV, "Membership," we affirm that "The foundation of Christian unity is Baptism into the Body of Christ" (IV.1). When the theology and anticipated practice of Baptism articulated in Chapter IV is read in conjunction with Chapter VI, "Worship," it is clear that in the Church Uniting Baptism is expected to be essential for church membership; unrepeatable; for infants as well as adults; normally administered by a presbyter in the presence of a congregation; and a beginning of a life-long process of development and renewal, which may include Confirmation and Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows at particular times. Chapter IV also places appropriate emphasis on "The Development of Membership," and we fully concur with its affirmation that "the recovery and clarification of Christian discipline . . . is an essential task as churches work towards union" (IV.14).

We conclude that Anglicans will strongly affirm the following points of Chapter V, "Confessing the Faith," namely that:

(1) the identifying Christian confession is that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior and that this faith is at the heart of the tradition of apostolic preaching and teaching (V.1-3);

(2) the Holy Scriptures are recognized "as the unique and normative authority" for the Church's life, worship, teaching, and witness (V.4);

(3) "Scripture and Tradition belong together," with Scripture as the "supreme norm and corrector of all traditions" and the "focal and definitive expression of the Tradition of the apostles" (V.6-7);

(4) the Apostles' and Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creeds are acknowledged as "unique, ecumenical witnesses of the Tradition to the revelation of God recorded in Scripture" which the Church Uniting will use in worship and in teaching the faith (V.8-9);

(5) the public confession of faith as represented in the creeds must be accompanied by "costly individual choice and obedience" enabled by grace that will foster personal trust in Jesus Christ (V.10);

(6) Christian faith is confessed in "acts of common public worship" (V.14);

(7) the "prophetic and reconciling" mission of the Church toward the world is an important part of her confession of faith that Jesus is Lord (V.15-16);

(8) the Church Uniting will include in her fellowship "every person who confesses Christ as Lord," making no disparaging discriminations "based upon social, racial, mental, physical, or sexual" attributes (V.17-18).

We commend Chapter VI, "Worship," for its affirmation that worship, considered as an act of thanksgiving, is simply the whole of Christian life viewed from a certain angle. The chapter's discussion of corporate worship—centered on the elements, pattern, and meaning of normal Sunday worship—accords with the broadest tradition of catholic teaching (V.9), and the articulated understanding of "sacrament" is traditional and unexceptionable. Given present-day confusions and disagreements about the character and status of "confirmation" or "sealing," the practical compromise in this regard suggested in the chapter is welcome in its conformity to long-established practices without attempting a final settlement of the issues.

Finally, with regard to Chapter VII, "Ministry," we heartily affirm the location of ordained ministry within the context of the ministry of all Christians. The chapter's assertion that all ministries are simultaneously personal, collegial, and communal (VII.22) is extremely important. Also welcome is the rooting of the ministry of all believers in Baptism (VII.24-26). We find the section describing the exercise of the episcopate as generally consonant with the apostolic faith as understood by Anglicans and appreciate the treatment accorded the three-fold pattern of ordained ministry (VII.39-44). As an adaptation of statements in the WCC ecumenical document *Baptisms, Eucharist and Ministry*, the historical overview of developments in the three-fold ministry among those traditions which have not retained the orders by name and those which have but acknowledge the necessity of their reformation is instructive, helpful, and given prominent place in the discussion. The expressed intention that bishops in the Church Uniting shall be "in continuity with the historic ministry of bishops" (VII.48) is vitally important for Anglicans, and the document's section on the presbyterate is generally expressive of our understanding of that ministry (VII.52-56).

The SCER also recognizes that *The COCU Consensus* is "an anticipation of the Church Uniting which the participating bodies, by the power of the Holy Spirit, wish to become." In particular, we affirm in this regard the comprehensive vision of the Church and its stand against discrimination on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, or ethnic origin.

B. Reservations

The Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations does not, however, find *The COCU Consensus* to be a "sufficient theological basis for covenanting acts and the

uniting process proposed at this time by the Consultation.” SCER notes the following critical comments and reservations:

(1) The SCER is uncertain about the function of *The COCU Consensus* document. Affirmation of it as a sufficient theological basis for the covenanting process could be construed as the sufficient condition for mutual recognition of the churches, and hence as a substitute for the normal, painstaking process of becoming intimately knowledgeable and understanding of each other—a process which is presupposed by the act of mutual recognition. We are clear in the conviction that the document alone cannot serve this purpose.

(2) The larger ecumenical dialogue has moved beyond the terms of this particular consultation,² which is tied too closely and, perhaps, uncritically to certain aspects of our national heritage and expectations. As a corrective to this tendency we find it important to call attention to certain more international ecumenical documents, such as *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* and the agreed statements of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission.

(3) The Episcopal Church is committed to a vision of unity of greater specificity than that expressed by *The COCU Consensus*—namely, a communion of Communion based on mutual recognition of each other as churches rather than on the basis of mutual acceptance of a document.

(4) The understanding of salvation articulated in *The COCU Consensus* is insufficient. The role of the Church in the economy of salvation is conceived almost exclusively as an agency of social amelioration. There is little sense of grace and the need for personal and corporate transformation in Christ. The eschatological dimension of Christian faith and life are nearly lost amidst the concern for improving society.

(5) *The COCU Consensus* describes a process by which the faith of the Church Uniting may be confessed, rather than setting forth a statement of the Apostolic faith. For instance, while there is a stated commitment to acknowledge the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds (see above IV.A, p. 12) and to teach their faith and use them in worship, we note, however, that the actual teaching of those creeds is not adequately engaged in the text of the document itself. At the same time, the document affirms that the Church Uniting “will include, as part of its preaching and teaching office, an obligation to confess and communicate from time to time the substance of the faith in new language to meet new occasions and issues.” Questions thus arise about which statements would express the binding teaching authority of the Church, and whether local confessions do not need wider ecumenical acceptance in order to offer an authoritative interpretation of the ecumenical creeds.

(6) For Episcopalians and other Anglicans, worship and confession of faith are particularly and especially joined in liturgy. *The COCU Consensus* lacks provision for liturgical norms to be used by the Church Uniting that would safeguard, ensure, and promote the common character of worship. By this we do not mean specific authorized liturgies, but rather the articulation of principles. For example, the document entirely ignores the issue of the elements (bread and wine) appropriate to the Lord’s Supper as noted by the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral. Similarly, trinitarian language is safeguarded in the document only with respect to the Creeds and the rite of Holy

²In addition to the national restriction noted in this sentence, there is a more general criticism to be discerned in the fact that absolutely no affirmations were made in regard to Chapter III, “Toward a Church Catholic, Evangelical, and Reformed.” The larger ecumenical discussion has moved beyond the confining aspects of the paradigm informing Chapter III.

Baptism, whereas we would want, for example, to ensure its inclusion in the rehearsal of salvation history featured in the Great Thanksgiving of the Eucharist also.

(7) In spite of tremendous advances made in Chapter VII, "Ministry," there remain a number of difficulties. For example, the document states particularly with regard to the office of bishop that "the Church Uniting . . . will ordain its bishops in such a way that recognition of this ministry is invited from all parts of the universal Church." The document, however, is not sufficiently specific about the role of bishops in ordination; it does not define what it means by the bishop's "presiding" at ordinations; nor does it specify who performs the laying-on-of-hands at the ordination of a bishop (VII.50). There appears to be a possible confusion of orders where the text mentions the participation of other ministers, ordained and unordained, in ordinations (VII.51e). The document would seem not only to call into question catholic teaching of long standing, but also to contradict what Anglicans have said in dialogue with Lutherans and Roman Catholics in this regard.

(8) Finally, the document leaves unclear how the Church Uniting will combine traditions which express episcopacy "in the form of a succession of ordained ministers" and those which intend "a succession in the apostolic faith" but lack formal episcopal succession (VII.47). For churches in the catholic tradition, such a ministry must be inaugurated by a liturgical act, and, unless a liturgy is agreed upon which will accomplish this, no definitive step should be taken.

Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue

Since 1983, members of the third series of the Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue (LED) have been at work on the mandate given by the General Conventions of the respective churches in the Lutheran-Episcopal Agreement of 1982. By that mandate the Dialogue was authorized to discuss "any other outstanding questions that must be resolved before full communion . . . can be established between the respective churches, e.g., implications of the Gospel, historic episcopate, and ordering of ministry (Bishops, Priests, Deacons) in the total context of apostolicity" (*Journal*, 1982, p. C-48).

The Dialogue has met five times since the 68th General Convention of 1985 and continued its work through extensive studies and intensive discussions. Through this process LED has come to a new appreciation of the importance of unity in mission and of the 1982 Agreement involving mutual ecclesial recognition and Interim Sharing of the Eucharist. In January 1988, the Dialogue announced partial completion of its mandate with the adoption of an agreed statement entitled "Implications of the Gospel." The ninety-page text of this document was simultaneously transmitted to the SCER of this Church and to the Standing Committee of the Office of Ecumenical Affairs of the newly constituted Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (a merger of the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, the American Lutheran Church, and the Lutheran Church in America). On New Year's Day, 1988, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) became the official partner, along with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS), of the Episcopal Church in LED. SCER welcomes the emergence of ELCA, noting that this event brings the Dialogue into a new phase.

"Implications of the Gospel" has been recommended by the Dialogue for study in the churches. As an ecumenical document, "Implications" is not directed toward the task of overcoming doctrinal differences. It attempts rather to set forth what Episcopalians and Lutherans can say together for the contemporary life and mission of the Church about a gospel grounded in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is, furthermore, a document addressed to an audience beyond as well as within the churches which commissioned it. And, finally, it is vitally concerned with unity in

mission and concludes with a number of specific and practical recommendations to the Episcopal Church and the ELCA which are not dependent upon full communion for implementation, but which, insofar as they are undertaken cooperatively, can aid the churches in advancing faithful life and mission and can also provide living steps toward full communion.

It should be noted that the LCMS representatives to the Dialogue were unable to endorse the latest agreed statement, since their church was not an official party to the Agreement of 1982. At the same time, the LCMS representatives have been full partners in the Dialogue's discussion and examination of all these and other topics. Their role in the future of LED III, however, awaits further clarification.

During the past triennium, LED has also examined a number of key documents in the churches' traditions—namely, the *Book of Common Prayer*, the Augsburg Confession, and Luther's Small Catechism—with a view, through reflection and discussion, toward deepening mutual doctrinal understanding in our developing relationship. This examination and evaluation will continue on LED's agenda at least throughout the next triennium.

Finally, the remaining part of the 1982 mandate will form a major focus for LED's agenda in the coming years: study of the topic of "historic episcopate and ordering of ministry . . . in the total context of apostolicity." Papers on these and the other above-mentioned topics have been assigned to various members of the Dialogue beginning with its next meeting in January 1989. Meanwhile, the SCER hopes that a widely based study of the significant agreed statement "Implications of the Gospel" can go forward with the endorsement of this Church and the ELCA.

Resolution #A040

Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, **That this 69th General Convention greet with joy the newly constituted Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, recognize now the partnership of that Church in the Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue, and acknowledge with gratitude that Church's continuance of those agreements achieved between this Church and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, the American Lutheran Church, and the Lutheran Church in America (its predecessor churches) in 1982; and be it further**

Resolved, **That these greetings and acknowledgements be communicated by the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church to the Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**

Resolution #A041

"Implications of the Gospel"

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, **That this 69th General Convention direct the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations to devise and execute during the next triennium a process for study and evaluation by this Church of that certain document entitled "Implications of the Gospel" as adopted by the Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue in January 1988; and be it further**

Resolved, **That this 69th General Convention direct the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations to report to the 70th General Convention the results of such study and evaluation along with a recommendation concerning whether this Church can receive and affirm the agreed statement as a faithful expression of the Gospel and as a step on the road to full communion with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**

Oriental Orthodox Relations

The first international Forum of Representatives of Anglican and Oriental Orthodox Churches met at St. Albans, England, in 1985. Sponsored by the Anglican Consultative Council, the meeting took place against the background of long friendship with all these churches with jurisdictions in North America: Armenian, Coptic Orthodox, Ethiopian Orthodox, Syrian Orthodox and Syrian Orthodox Church of the East. The Forum proposed, among other things, that a North American regional body be formed to promote Anglican-Oriental Orthodox understanding and cooperation. The SCER recommended that the Presiding Bishop approach the Oriental Orthodox bishops in the U.S. about the proposal. The ecumenical officers of the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church of Canada have begun conversations about the proposed regional body.

RELATIONS WITH CHURCHES IN FULL COMMUNION

The past triennium has witnessed theological advance and wider geographical representation in the international Anglican theological conferences held with the Old Catholic Churches because of the full communion that exists with them. The "Chichester Agreed Statement" on authority and primacy in the Church is an example of such achievement (*Ecumenical Bulletin* 73, September-October, 1985). Discussions at the latest Anglican-Old Catholic Theological Conference meeting, at Toronto in 1987, led the official Anglican representatives from the U.S.A. and Canada to recommend that the North American Working Group of this dialogue be continued despite the termination of intercommunism by the Polish National Catholic Church in 1978. The SCER endorses this recommendation.

Resolution #A042

North American Working Group

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, **That this 69th General Convention authorize the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations to continue the participation of the Episcopal Church in the North American Working Group of the international Anglican-Old Catholic Theological Conference.**

Regular contacts and cooperation have been maintained with the united Churches of South India, North India, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Meetings of the Council of the Episcopal Church and the Philippine Independent Church in the U.S.A. were initiated. The Rt. Rev. Victor Esclamado is the auxiliary in the U.S.A. of the Obispo Maximo of the Philippine Independent Church, the Most Rev. Soliman F. Gauno. Esclamado's office coordinates relations between the Philippine Independent Church and the Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. Lists of recognized clergy and congregations are available.

The close cooperation of the Episcopal Church with the Mar Thoma Church continues through the efforts of the Asiamerica Ministries Office at the Episcopal Church Center and through dioceses where Mar Thoma congregations continue to increase.

For the first time, representative bishops from each of the churches in full communion with the churches of the Anglican Communion have been invited to participate in the Lambeth Conference of 1988. The SCER applauds this broadening of the traditional composition of the Lambeth Conference, which recognizes that communion implies a visible sharing in the common life of the Body of Christ.

**PARTICIPATION IN THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
AND THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES**

The Episcopal Church has a long and important history of commitment to the ecumenical movement. This commitment is lived out in many diverse ways, and the conciliar movement is a significant part of that experience. We participate fully in the life of the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches.

National Council of the Churches of Christ

The SCER notes with appreciation that the integrating vision of the National Council of the Churches of Christ (NCCC) as a "community of Christian communions" is coming to fruition. Several important structural changes have been achieved from 1985 to 1988. All of these were studied and developed by the NCCC Implementation Committee working with the NCCC staff and Executive Committee. General Secretary Arie Brouwer's steadfast commitment to the vision of an integrated Council and his seasoned organizational development skills have been invaluable during this reorganization of the former structure of a "cooperative agency."

The most noteworthy achievement has been the separation of the Division of Overseas Ministries and Church World Service. Prior to this separation, Church World Service, which represents at least 75 percent of the budget and personnel in the NCCC, was subsidiary to the Division of Overseas Ministries. The two divisions are now on a peer basis and are seeking ways to serve each other and to strengthen the life of the NCCC in education, public policy, international affairs, communication and social service. This major area of reorganization illustrates what has already been achieved through the process of integration as well as the direction in which the Council must continue to move.

Significant progress has also been made in both the reality and perception of the Governing Board truly "governing" a Council which has within it many individual unit committees, different constituencies, and varying objectives based on different histories. Now all major business comes before the Board from "clusters" of divisions and units, and each Governing Board member serves on such a cluster. The actual leadership of the officers and Executive Committee has also been significantly enhanced. Nevertheless, the tension between program unit leadership and Governing Board leadership still exists.

The need for better linkage of the NCCC and its Governing Board to the internal life of the member communions has been identified but not resolved. Many Governing Board members do not yet have a direct place in their communion's policy planning. The attempted integration of the work of program units of the Council and the enhancement of the Governing Board's role in the Council have not yet generated significantly more funds for the Council. The level of total support for divisions and units is at a precariously low level. The Council is thus forced into a survival mentality rather than being creative and proactive in responding to the wide range of needs and opportunities. Because member communions have yet to recognize themselves as a "community of Christian communions," they have yet to reshape their own program and budget priorities.

Nevertheless, we are encouraged by the direction in which the NCCC is moving. We look forward to being more effective partners with others in this pilgrimage towards a "community of Christian communions".

World Council of Churches

Since the 1983 Sixth Assembly, the World Council of Churches (WCC) has pursued its post-Vancouver agenda, building towards the Seventh Assembly to be held in Canberra, Australia, in February, 1991.

Since the 1983 Assembly, two major international conferences have been held. In 1986, a conference on Inter-Church Aid, Refugees and World Service (CICARWS) addressed the question of ways in which member churches, with CICARWS, serve migrants, refugees, and other needy people and respond to related issues. In 1987, a Consultation on Resources Sharing addressed the manner in which churches, agencies, ecumenical bodies, and persons participate in the use and exchange of spiritual, human, and material resources.

Other major events scheduled before the Canberra Assembly are a 1989 Conference on World Mission and Evangelism in San Antonio, Texas, and a 1990 World Convocation on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation. "Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation" is a special focus of the WCC in this period, designed to be addressed by all program units of the Council.

The WCC-sponsored "Ecumenical Decade: The Churches in Solidarity with Women" is planned to begin at Eastertide, 1988. The Episcopal Church's Executive Council has commended the decade to our attention and for our observance.

The present Presiding Bishop has taken up his responsibilities as a new member of the WCC's Central Committee and has shown deep concern for, and commitment to, the work of the Council.

The SCER offers its continuing appreciation for the work of the WCC's Faith and Order Commission, particularly for the agreed statement on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, which the 68th General Convention declared to be a major contribution to the work of reconciliation. Two other current study projects are *Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today* and *The Unity of the Church and the Renewal of Human Community*.

The Episcopal Church's participation in the NCCC and the WCC is addressed in the report which follows. The report's recommendations present challenges both to this Church and to each of the Councils.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO EVALUATE THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH'S PARTICIPATION IN THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST AND THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

I. The Work of the Committee

A. Purpose

A strong ecumenical vision is essential for the very life of the Church. The 1967 General Convention spoke of our commitment to this vision in the following words: "Our ecumenical policy is to press toward the visible unity of the whole Christian fellowship in the faith and truth of Jesus Christ, developing and sharing in its various dialogues and consultations in such a way that the goal be neither obscured nor compromised and that each separate activity be a step toward the fullness of unity for which our Savior prayed."

The ecumenical policy, therefore, of the Episcopal Church is the visible unity of the whole Church, and we strongly reaffirm that policy.

Participation and leadership of the Episcopal Church in the modern ecumenical movement began with the movement itself. A great range of activities and decisions at

all levels constitute this participation and leadership. As this Church has been involved, it has given of its richness, and it has also received much.

It is in the light of this policy and out of deep concern for the effectiveness of existing conciliar bodies that Presiding Bishop John M. Allin requested that there be an evaluation of our participation in the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA (NCCC) and the World Council of Churches (WCC). Further responsibilities were added to the work of the committee as the result of actions of the 1985 General Convention. The purpose of the committee was to study both councils and our relationship to them, to raise concerns and questions, and make recommendations that will lead to stronger and more accountable councils.

More effective participation on the part of the Episcopal Church emerged as a major issue during the work of the committee. As the committee continued its study, it became clear that such effective participation will depend upon a renewed interest in and commitment to the ecumenical movement.

B. Process

In response to Presiding Bishop Allin's request through the Executive Council, the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations (SCER) appointed a special committee at its 1984 fall meeting to carry out this mandate. There have been six major meetings of the whole committee. We have read numerous documents, papers and books relating to the life and work of the councils. We have consulted with current and former members of the Governing Board of the NCCC and with delegates to the Assemblies of the WCC. We have sought the advice of various persons who have been involved in the working units, committees and commissions of the two bodies. The entire committee made an on-site visit to the NCCC offices at the Interchurch Center in New York City to meet with the Rev. Dr. Arie Brouwer and other key staff persons. Three of our members visited the WCC offices at the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva, Switzerland, for a similar consultation with the Rev. Dr. Emilio Castro and other key persons. In addition, we spoke with representatives from dioceses that have been critical of our Church's involvement in the NCCC and the WCC. We also met with representatives from the Institute of Religion and Democracy, a major critic of the councils. Our report is a product of this research process and consultation, together with our own analysis and deliberation.

II. Conciliar Ecumenism

A. Background

The plurality of Christian communions in the United States is the background for understanding the 19th-century movements toward cooperation between the churches. The Episcopal Church has been a leader and pioneer in the ecumenical movement while being a minority among the Christian churches in America. Consideration of its role in relation to the other Christian communions led to the historic Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral of 1886-1888 as the basis on which it would confer with other Christian bodies to restore the unity of Christ's Church. A primary interest of the Episcopal Church historically has been in issues of Faith and Order.

While these efforts to reach a theological consensus were underway, the Episcopal Church sought also to cooperate with other Christian bodies on a variety of issues. The 1907 General Convention instructed the Joint Commission on Unity to send representatives to an inter-church conference in 1908 that created the Federal Council of Churches. Although various commissions and the National Council (now called the Executive Council) of the Episcopal Church worked with it, the Episcopal Church as a whole did not join the Federal Council of Churches until 1940.

Many agencies of cooperation were organized outside and apart from the Federal Council of Churches. In 1950, eight major agencies, including the Federal Council, joined together to form the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. The Episcopal Church was a founding member. Its first President was Presiding Bishop Henry Knox Sherrill; Dr. Cynthia Wedel later served as President. It was not until 1959 that Faith and Order became a part of the NCCC as a result of the 1957 North American Conference on Faith and Order at Oberlin, Ohio. Faith and Order's first Executive Director was the Rev. Dr. William A. Norgren, who now serves as the Episcopal Church's Ecumenical Officer.

The NCCC, as a result of its history and sources of funding, has been to a large degree a council of agencies with limited governance by its Governing Board. As a result of concerns raised by the Executive Council of our own Church and other member churches, a new preamble to the constitution and statement of purposes was approved in 1981, reflecting a change in self-understanding. The NCCC, previously described as a "cooperative agency" of the member churches, was to become a "community of Christian communions." A Presidential Panel, appointed from members of the Governing Board, prepared a plan for NCCC's functioning as such a community. (The Episcopal Church was represented by Bishop Gerald McAllister and Dean Elton O. Smith.) In 1984, the Panel's report was approved, and an Implementation Committee was elected to monitor and assist in the complex reshaping necessary. (The Episcopal Church was represented by Dean Elton O. Smith.)

The first great impetus to the global ecumenical movement was the pioneering World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh in 1910. Episcopal Bishop Charles Henry Brent's passionate plea for unity in a world "too strong for a divided Church" was instrumental in the development of the Faith and Order Movement. Starting with the 1910 General Convention, a Joint Commission on Faith and Order worked for seventeen years in preparation for the Lausanne Conference on Faith and Order in 1927. Two years previously a conference on Life and Work had met in Stockholm. Representatives from our Church participated in both of these conferences, and in the two conferences when they met again at Oxford and Edinburgh in the summer of 1937. At this second series of meetings, the decision was reached to form the World Council of Churches. The 1937 General Convention endorsed the proposal and was a founding member of the Council when these two World Conferences came together in 1948. Presiding Bishop Henry Knox Sherrill and Dr. Cynthia Wedel have served as presidents.

B. What is a Council of Churches?

The 1981 preamble to the constitution says, "The National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America is a community of Christian communions which, in response to the Gospel as revealed in the Scriptures, confess Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word of God, as Savior and Lord. These communions covenant with one another to manifest ever more fully the unity of the Church. Relying upon the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, the Council brings these communions into common mission, serving in all creation to the glory of God." Communions which can accept the nature and purposes of the Council as set forth in the preamble and the body of the constitution are eligible for membership. Membership requires a dual vote at a meeting of the Governing Board; both a two-thirds vote of the member churches present and voting, and a two-thirds vote of the individual delegates present and voting are necessary. Membership of the NCCC includes Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox, Old Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian and Reformed, Baptist, and other communions. The Roman Catholic Church, most conservative evangelical

churches, and Pentecostal churches are not members. It is the most prominent ecumenical organization in the nation, though its member churches include less than half the the Christians in the United States.

The "Basis" of the World Council of Churches is stated in its constitution: "The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior according to the scriptures and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit." The "Basis" was defined by the 1954 Evanston Assembly of the WCC as indicating the nature of the fellowship, providing the orientation point for the work the Council undertakes, and indicating the range of the fellowship which the churches in the Council seek to establish. Membership is open to any church which is able to accept the "Basis" and meet established criteria. A two-thirds vote of the churches which are already members is required. Today the more than 300 national or regional member churches live in very different political, economic and social environments. Many have a long history, but there are also younger Pentecostal bodies and Independent churches in Africa and Asia. The Roman Catholic Church is not a member, but it works with the WCC in important areas of cooperation. The WCC is the most comprehensive expression of the ecumenical movement. It calls the churches to the goal of visible unity, facilitates common witness of the churches as they seek unity, and works toward the reconciliation of all humankind.

C. What is the Authority of a Council of Churches?

The constitution of the National Council of Churches limits the authority of the Council in relation to the member churches: "The Council shall have no authority or administrative control over the churches which constitute its membership. It shall have no authority to prescribe a common creed, form of church government, or form of worship, or to limit the autonomy of the churches cooperating in it."

The authority of the World Council of Churches is specified in its constitution: "The World Council of Churches shall offer counsel and provide opportunity for united action in matters of common interest. It may take action on behalf of constituent churches only in such matters as one or more of them may commit to it and only on behalf of such churches. The World Council shall not legislate for the churches . . ." Archbishop William Temple of Canterbury said the authority of the WCC consists only "in the weight it carries with the churches by its own wisdom." This also can apply to the NCCC.

The decisions of the NCCC and WCC do not have the authority of an ecumenical council of the Church. These councils should not be confused with the Church nor identified with the goal of the ecumenical movement. Councils are instruments with a view toward visible unity, which is the goal to be reached. The distinction is important because authentic ecumenism aims at enabling Christians to be one in full communion in the faith and sacraments, not simply in their acting together.

The General Convention of the Episcopal Church has twice acted to clarify this Church's position on the authority of the councils and their relationship to this Church. In 1961 it stated, "This Convention recognizes the importance of having the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA speak to the Churches about the Christian implications of contemporary social, economic, and political issues, but also declares that no pronouncement or statement can, without action by this Church's authority, be regarded as an official statement of this Church." In 1964 General Convention stated "that the position of this Church in any public statements or releases of the National Council of Churches be stated as follows:

- a. Such public statements or releases shall have as their primary purpose the setting forth of issues about which Christian people ought to be concerned;
- b. They should be so phrased as not to bring into question Christian commitment of those who do not agree;
- c. Statements should not try to give specific solutions to problems that must be decided by statesmen or others in specialized fields of competence;
- d. While statements may be directed properly to any area of life, they should avoid the impression that they offer the only specific Christian solution to the problem."

It has often been noted that the word "council" is a misnomer. A council of churches does not have the authority that is traditionally given to a council, such as the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church, a synod such as the General Convention, and least of all to an ecumenical council of the Church.

III. Expectations

An important aspect of our review is to clarify both our expectations of the councils and the councils' expectations of our participation and commitment.

We asked both General Secretary Arie Brouwer of the NCCC, and General Secretary Emilio Castro of the WCC, to respond to this issue of the councils' expectations of the Episcopal Church. Certain common expectations are in both letters:

1. That we will bring to the councils a commitment to the visible unity of the whole Church.
2. That we will bring the richness of our own traditions along with an openness to the traditions of others.
3. That we will participate in the life of the councils, committing our human and financial resources in order that there can be a common ecumenical vision and agenda.
4. That we will both interpret and act on that ecumenical vision and agenda at all levels of our life.

As we look to the Episcopal Church's expectations of the councils it is necessary to understand them in the context of the declaration on the nature of the unity we seek, as adopted by the 1979 General Convention:

The visible unity we seek will be one eucharistic fellowship. As an expression of and a means toward this goal, the uniting Church will recognize itself as a communion of Communion, based upon acknowledgement of catholicity and apostolicity. In this organic relationship all will recognize each other's members and ministries. All will share the bread and the cup of the Lord. All will acknowledge each other as belonging to the Body of Christ at all places and at all times. All will proclaim the Gospel to the world with one mind and purpose. All will serve the needs of humankind with mutual trust and dedication. And for these ends all will plan and decide together in assemblies constituted by authorized representatives whenever and wherever there is need.

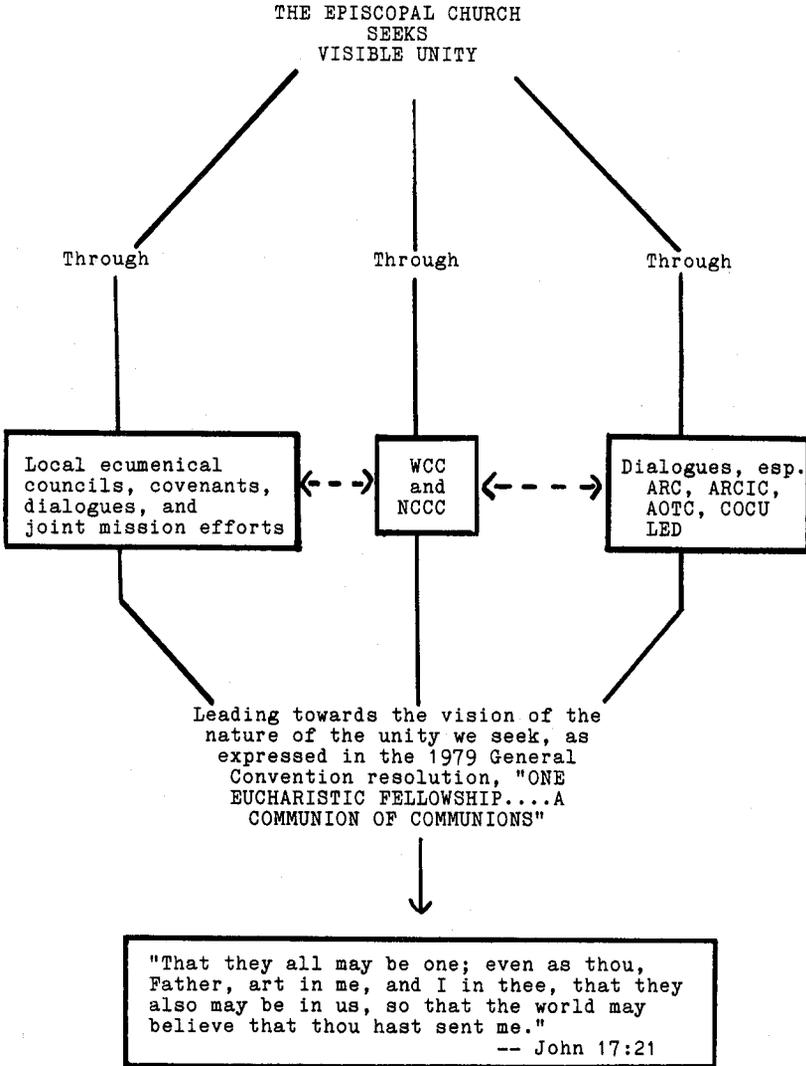
We do not yet see the shape of that collegiality, conciliarity, authority and primacy which need to be present and active in the Diocese with its Parishes as well as nationally, regionally, universally; but we recognize that some ecclesial structure will be necessary to bring about the expression of our unity in the Body of Christ as described above.

We do not yet know how the particular traditions of each of the Communion will be maintained and developed for the enrichment of the whole Church. We do not see how the Church will be shaped by the particular histories and cultures within which she is called to fulfill her mission.

THE BLUE BOOK

All Christians are challenged to express more fully among themselves the biblical call to mutual responsibility and interdependence. We believe ways can now be found to express this call to a communion of the Churches in the Body of Christ. As the Churches become partners in mission they will move from present inter-relatedness to interdependence.

We seek to manifest our commitments to visible unity and common witness through three broad types of relationships, as illustrated in the following diagram:



The committee identifies the following expectations for the councils and for the Episcopal Church's participation in these councils:

1. We expect the councils to exhibit those qualities of collegiality and conciliarity which will support the visible unity we seek.

2. We expect the councils to create a climate of understanding and mutuality among member communions such that, in obedience to the word of God, respect and self-sacrifice will be exhibited within the fellowship and to the world, even in the midst of disagreement and controversy.

3. We expect the councils to foster those qualities of leadership which attract to common witness people of good will from many backgrounds and traditions.

4. We expect the councils to engage in theological reflection, biblical study, and research of such character and quality that support common witness.

5. We expect the councils to provide the churches with opportunities for mutual sharing of human, spiritual, and financial resources within the councils and with one another.

6. We expect that the councils will function clearly and with a sense of accountability so that we may freely commit our human and financial resources.

Our life together provides the churches with a means of cooperation and an indispensable corrective to our own limitations and cultural bias in discerning the will of God as we are on mission in the world. If these councils did not exist, we would have to create similar bodies.

The nature of our participation needs to be conciliar in the best sense of the word: not doing ministry and mission *for* the churches but *with* the churches.

As we live out these expectations, we begin to view the results as our own. We are more faithful to that unity to which our Lord calls us, and develop a more powerful and common witness to the world.

IV. Recommendations of the Committee

From the experience of this Church, the research of the committee, and correspondence with council leadership, the following issues have been identified:

A. Recommendations Relating to the NCCC

1. Issue: The complex and sometimes cumbersome, and seemingly self-perpetuating structure of the NCCC.

The enormous input of time and energy which have been poured into the NCCC's Presidential Panel would indicate that this is a concern felt as sharply by the leadership in the NCCC as by leadership in the Episcopal Church. Whether the recommendations of the Presidential Panel can be successfully implemented is as yet unclear. Certainly at the highest levels of the NCCC management, there seems to be a desire to reform despite varying forms of resistance to change at many levels of the NCCC, including the Governing Board and the member communions.

Recommendation: That the Presiding Bishop and Executive Council of the Episcopal Church reaffirm the recommendations put forth by the Presidential Panel, and continue to monitor their implementation, particularly as related to issues of accountability, credibility and clarity.

2. Issue: The quality of the Episcopal Church's participation and leadership with the NCCC.

NCCC leaders have assured the committee that the Episcopal Church continues to occupy a significant, even pivotal, place in the NCCC community of churches. If

participation in the NCCC is to be enriched and needed change is to be implemented, then initiative and leadership for so doing will need to come from the Episcopal Church. One of the difficulties we experience as member communions in providing leadership to the NCCC is the representation requirements made by the NCCC and the internal guidelines of the Episcopal Church.

Recommendation: That the Presiding Bishop and Executive Council consider ways whereby the Episcopal Church's representatives to the NCCC Governing Board can be made more accountable to the Episcopal Church, such as direct reporting to the Executive Council and sharing the Episcopal Church's concerns with the Governing Board.

Recommendation: That the Presiding Bishop and the Executive Council provide means to oversee and evaluate NCCC policies and actions in order to develop policy recommendations to the General Convention.

Recommendation: That units and divisions of our Church be urged to review their priorities to see whether the NCCC can be a channel for more effective fulfillment of their goals and objectives.

Recommendation: That the Presiding Bishop and Executive Council be more intentional in briefing our representatives to the Governing Board so that they may be more effective members.

3. Issue: The NCCC's need to develop a more consultative and collegial style.

The NCCC has behaved more like another denomination than a "community of Christian communions" and has not sufficiently consulted with member churches as to their needs and concerns.

Recommendation: That the Presiding Bishop and Executive Council urge that increased emphasis be placed on the NCCC's unique opportunity for calling together the leadership of member churches into leadership forums.

4. Issue: The NCCC is perceived as more reactive than proactive in the way it addresses public issues.

Although there have been well-prepared initiatives on public issues, nevertheless the NCCC is often perceived as more reactive than proactive. People often see only this distorted picture of the work of the NCCC.

Recommendation: That the Presiding Bishop and Executive Council urge the NCCC to be more selective and intentional in the choice of public issues which it addresses, and more thorough in research. In making this recommendation, the committee believes there exist possibilities for addressing public issues with the same thoroughness evidenced in recent pastoral letters published by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. The committee recommends that the Presiding Bishop and the Executive Council collaborate more regularly with the NCCC as a resource for research.

5. Issue: Need for communication and cooperation among various expressions of the ecumenical movement.

The NCCC should not stand in isolation from the rest of the ecumenical movement, such as bilateral dialogues, consultations, and inter-church consortia, or from state and local councils of churches on the one hand and the WCC on the other.

Recommendation: That the Presiding Bishop and Executive Council press upon the NCCC, as it seeks to become a community of communions, the importance of assessing its relationship with and furthering the work of visible unity as carried out by consultations, bilateral dialogues, and other consortia.

Recommendation: That the Presiding Bishop and Executive Council ask the Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers (EDEO) to work with the Commission on

Regional and Local Ecumenism (CORLE) of the NCCC to develop stronger lines of communication and cooperation with the World Council of Churches as well as state and local councils of churches.

6. Issue: The perceived ideological stance of the NCCC.

Just as the Episcopal Church General Convention sometimes adopts policies and statements which seem to some Episcopalians to be unreflective of attitudes at the grassroots of the Church and insufficiently reflective of the complexities surrounding certain controversial issues, so too, the NCCC seems to be unrepresentative of the diversity of attitudes in its member communions. Part of the problem has been the media's tendency to regard as newsworthy only that which is controversial. However, the problem cannot be laid entirely at the media's doorstep. NCCC's statements do not always evidence a sufficient understanding of the moral, cultural and political ambiguities which surround sensitive public issues.

Recommendation: While the committee does not quarrel with the NCCC's right and responsibility to speak to the churches, we would urge units of NCCC and our members of the NCCC Governing Board: (1) That such statements seek, wherever possible, to evidence an awareness of all sides of an issue; (2) That, in addressing public policy questions, the NCCC describe, in greater detail, the process and theological assumptions which led the NCCC to adopt its position; and (3) That the NCCC be more conscious of the image it presents through the media to church members.

7. Issue: Funding.

It is difficult to understand the complex patterns of funding by the Episcopal Church to ecumenical bodies. It is also difficult to understand patterns of funding within the NCCC. At present funding from the Episcopal Church to the NCCC is scattered throughout the Episcopal Church's budget. The NCCC budget appears complicated to persons trying to understand NCCC funding.

Committee members found it helpful to have an analysis of the Episcopal Church's funding of the NCCC presented in one report. At its request the committee received from the NCCC a report of how money from the Episcopal Church was spent.

Recommendation: That the Presiding Bishop and Executive Council request the NCCC through its proper channels to provide Executive Council members an annual summary report of how Episcopal Church money was spent, and request its own Finance Committee to supply to Executive Council members annually a report showing the Episcopal Church's grants to the NCCC.

In Conclusion: It is important to remember that the NCCC is an organization in the process of establishing a new future for itself: a community of Christian communions, with an organizational structure which will be considerably reformed if the recommendations of the Presidential Panel are in fact implemented. Therefore, the leadership of the Episcopal Church has presently an opportunity to influence the future of the NCCC. If the Executive Council is to participate more effectively in the NCCC, this will necessarily involve assuming our fair share of budgetary responsibility.

B. Recommendations Relating to the WCC

Many of the issues and concerns mentioned in the section of this report dealing with the Episcopal Church's participation in the NCCC are applicable also to the WCC. At the same time, there are issues which particularly bear on the Episcopal Church's relationship with and participation in the WCC. One major difference lies in the difficulty for many Americans to view their concerns as well as those of other peoples in an international context.

1. Issue: The agenda of North American Churches.

North American denominationalism (for example, 31 U.S. churches are members of the WCC) makes it difficult for WCC leadership to monitor the mission priorities and viewpoints of the North American churches.

Recommendation: That the Presiding Bishop urge the WCC to hold a consultation in North America to define and propose solutions to this problem.

Recommendation: That the Presiding Bishop and Executive Council, in consultation with the SCER, seek the development of appropriate channels for sharing with WCC leadership those mission priorities which are important to the Episcopal Church.

2. Issue: Linkages between the Episcopal Church and the WCC.

Linkages between the Episcopal Church and the WCC have weakened in recent years for a variety of reasons. Because the WCC has grown to more than 300 member churches, some founding members like the Episcopal Church have fewer seats allocated to them at Assemblies and on the committees and commissions of this council, and thus fewer leaders of our Church are able to have direct personal experience of the life and work of the WCC. Moreover, in the 1950s and 1960s a generation of American ecumenists received their inspiration and training at WCC-related student conferences and work camp programs. Few such programs are available to Americans today. In addition, the Episcopal Church, until 1970, provided scholarships for qualified students to study at the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey. Misunderstanding is increased when strident voices criticize the WCC in the secular media and there are few Episcopalians able to answer in an informed and responsible way.

Recommendation: That the Presiding Bishop and Executive Council make provision for consultation between the communication staffs of the Episcopal Church and the WCC.

Recommendation: That the Presiding Bishop and Executive Council affirm support for the newly established "John M. Allin Scholarship Fund" for students wishing to study at the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey.

Recommendation: That the Presiding Bishop appoint a qualified person to serve in Geneva on the staff of the Faith and Order Commission, which would provide communication and linkage with our Church.

3. Issue: Perceived Ideological Stance of the WCC in Respect to Matters of Public Policy.

When it was constituted at Amsterdam in 1948, the WCC was largely a creation of the European and North American churches. In the nearly 40 years since, WCC membership has grown enormously, a growth which has reflected the emergence of indigenous national churches in the independent nations of Africa, Asia, and, to a lesser degree, Latin America. So, too, there has been a gradual shift of influence in the WCC from the Northern to the Southern Hemisphere. Furthermore, the entrance of the Russian Orthodox Church and other Orthodox Churches of Eastern Europe in 1961 has brought another dimension of complexity. All this means that the WCC has become far more reflective of tensions in the world. It has also meant that, in the governance of the WCC, there has been a shift in leadership and power.

The WCC has been especially likely to make public statements concerning the policies of the United States, where democratic freedoms have a greater chance of being heard, than is the case in countries with authoritarian regimes (whether of the left or right). In such countries the only way to influence public policy is to deal with the regimes directly and privately. Nonetheless, when the WCC issues public statements critical of the United States, it would help to find points to affirm as well, including

the freedom to be critical. If the WCC is seen entering into the U.S. public process with appreciation as well as criticism, its statements are less likely to be perceived as unfair and the WCC's credibility will rise.

Recommendation: That major WCC statements, particularly those dealing with public policy, include a prologue documenting the process used in developing the statement and the basis upon which the WCC feels competent to make it.

4. Issue: How to Combat Racism.

Even as the Church is committed to combating racism, we need honestly to say that the Church has also contributed to the problem. What ought the witness of the Church to be in a world where racism is a reality that threatens unity? What strategy should be followed?

There are within the WCC two distinct programs that address the issue of racism: the Programme to Combat Racism and a Special Fund to Combat Racism. Of all the WCC programs, the one which has proven most controversial is the Special Fund to Combat Racism, from which grants have been made to such groups as the Patriotic Front in Zimbabwe in 1978. It was this grant which provoked recurring attacks on the WCC. No Episcopal Church funds have been designated for the Special Fund since 1972.

It is important to note that WCC policy requires that all such grants be made for humanitarian purposes. In reality, this often involves us in the dilemma of responding to humanitarian needs in communities where civil war and terrorism are facts of life.

Recommendation: That the Presiding Bishop and Executive Council request that continuing efforts be made by the WCC to help us interpret the purpose and grants of the Special Fund to Combat Racism.

Recommendation: That the Presiding Bishop and Executive Council consider the Episcopal Church's participation and support of programs of the WCC directed toward combating racism, including the Special Fund.

5. Issue: Use of WCC Statements within the Episcopal Church.

The Episcopal Church has not given sufficient attention to WCC study papers, reports, and resolutions on current affairs as significant resources for the development of our mission and ministry. We ought to make our decisions with respect to the rest of the world and other families of churches. WCC statements could be a significant resource in helping us meet this responsibility.

Experience with the WCC's document on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* gives evidence that significant WCC statements can have major positive impact.

Recommendation: That the Presiding Bishop utilize the full resources of the staff and of the Church in evaluating study papers, reports, and resolutions on current affairs and make recommendations for appropriate action, publicizing them where appropriate.

6. Issue: Relationship between the Anglican Communion and the WCC.

Anglicans throughout the world increasingly understand themselves as belonging to a Christian World Communion. The impact of this relationship along with our relationship with the WCC is not clear at this point in history.

There is no question in our minds that the Episcopal Church along with the Anglican Communion needs to see its mission and ministry in this wider global context. Our challenge is to discover new and creative ways to exert leadership and share our resources with others who may differ from us in so many diverse ways, yet are one with us in the Body of Christ.

Recommendation: That the Presiding Bishop and Executive Council request the Anglican Consultative Council to address the relationship between the Anglican Communion with its several provinces and the WCC.

In Conclusion: The WCC is constantly increasing its membership and struggling to be faithful to its unique role in mission. The very nature of the world today creates stress and strain. The WCC's faithfulness is being tested by these stresses and divisions which exist and develop within the societies in which its member churches minister. The only alternative to being part of that struggle is to withdraw into an isolationist position. The committee does not see that as an option if we are to be faithful to the Gospel.

V. The Episcopal Church's Responsibility for Leadership

The quality of the Episcopal Church's participation in the councils will inevitably be influenced by the leadership we provide. The Episcopal Church's delegations to the councils should receive education about their duties, and be responsive and responsible. They should have had sufficient exposure to the wider Church and should understand how the Episcopal Church with the Anglican Communion manifests unity in diversity. The people of the Episcopal Church should feel confident that we have people representing us who are informed and responsible.

A. Appointments

Appointments to the Governing Board of the NCCC and the delegates to WCC Assemblies are nominated by the SCER for appointment by the Presiding Bishop.

Recommendation: That the SCER initiate a change in the process of appointment to allow for the advice and consent of Executive Council to appointment of representatives to the Governing Board of the NCCC and the Assembly of the WCC. [If this process is approved by the SCER and Executive Council, it will be the responsibility of the SCER to seek amendment of Canon I.1.2 (n)(3).]

B. Criteria for Appointments

All of the following are offered subject to the requirements of the NCCC and WCC regarding representation of women, minorities and young people.

Recommendation: That the following criteria be used by the SCER, Presiding Bishop and Executive Council in making these appointments:

1. Appointments to the NCCC Governing Board
 - a. As service on the Board takes almost two weeks a year, members should either be in position to control their time and priorities or have ample vacation time.
 - b. Appointees should be accustomed to conflict and to bureaucratic process.
 - c. The delegation should include one leader with the full backing of the Presiding Bishop who will stay in touch with the NCCC and be an effective communicator.
 - d. One member of the Executive Council should be appointed to be the liaison for each quadrennium and should report annually on behalf of the delegation. This person might be reappointed for a second term in another capacity.
 - e. Appropriate consultation with constituency networks should be encouraged.
 - f. The eight provinces should be represented on the delegation.
 - g. Only the Ecumenical Officer among the staff should be appointed to the delegation.
2. Support for the Delegation to the NCCC Governing Board
 - a. A staff consultant for each of the Governing Board clusters should be present for the delegation's briefing, the Governing Board, and cluster meetings. These should

be appropriate executives, who may, however, delegate this responsibility to another staff person.

b. The evening before the Board meeting should always be free for pre-meeting caucuses of the communions. This request should be addressed to the NCCC by the Presiding Bishop.

c. At the beginning of each quadrennium and before the first Board meeting, the entire delegation should meet with the Presiding Bishop. Here they would learn in detail about their responsibility. The Presiding Bishop would share with them his views concerning the NCCC agenda and what problems he sees.

d. Staff consultants to the delegation should be responsible for seeing that provision is made for prior review of important policy statements, resolutions, programs, and other actions coming before the Board.

e. For the purposes of communication and support, Episcopal Church representatives on the NCCC unit committees and commissions should be appointed with a view to their linkages with Governing Board members.

3. Appointments to the WCC Assembly

a. Because the Assembly requires almost a month every 7-8 years, they must either be in a position to control their time and priorities or have ample vacation time.

b. It is important that all delegates attend preparatory meetings for the Assembly.

c. Delegates should be able to function in inter-cultural, inter-confessional, multi-lingual, inter-racial and conflicted settings.

d. The delegation should report to the SCER and Executive Council, and individual delegates to groups in local areas.

e. The delegation should include the Presiding Bishop and at least one person with experience from prior Assemblies.

f. Delegates should be able to speak well in public and on the normal theological level at which current church concerns are debated within the plenaries of the WCC Assembly, so that a voice from the Episcopal Church may be heard.

4. Support for the Delegation to the WCC Assembly

a. The delegates should meet with the Presiding Bishop before the Assembly to help them prepare in such areas as issues, responsibilities, procedures, structures, and how the delegation will work at the Assembly.

b. Staff consultants should be present for the delegates' briefing prior to the Assembly. Appropriate staff persons should accompany the delegation to the Assembly.

Recommendation: That the Presiding Bishop and Executive Council authorize SCER to present this entire report to the 1988 General Convention for information, and to prepare resolutions for General Convention on those recommendations where such approval is appropriate or required for implementation. [The Executive Council acted in November, 1987. Council's resolution "commends that Report, and authorizes the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations to submit that Report on behalf of the Executive Council to the 1988 General Convention, and to prepare resolutions for the General Convention on those recommendations where approval of the General Convention is required or appropriate for implementation."]

Resolution #A043

Report of the Episcopal Church's Participation in the NCCC and the WCC

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, **That this 69th General Convention give special thanks for the unique opportunity and responsibility that the Episcopal Church is given through participation in both the National Council of the**

Churches of Christ and the World Council of Churches to witness to the unity of the Church and to work for the healing of its broken Body; and be it further

Resolved, That this 69th General Convention receive with appreciation the "Report of the Committee to Evaluate the Episcopal Church's Participation in the National Council of the Churches of Christ and the World Council of Churches" dated September 22, 1987; and be it further

Resolved, That this 69th General Convention commend the recommendations contained in this report and direct that they be forwarded to the appropriate agencies with the endorsement of this Convention.

This recommendation found in Section V.A of the committee's report requires, in part, a canonical change. The SCER, therefore, offers this additional resolution:

Resolution #A044

Change in Canon I.1.2(n)(3)

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That this 69th General Convention amend Canon I.1.2(n)(3) to read: ". . . It shall also nominate for appointment by the Presiding Bishop, with the advice and consent of the Executive Council . . .

REPORT ON THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESAN ECUMENICAL OFFICERS

The Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers (EDEO) is a network of local ecumenical officers and assistant ecumenical officers through which the SCER disseminates studies, reports, and information to the local church, and from which it learns of local ecumenical efforts and priorities. The SCER expresses its gratitude to EDEO for their commitment to local ecumenism and for the aid and support they give to this commission.

The three-year national ecumenical emphasis was a major priority for EDEO this triennium. The network facilitated the involvement of dioceses in celebrations of the 100th anniversary of the Chicago-Lamberth Quadrilateral and in assessment of ecumenical developments during the last decade. EDEO made a major contribution to the National Ecumenical Consultation by publishing the booklet *Models of Ecumenism*. The EDEO Executive Committee collected examples of local ecumenical projects and events which were then compiled in the publication. *Models of Ecumenism* was presented to the Consultation during a dinner honoring past and present EDEO presidents. It was also distributed to all diocesan bishops and ecumenical officers.

During the triennium a joint committee of representatives from EDEO and the Roman Catholic ecumenical network, the National Association of Diocesan Ecumenical Officers (NADEO), researched and produced three studies: *Food for the Journey: A Study on Eucharistic Sharing*; *Who in the World: a Study of Ministry*; and *How in the Church: A Study of Authority*.

EDEO facilitated continuing diocesan study of the various ecumenical documents commended to this Church: the First Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission's *Final Report*; the Consultation on Church Union documents, *The COCU Consensus: In Quest of a Church of Christ Uniting and Covenanting Toward Unity: From Consensus to Communion*; the Report of the Anglican-Reformed International Commission, *God's Reign and Our Unity*; and the *Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue: The Dublin Agreed Statement 1984*.

During the past triennium EDEO initiated an Ecumenical Institute for the training

of new ecumenical officers and their assistants. The first Institute was held June 1-6, 1986, in Washington, D.C. Sixteen officers from eastern dioceses participated in the Institute, attending lectures and formulating projects to initiate in their own dioceses. A second Institute is scheduled for 1989 at Seabury-Western Theological Seminary.

A joint Episcopal-Lutheran committee initiated a study to determine the number of covenants between parishes, dioceses, and synods and to determine their effect on local ecumenical efforts. The study has been interrupted by the formation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It is hoped that the study will soon be completed.

EDEO extended invitations to the Episcopal Church Women and to the Anglican Religious Orders in the U.S.A. to appoint official representatives to its Executive Committee. These invitations resulted from the recognition that the two organizations are also committed to, and involved in, local ecumenism and would thereby have much to contribute to, and gain from, such participation.

EDEO continues to be actively involved in planning and participating in the National Workshop on Christian Unity. The EDEO annual meeting is held in the context of the Workshop and involves between 90 and 100 Episcopal participants. The Workshop provides opportunities for training and continuing education. The Presiding Bishop was the invited preacher for the opening worship service at the 1988 Workshop in Portland, Oregon.

EDEO's work is accomplished by the local officers and through the work of ten standing committees, appointed by the president and confirmed by the Executive Committee: (1) an EDEO-NADEO committee which studies local issues pertaining to the two communions; (2) a joint Episcopal-Lutheran committee which has focused its attention on the two churches' growing relationship, particularly since the Agreement of 1982; (3) an Episcopal-Jewish committee, formed to encourage local Episcopal-Jewish conversations (a member of this committee serves as liaison with the Presiding Bishop's Committee on Christian-Jewish Relations); (4) an Ecumenical Institute committee to plan future training for ecumenical officers; (5) a General Convention committee responsible for the EDEO booth and for hosting guests from other communions and other religious faiths; (6) a finance committee; (7) a nominations committee; (8) a bylaws committee; (9) a resolutions committee; and (10) a committee for the revision of the *Handbook for Ecumenism*, a primary ecumenical resource.

A portion of the network's budget comes from the dioceses. Each diocese is asked to pay \$150 a year; 70 percent of the dioceses contribute the requested amount. Dioceses are asked to appoint a diocesan ecumenical officer and an assistant, one from the lay order and one from an ordained order. A few dioceses have not made such appointments. EDEO recognizes the need for increased financial support in the future as the network endeavors to make visible the relationship between the unity and mission of the Church through the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Resolution #A045

Appointment of Diocesan Ecumenical Officers and Financial Support

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, **That this 69th General Convention encourage all dioceses which have not already done so to appoint ecumenical officers and assistants and to provide the necessary financial support for their work.**

THE BLUE BOOK

FINANCIAL REPORT

	<i>Authorized Budget</i>	<i>Actual Expenditures</i>	
Appropriated by the 1985 General Convention for the 1986-1988 triennium	\$126,960		
Budget as revised by the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance on recommendation of its General Convention Expense Section			
1986	\$ 49,320	\$ 46,845	
1987	52,555	52,566	
1988	<u>37,557</u>	<u>16,624</u>	(to 1/29/88)
Total	\$139,432	\$116,035	(to 1/29/88)

REQUEST FOR BUDGET APPROPRIATION

Based upon the experience of the past triennium, we propose the following budget for 1989 through 1991 to implement our commitment to the unity of the Church:

Plenary Meetings of SCER (five to be held)	\$ 52,420
Anglican-Orthodox Theological Consultation (three to be held)	13,466
Anglican-Roman Catholic Consultation (five to be held)	21,377
Consultation on Church Union Plenary (one to be held)	8,460
Consultation on Church Union Executive Committee (nine to be held)	4,571
Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue (six to be held)	25,649
Polish National Catholic-Episcopal Working Group (three to be held)	4,567
Linkage with Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers (EDEO)	<u>1,844</u>
	\$132,354

Resolution #A046

Request for Budget Appropriation

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, **That the 69th General Convention appropriate for the work of the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations during the 1989-1991 triennium the sum of \$132,354 from the Assessment Budget of the General Convention.**

APPENDIX

EPISCOPAL CHURCH REPRESENTATIVES IN DIALOGUES AND COUNCILS

Central Committee of the World Council of Churches
The Presiding Bishop

Governing Board of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

1985-1987

The Presiding Bishop
The Rt. Rev. David B. Reed
The Rev. Canon Richard J. Anderson
The Rev. Canon Edward B. Geyer (1985-86)
The Rev. William B. Lawson
The Rev. Earl A. Neil (1987)
The Rev. William A. Norgren
The Rev. Jose A. Poch (1985-86)
The Rev. F. Goldthwaite Sherrill
The Very Rev. Elton O. Smith
Dr. Robert Bottoms
Mr. John L. Carson III
Mrs. Joanna Fitts Ware
Mrs. Eugenie Havemeyer
Mrs. Constance Lyle

1988-1991

The Presiding Bishop
The Rt. Rev. Craig B. Anderson
The Rt. Rev. Rustin R. Kimsey
The Rt. Rev. David B. Reed
The Rev. J. Carleton Hayden
The Rev. Barnett Jackson
The Rev. William B. Lawson
The Rev. William A. Norgren
Dr. Robert Bottoms
Mrs. Pamela P. Chinnis
Mrs. Glennes Clifford
Ms. Naomi Diaz
Mrs. Eugenie Havemeyer
Mr. Albert Rodriguez
Mrs. Anne Shire
Mrs. Joanna Fitts Ware

Anglican-Roman Catholic Consultation (ARC)

The Rt. Rev. A. Theodore Eastman, *Chair*
The Rt. Rev. Richard F. Grein (to 1986)
The Rt. Rev. Frank T. Griswold III (from 1987)
The Rev. Bruce Griffith
The Rev. Eleanor McLaughlin
The Rev. Charles P. Price
The Rev. Philip Turner
Dr. William Banner
Dr. Ralph William Franklin

Anglican-Orthodox Theological Consultation

The Rt. Rev. David B. Reed, *Chair*
The Rt. Rev. Mark Dyer
The Very Rev. John H. Backus
The Rev. William B. Green
The Rev. Lloyd G. Patterson, Jr.
Deacon Ormonde Plater (to 1987)
Dr. E. Rozanne Elder
Dr. Paul Valliere
The Rev. James C. McReynolds, *Adjunct Secretary*

Consultation on Church Union (Executive Committee)

The Rt. Rev. Donald J. Parsons (to 1987)
Dr. Alice Cowan

THE BLUE BOOK

Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue

The Rt. Rev. William C. Weinbauer, *Chair*
The Rt. Rev. Mark Dyer
The Rt. Rev. Richard F. Grein
The Rev. L. William Countryman
The Rev. John R. Kevern
The Very Rev. William H. Petersen
The Very Rev. John H. Rodgers, Jr.
Dr. Marianne Micks (to 1987)

Committee to Evaluate the Episcopal Church's Participation in the National Council of Churches of Christ and the World Council of Churches

The Rev. William B. Lawson, *Chair*
The Rt. Rev. Edward W. Jones
The Rev. Canon John E. Kitagawa
Mrs. Lueta E. Bailey
Dr. George McGonigle
The Rev. Michael L. Barlowe, *Editor*

Theological Committee on *The COCU Consensus*

The Rt. Rev. James B. Brown, *Chair*
The Rt. Rev. John M. Krumm
The Rev. Julia Gatta
The Rev. Richard A. Norris
The Very Rev. Elton O. Smith
The Rev. Patricia Wilson-Kastner

Committee on the Three-Year National Ecumenical Emphasis

The Rt. Rev. Edward W. Jones
The Rt. Rev. James B. Brown
The Rev. Charles Long
The Rev. Henry A. Male, Jr.
The Rev. Suzanne Peterson
The Rev. J. Robert Wright