

Interim Report of the Anglican Church of Canada-United Church of Canada Dialogue

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“Great things are they that you have done, O Lord my God! How great your wonders and your plans for us!” Psalm 40:5a

The current phase of the theological dialogue between the Anglican Church of Canada and the United Church of Canada resumed in January 2012 with a shared mandate to discern “whether God is calling us into a new stage in our common life.”¹ The 2010 General Synod of the Anglican Church specifically asked the dialogue to focus its work on “an examination of the doctrinal identities of the two churches and the implications of this for the lives of the churches, including understandings of sacraments and orders of ministry.”²

Meeting once annually, the members of the dialogue have rediscovered the degree to which our two churches share a common faith, context, history, geography, and commitment to carrying out God’s mission in the world. We have spent considerable time examining the theological positions and practices related to orders of ministry, sacraments, and creeds.

In doing so we have noted our differences, particularly in the way our churches order their ministries. However, we are also cognisant that such differences have been successfully navigated in numerous Ecumenical Shared Ministries, which have been for decades served interchangeably by both United Church and Anglican clergy. We have also learned from similar ecumenical dialogues in other parts of the world how it is possible to move beyond differences to achieve mutual exchanges of ministries for the purposes of mission.

When the Anglican Church of Canada and the United Church of Canada were negotiating a formal merger in the 1970s, it was for the sake of mission: “We desire that union should make possible more effective participation in God’s mission both in Canada and throughout the world.”³

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