

## Reuilly Declaration English

### THE REUILLY DECLARATION

We, the Church of the Augsburg Confession of Alsace and Lorraine, the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of France, the Reformed Church of Alsace and Lorraine, the Reformed Church of France, the Church of England, the Church of Ireland, the Scottish Episcopal Church, and the Church in Wales, on the basis of our fundamental agreement in faith, our common understanding of the nature and purpose of the Church, and our convergence on the apostolicity of the Church and the ministry contained in Chapters II-VI of the Reuilly Common Statement, make the following acknowledgements and commitments, which are interrelated.

#### a Acknowledgements

- (i) We acknowledge one another's churches as churches belonging to the One, Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ and truly participating in the apostolic mission of the whole people of God.
- (ii) We acknowledge that in all our churches the word of God is authentically preached, and the sacraments of baptism and the eucharist are duly administered.
- (iii) We acknowledge that all our churches share in the common confession of the apostolic faith.
- (iv) We acknowledge that one another's ordained ministries are given by God as instruments of grace for the mission and unity of the Church and for the proclamation of the word and the celebration of the sacraments.
- (v) We acknowledge one another's ordained ministries as possessing not only the inward call of the Spirit but also Christ's commission through the Church, and look forward to the time when the fuller visible unity of our churches makes possible the interchangeability of ministers.
- (vi) We acknowledge that personal, collegial and communal oversight (episkope) is embodied and exercised in all our churches in a variety of forms, as a visible sign expressing and serving the Church's unity and continuity in apostolic life, mission and ministry

#### b Commitments

We commit ourselves to share a common life and mission. We will take steps to closer fellowship in as many areas of Christian life and witness as possible, so that all our members together may advance on the way to full visible unity. As the next steps we agree:

- (i) to seek appropriate ways to share a common life in mission and service, to pray for and with one another, and to work towards the sharing of spiritual and human resources;
- (ii) to welcome one another's members to each other's worship and to receive pastoral ministrations;
- (iii) to welcome one another's members into the congregational life of each other's churches;
- (iv) to encourage shared worship. When eucharistic worship is judged to be appropriate, it may move beyond eucharistic hospitality for individuals. The participation of ordained ministers would reflect the presence of two or more churches expressing their closer unity in faith and baptism and demonstrate that we are still striving towards making more visible the unity of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Nevertheless, such participation still falls short of the full interchangeability of ministers. The rite should be that of the church to which the presiding minister belongs, and that minister should say the eucharistic prayer.

*Note:* In such celebrations each church should respect the practices and piety of the others and reflect the emerging ecumenical consensus with regard to the celebration of the eucharist. The celebration will include the prayer of thanksgiving, the words of Christ's institution and the making of the memorial of his sacrifice; the invocation of the Holy Spirit; intercession for the Church and the world and the proclamation of God's kingdom. Ecumenical sensitivity and mutual respect demand that the eucharistic elements are treated reverently after the celebration. The minister who presides at such an ecumenical celebration is an ordained pastor, presbyter or bishop. Concelebration is not envisaged.

(v) to welcome ordained ministers of our churches to serve in each other's churches, in accordance with the discipline of our respective churches, to the extent made possible by our agreement;

(vi) to continue theological discussions between our churches to work on the outstanding issues hindering fuller communion, whether bilaterally or in a wider European, ecumenical framework;

(vii) to work towards closer relations between ourselves in diaspora situations;

(viii) to encourage ecumenical visits, twinings and exchanges;

(ix) to establish a contact group to nurture our growth in communion, to facilitate regular consultation on significant matters, and to co-ordinate the implementation of this agreement.

## **IX Celebration and Wider Ecumenical Commitment**

### **A Celebration**

47. The Declaration will come into force when it is accepted by two participating churches of different traditions according to their own processes. We recommend that our churches express in worship their commitment to share a common life and mission and to continue to strive for the full visible unity of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.

### **B Wider Ecumenical Commitment**

48. We rejoice in this agreement and see in it a step towards the visible unity which all churches committed to the ecumenical movement seek to manifest. We regard our move to closer communion as part of the pursuit of a wider unity, embracing more and more churches of different traditions.

This pursuit will involve the following:

strengthening the links which each of our churches has with other churches at local, national and international levels;

deepening relationships within and between our three world communions and supporting efforts towards closer communion between Anglican, Lutheran and Reformed churches in Europe and in those parts of the world where good relations between our church families already exist;

developing further existing links with other world communions, especially those with whom we have ecumenical dialogue and agreements;

supporting together our local, national and regional ecumenical councils, the Conference of European Churches and the World Council of Churches.

49. The common inheritance and common calling of our churches, spelt out in this agreement, makes us conscious of our obligation to contribute jointly to the ecumenical efforts of others. At

the same time we are aware of our own need to be enriched by the insights and experience of churches of other traditions and in other parts of the world. Together with them we are ready to be used by God as instruments of his saving and reconciling purpose for all humanity and creation.