Common Statement

FOREWORD by the Co-Chairmen

1. Dramatic changes have swept across Northern Europe in recent years. Many new links of commerce, education, tourism and consultation on environmental matters are now being actively developed across the Nordic/Baltic and British/Irish region. In this fast changing scene the Anglican and Lutheran churches have a key rôle to play, and the present report offers the vision of twelve such churches - with a total membership of some 50 million Christians - entering into closer communion and joining in various forms of practical cooperation as they carry out their contemporary mission. It is a cause of great joy that the Anglican and Lutheran strands of Western Christendom which have so many common roots and display remarkably similar characteristics, have rediscovered one another in the present century and begun growing closer together.
2. The Porvoo Common Statement is the result of several major influences. The first was the series of theological Conversations which took place between Anglicans and Lutherans in the Nordic and Baltic region during 1909-1951, and the agreements to which these talks gave rise. Secondly, acquaintance between these churches was greatly strengthened by other joint events not directly concerned with church unity negotiations, notably the series of Anglo-Scandinavian theological conferences (begun in 1929) and pastoral conferences (begun in 1978) which still continue. Thirdly, a new climate of theological debate was created at world level by the bilateral and multilateral ecumenical dialogues of the 1970s and 80s, as evidenced by the following reports in particular: Pullach 1973, Lima (BEM) 1982, Helsinki 1982, Cold Ash 1983 and Niagara 1988. This last report in particular has thrown new light on old questions of Faith and Order.
3. The immediate stimulus to move beyond the earlier agreements came from the personal initiative of Archbishop Robert Runcie (Canterbury) and Archbishop Bertil Werkström (Uppsala), coupled with the efforts of those officers who set preliminary arrangements in hand: Canon Christopher Hill and Canon Martin Reardon (England), together with Dean Lars Österlin (Sweden) and Prof. Ola Tjørhom (Norway). We owe them a debt of gratitude for their vision and determination, which evoked a positive response in each participating country.
4. A further impulse was added by the Lutheran-Episcopal Agreement of 1982 in the USA and by The Meissen Common Statement of 1988 between the Church of England and the Evangelical Churches in East and West Germany. Each of these agreements led to mutual eucharistic hospitality, a limited degree of sharing ordained ministry, occasional joint celebrations of the eucharist and a commitment to common life and mission. Representatives who had been involved in both these ventures told us about them at first hand.
5. Four plenary sessions of official Theological Conversations were held during 1989-92, interspersed by meetings of a small Drafting Group. We take this opportunity of thanking members of the Drafting Group, especially Bishop Stephen Sykes (Ely), Bishop Tord Harlin (Uppsala) and Dr. Lorenz Grönvik (Finland), who gave their time unstintingly in carrying this extra burden. We also wish to record our appreciation and warm thanks to other particular persons: those who generously provided accommodation and hospitality

during our meetings; our consultants and ecumenical observers for their sensitive encouragement and constructive advice; Director Gunnel Borgegård for her work in coordinating the Nordic translations; all those involved in making this report available in other languages; and those staff members who contributed their theological and administrative skills: Dr Mary Tanner, The Reverend Geoffrey Brown, Mr Colin Podmore and the Reverend Kaj Engström.

6. The aim of these Conversations was to move forward from our existing piecemeal agreements towards the goal of visible unity. By harvesting the fruits of previous ecumenical dialogues we hoped to express a greater measure of common understanding, and to resolve the longstanding difficulties between us about episcopacy and succession. We found that we had similar histories and faced similar challenges in contemporary society, and that there were no essential differences between us in the fields of faith, sacramental life or ministry (each church already being episcopal in structure). We became convinced that the way was now open to regard one another's churches, each with its own distinctive character, as sister churches. The time was ripe to move closer together and to implement a practical agreement which would be relevant to laity and clergy alike in carrying out our common mission.
7. This purpose proved so attractive to Anglicans and Lutherans in neighbouring countries that our membership was extended. The original participants came from the five Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) together with Latvia, Estonia and England. From the outset and at every stage of the Conversations full information was shared with church representatives in Lithuania as well as Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Their attendance and full membership was encouraged by Archbishop George Carey who, before his translation to Canterbury, had been one of the original English delegates, and was warmly welcomed when it came about. A full list of those who took part is shown towards the end of the document.
8. The final text was agreed unanimously on Tuesday, 13th October 1992 at Järvenpää, and entitled The Porvoo Common S tatement after the name of the Finnish city in whose cathedral we had celebrated the eucharist together on the previous Sunday. Indeed, the context of worship in which Anglicans and Lutherans shared the eucharist and daily morning and evening prayer throughout these meetings played an important rôle in bringing us, under God, to a common mind
9. As regards the structure and content of this report we offer the following brief commentary:

   Chapter I sets the scene, both historically and today, and anchors the ensuing doctrinal discussions firmly in the context of the Church's mission. In this respect it follows the perspective of The Niagara Report.

   Chapter II spells out our agreement on the nature of the Church and the goal of visible unity. Especially crucial to the later argument are paras 20 and 28.

   Chapter III records in brief compass the substantial areas of belief and practice which Anglicans and Lutherans have in common. The twelve sections of paragraph 32 draw on the doctrinal agreements reached in earlier dialogues.

Chapter IV begins by identifying in paragraph 34 the major problem to be resolved: namely, episcopal ministry and its relation to succession. The report then breaks new ground, signposted in paragraph 35. The sections which follow deserve close attention. In seeking to unlock our churches from limited and negative perceptions, this chapter spells out a deeper understanding of apostolicity, of the episcopal office, and of historic succession as ‘sign'. This theological argument is again linked in paragraph 54 to a mission context, and its conclusions are summarized in paragraphs 56-57. Since this part of the report arises from the empirical reality of church life in twelve different countries, we refer the reader to the series of twelve short historical essays on Episcopacy in our Churches and Canon and Canon Christopher Hill's Introduction to the Essays on Church and Ministry in Northern Europe. Regarding the Lutheran understanding of ordination in the Nordic and Baltic churches, Anglican readers will be helped by Canon John Halliburton's analysis of the ordinals in current use. Local similarities and differences over the ministry of deacons and initiation and confirmation are described and evaluated in further essays. In mentioning these materials we add our grateful thanks to all the writers, and especially to Canon Hill for his work as editor of the Essays.

Chapter V contains in paragraph 58 the Porvoo Declaration which will be laid before the appropriate decision-making bodies of each church for approval. Clause b(v) makes clear that the interchange of ordained ministers must be ‘in accordance with any regulations which may from time to time be in force'. This implies a realistic acceptance of certain restrictions which already apply within our communions, e.g. regarding the ministry of women bishops (and those ordained by them) or women priests in particular places, the requirements of reasonable fluency in the local language, appropriate professional qualifications, State employment regulations, taking of customary oaths, etc.

10. We now offer this report to the participating churches for their scrutiny. The text is being translated into each of the languages concerned, but the English text remains definitive. As paras 60 and 61 make clear, these proposals do not conflict with existing ecumenical relationships. Yet we are clear that this report does have implications for other churches too, and we would urge that advisory responses be sought from our ecumenical partners during the process of response. The method adopted by this report is, in principle, one which could be applied between other ecumenical partners. To them, as well as to our own church authorities, we submit these proposals with humility.
11. We have a keen hope that all the participating churches will approve the Porvoo Declaration. If so, this will be a very significant contribution towards restoring the visible unity of Christ's Church. As soon as one of the Anglican churches and one of the Lutheran churches has approved the Declaration, its provisions can begin operating between them, subject to any necessary changes being made by each church to its own laws or regulations. Only in the course of time will the full consequences of the Declaration be able to be gauged. It is envisaged that public celebrations to mark our new relations will not take place until all the participating churches have made their response.

12. During the eucharist in Porvoo Cathedral on the final Sunday of our Conversations we were reminded by the preacher that to rejoice in our Anglican and Lutheran traditions is not enough. If the gospel is to be allowed to define and shape the life of our communities, this requires us not only to be faithful to the tradition which we have inherited, but also to be responsive to new issues. A special challenge faces those who belong to national churches: to exercise a critical and prophetic rôle within the life of their own nation, and also to witness to a unity in Christ which transcends national loyalties and boundaries. We believe that the insights and proposals contained in this report offer a way to bring us closer together in answering that challenge, and in enabling our churches to bear effective Christian witness and service not only within their particular nations and cultures but also within a broader European setting.

+DAVID GRIMSBY, The Right Revd. David Tustin, Bishop of Grimsby
TORE FURBERG, The Right Revd. Dr. Tore Furberg, Former Bishop of Visby

Johannesburg, February 1993

Common Statement

1 - Setting the Scene

A. A New Opportunity

1. Through the gracious leading of God Anglicans and Lutherans all over the world are sharing together in mission and service, and discovering how much they have in common. In Europe our churches have lived side by side in separate nations for centuries. For a considerable time our churches have maintained in each other's countries chaplaincies, which are of growing significance with the increased mobility of population between the churches. Where both church traditions are present in the same place, as in North America and Southern and East Africa, new relationships have developed and new local agreements have been made. At the same time there is a growing closeness between European Anglicans and Lutherans, which convinces us that the time has come for us to review and revise the existing agreements.
2. These agreements, which make possible differing degrees of communion, have been only partially implemented. For example, the political situation of the Baltic states hindered effective implementation for fifty years from 1939 to 1989. The agreements differ widely because in the past Anglicans have distinguished between the different Lutheran churches, principally on the criterion of the historic episcopate. However, the Nordic and Baltic churches have always enjoyed eucharistic communion. Moreover, the Nordic countries are increasingly regarded as one region and the churches now cooperate closely with one another and within the Nordic Bishops' Conference and the Nordic Ecumenical Council. Political change in Eastern Europe has given new hope to the churches of the Baltic countries. They are now developing their own life and are increasingly making their contribution to the wider fellowship. Cooperation with them becomes more important in a rapidly changing situation offering new possibilities for the churches.
3. The Nordic and Baltic churches wish to relate to the Anglican churches in Britain and Ireland, not only as separate national churches, but also as groups of churches. The Commission is glad of new links with the Lutheran Church in Lithuania. It believes that the possibility of a new agreement, which will not differentiate between our churches, is opening up before us.
4. We are encouraged in this belief by an evident theological convergence in several Anglican-Lutheran conversations. Furthermore, the official acceptance of The Meissen Common Statement by the Church of England and the Evangelical Church in Germany indicates a growing common understanding of the Church.
5. Anglicans and Lutherans are also helped by the broader ecumenical convergence, to which Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Protestant churches have contributed, on the doctrines of the Church, the ministry and the sacraments. This convergence has enabled us to move beyond both ways of thought and misunderstandings which have hindered the quest for unity between Anglicans and Lutherans. Of particular importance is the understanding of the mystery of the Church as the body of Christ, as the pilgrim people of God, as fellowship (koinonia), and also as participation through witness and service in God's mission to the world. This provides a

proper setting for a new approach to the question of the ordained ministry and of oversight (episcope).

6. Above all, we face a common challenge to engage in God's mission to the people of our nations and continent at a time of unparalleled opportunity, which may properly be called a kairos.

B. Our Common Ground as Churches

7. The faith, worship and spirituality of all our churches are rooted in the tradition of the apostolic Church. We stand in continuity with the Church of the patristic and medieval periods both directly and through the insights of the Reformation period. We each understand our own church to be part of the One, Holy, Catholic Church of Jesus Christ and truly participating in the one apostolic mission of the whole people of God. We share in the liturgical heritage of Western Christianity and also in the Reformation emphases upon justification by faith and upon word and sacrament as means of grace. All this is embodied in our confessional and liturgical documents and is increasingly recognized both as an essential bond between our churches and as a contribution to the wider ecumenical movement.
8. Despite geographical separation and a wide diversity of language, culture and historical development, the Anglican and Lutheran churches in Britain and Ireland and in the Nordic and Baltic countries have much in common, including much common history. Anglo-Saxon and Celtic missionaries played a significant part in the evangelization of Northern Europe and founded some of the historic sees in the Nordic lands. The unbroken witness of successive bishops in the dioceses and the maintenance of pastoral and liturgical life in the cathedrals and churches of all our nations are an important manifestation of the continuity of Christian life across the ages, and of the unity between the churches in Britain and Ireland and in Northern Europe.
9. Each of our churches has played a significant role in the social and spiritual development of the nation in which it has been set. We have been conscious of our mission and ministry to all the people in our nations. Most of our churches have had a pastoral and sometimes a legal responsibility for the majority of the population of our countries. This task is today increasingly being carried out in cooperation with other churches.

C. Our Common Mission Today

10. Our churches and their nations are today facing new tasks and opportunities, in the context of many ideological, social and political changes in Europe. These include:
    a. a growing awareness by the European nations of their interdependence and mutual responsibility, and the need to rectify injustices resulting from the European wars of many centuries, but especially the twentieth century, which have affected the whole world
    b. new opportunities which are especially dramatic in the Baltic context for evangelism, re-evangelism and pastoral work in all our countries, and the challenge to restate the Christian faith in response to both a prevalent practical materialism and a yearning among many people for spiritual values;

c. a need to react to the vacuum arising from the collapse of a monolithic political system in Eastern Europe and to the increasingly pluriform character of society in Britain and Ireland and in the Nordic countries;
d. opportunities to work for peace, justice and human rights, to diminish the imbalance between the prosperous nations and those impoverished and suffering from undue economic dependency, and to protect the rights and dignity of the poor and desolate in particular, migrants, refugees and ethnic minorities;
e. an ecological debate within and between the countries of Northern Europe, to which the churches have begun to bring a positive theology of creation and incarnation according permanent value to the earth and life in all its forms;
f. a need for dialogue and understanding with people of other races, cultures and religious traditions as partners and fellow-citizens of a new Europe.

11. All the major European churches are now consulting together about these issues, especially in the follow-up to the European Ecumenical Assembly (Basel, 1989), co-sponsored by the Conference of European Churches (CEC) and the Council of Catholic Bishops' Conferences in Europe (CCEE). We are committed to encouraging this process of consultation and to playing an active part in the initiatives arising from it. Through such joint efforts in witness and service we shall build upon the unity we already enjoy, and contribute to a deeper unity which lies ahead of us.
12. 12 Within the wider relationship of the Lutheran World Federation and the Anglican Communion our churches have become aware of the necessity of facing problems and undertaking tasks in a global perspective.
13. 13 In the face of all the questions arising from our common mission today, our churches are called together to proclaim a duty of service to the wider world and to the societies in which they are set. Equally, they are called together to proclaim the Christian hope, arising from faith, which gives meaning in societies characterized by ambiguity. Again they are called together to proclaim the healing love of God and reconciliation in communities wounded by persecution, oppression and injustice. This common proclamation in word and sacrament manifests the mystery of God's love, God's presence and God's Kingdom.

2 - The Nature and Unity of the Church

A. God's Kingdom and the Mystery and Purpose of the Church

14. Our times demand something new of us as churches. Our agreement, as set out in this text, about the nature of the Church and its unity has implications for the ways in which we respond to the challenge of our age. We have come to see more clearly that we are not strangers to one another, but ‘fellow-citizens with God's people, members of God's household... built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone' (Eph. 2: 19-20 REB). By the gift of God's grace we have been drawn into the sphere of God's will to reconcile to himself all that he has made and sustains (II Cor 5: 17-19), to liberate the creation from every bondage (Rom. 8: 19-22) and to draw all things into unity with himself (Eph. 1: 9f). God's ultimate purpose and mission in Christ is the restoration and renewal of all that he has made, the coming of the Kingdom in its fullness.
15. To bring us to unity with himself, the Father sent his Son Jesus Christ into the world. Through Christ's life, death and resurrection, God's love is revealed and we are saved from the powers of sin and death (John 3: 16-18). By grace received through faith we are put into a right relationship with God. We are brought from death to new life (Rom. 6: 1-11), born again, made sons and daughters by adoption and set free for life in the Spirit (Gal. 4:5, Rom. 8: 14-17). This is the heart of the gospel proclamation of the Church and through this proclamation God gathers his people together. In every age from apostolic times it has been the purpose of the Church to proclaim this gospel in word and deed: ‘It is this which we have seen and heard that we declare to you also, in order that you may share with us in a common life (koinonia), that life which we share (koinonia) with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ' (I John 1.3 REB).
16. Faith is the God-given recognition that the light has come into the world, that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us and has given us the right to become children of God (John 1: 1-13). Faith, as life in communion with the triune God, brings us into, and sustains and nourishes us in, the common life of the Church, Christ's Body. It is the gift of forgiveness which delivers us from the bondage of sin and from the anxiety of trying to justify ourselves, liberating us for a life of gratitude, love and hope. By grace we have been saved, through faith (Eph. 2: 8).
17. Into this life of communion with God and with one another (koinonia), we are summoned by the gospel. In baptism the Holy Spirit unites us with Christ in his death and resurrection (Rom. 6: 1-11; I Cor. 12: 13); in the eucharist we are nourished and sustained as members of the one Body by participation in the body and blood of Christ (I Cor. 10: 16f). The Church and the gospel are thus necessarily related to each other. Faith in Jesus, the Christ, as the foundation of the reign of God arises out of the visible and audible proclamation of the gospel in word and sacraments. And there is no proclamation of the word and sacraments without a community and its ministry. Thus, the communion of the Church is constituted by the proclamation of the word and the celebration of the sacraments, served by the

ordained ministry. Through these gifts God creates and maintains the Church and gives birth daily to faith, love and new life.

18. The Church, as communion, must be seen as instrumental to God's ultimate purpose. It exists for the glory of God to serve, in obedience to the mission of Christ, the reconciliation of humankind and of all creation (Eph. 1: 10). Therefore the Church is sent into the world as a sign, instrument and foretaste of a reality which comes from beyond history the Kingdom of God. The Church embodies the mystery of salvation, of a new humanity reconciled to God and to one another through Jesus Christ (Eph. 2: 14, Col. 1: 19-27). Through its ministry of service and proclamation it points to the reality of the Kingdom; and in the power of the Holy Spirit it participates in the divine mission by which the Father sent the Son to be the saviour of the world (I. John 4: 14, cf. John 3: 17).
19. The Holy Spirit bestows on the community diverse and complementary gifts. These are for the common good of the whole people and are manifested in acts of service within the community and to the world. All members are called to discover, with the help of the community, the gifts they have received and to use them for the building up of the Church and for the service of the world to which the Church is sent.
20. The Church is a divine reality, holy and transcending present finite reality; at the same time, as a human institution, it shares the brokenness of human community in its ambiguity and frailty. The Church is always called to repentance, reform and renewal, and has constantly to depend on God's mercy and forgiveness. The Scriptures offer a portrait of a Church living in the light of the Gospel:

    it is a Church rooted and grounded in the love and grace of the Lord Christ;
    it is a Church always joyful, praying continually and giving thanks even in the midst of suffering;
    it is a pilgrim Church, a people of God with a new heavenly citizenship, a holy nation and a royal priesthood;
    it is a Church which makes common confession of the apostolic faith in word and in life, the faith common to the whole Church everywhere and at all times;
    it is a Church with a mission to all in every race and nation, preaching the gospel, proclaiming the forgiveness of sins, baptizing and celebrating the eucharist;
    it is a Church which is served by an ordained apostolic ministry, sent by God to gather and nourish the people of God in each place, uniting and linking them with the Church universal within the whole communion of saints;
    it is a Church which manifests through its visible communion the healing and uniting power of God amidst the divisions of humankind;
    it is a Church in which the bonds of communion are strong enough to enable it to bear effective witness in the world, to guard and interpret the apostolic faith, to take decisions, to teach authoritatively, and to share its goods with those in need;
    it is a Church alive and responsive to the hope which God has set before it, to the wealth and glory of the share God has offered it in the heritage of his people, and to the vastness of the resources of God's power open to those who trust in him.

This portrait of the Church is by no means complete; nevertheless, it confronts our churches with challenges to the fidelity of our lives and with a constant need for repentance and renewal.

B The Nature of Communion and the Goal of Unity

21. The Scriptures portray the unity of the Church as a joyful communion with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ (cf. I John 1: 1-10), as well as communion among its members. Jesus prays that the disciples may be one as the Father is in him and he is in the Father, so that the world may believe (John 17: 21). Because the unity of the Church is grounded in the mysterious relationship of the persons of the Trinity, this unity belongs by necessity to its nature. The unity of the Body of Christ is spoken of in relation to the ‘one Spirit..., one hope ..., one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all' (Eph. 4: 4-6). Communion between Christians and churches should not be regarded as a product of human achievement. It is already given in Christ as a gift to be received, and ‘like every good gift, unity also comes from the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit'.
22. Viewed in this light, disunity must be regarded as an anomalous situation. Despite our sins and schisms, the unity to which we are summoned has already begun to be manifested in the Church. It demands fuller visible embodiment in structured form, so that the Church may be seen to be, through the Holy Spirit, the one Body of Christ and the sign, instrument and foretaste of the Kingdom. In this perspective, all existing denominational traditions are provisional.
23. Visible unity, however, should not be confused with uniformity. ‘Unity in Christ does not exist despite and in opposition to diversity, but is given with and in diversity'. Because this diversity corresponds with the many gifts of the Holy Spirit to the Church, it is a concept of fundamental ecclesial importance, with relevance to all aspects of the life of the Church, and is not a mere concession to theological pluralism. Both the unity and the diversity of the Church are ultimately grounded in the communion of God the Holy Trinity.
24. The maintenance of unity and the sustaining of diversity are served by bonds of communion. Communion with God and with fellow believers is manifested in one baptism in response to the apostolic preaching; in the common confession of the apostolic faith; in the united celebration of the eucharist which builds up the one body of Christ; and in a single ministry set apart by prayer and the laying on of hands. This unity is also manifested as a communion in love, implying that Christians are bound to one another in a committed relationship with mutual responsibilities, common spiritual goods and the obligation to share temporal resources. Already in the Acts of the Apostles we can discern these bonds: ‘Those who received [Peter's] word were baptized... And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers... And all who believed were together and had all things in common' (Acts 2: 41ff).
25. In the narrative of the Acts of the Apostles this sharing in a common life is served by the apostolic ministry. We are given a picture of how this ministry fosters the richness of diversity while also maintaining unity. Through the mission of the apostles Peter and Paul, the Gentiles also are baptized. In the face of the threat of division, this radical decision is ratified by the coming

together of the Church in council (Acts 15). Here is illustrated the role of apostolic leaders and their place within councils of the Church.

26. Such an understanding of communion has been described in the following terms:
'The unity of the Church given in Christ and rooted in the Triune God is realized in our unity in the proclaimed word, the sacraments and the ministry instituted by God and conferred through ordination. It is lived both in the unity of faith to which we jointly witness, and which together we confess and teach, and in the unity of hope and love which leads us to unite in fully committed fellowship. Unity needs a visible outward form which is able to encompass the element of inner differentiation and spiritual diversity as well as the element of historical change and development. This is the unity of a fellowship which covers all times and places and is summoned to witness and serve the world.'
27. Already in the New Testament there is the scandal of division among Christians (I Cor. 1: 11-13, I John 2: 18-19). Churches not outwardly united, for reasons of history or through deliberate separations, are obliged by their faith to work and to pray for the recovery of their visible unity and the deepening of their spiritual fellowship. Set before the Church is the vision of unity as the goal of all creation (Eph. 1) when the whole world will be reconciled to God (II Cor: 5). Communion is thus the fruit of redemption and necessarily an eschatological reality. Christians can never tolerate disunity. They are obliged not merely to guard and maintain, but also to promote and nurture the highest possible realization of communion between and within the churches.
28. Such a level of communion has a variety of interrelated aspects. It entails agreement in faith together with the common celebration of the sacraments, supported by a united ministry and forms of collegial and conciliar consultation in matters of faith, life and witness. These expressions of communion may need to be embodied in the law and regulations of the Church. For the fullness of communion all these visible aspects of the life of the Church require to be permeated by a profound spiritual communion, a growing together in a common mind, mutual concern and a care for unity (Phil. 2: 2).

3 - What We Agree in Faith

29. Anglicans of Britain and Ireland and Lutherans of the Nordic and Baltic lands have at no time condemned one another as churches and have never formally separated. But a deeper realization of communion is certainly desirable, and now seems possible, without denying that proper and fruitful diversity which has developed, in course of time, into a distinctive way of confessing and expressing our faith. Anglicans have tended to stress the importance of liturgy as expressing the faith of the Church. Lutherans, whilst not denying this, have tended to lay more emphasis on doctrinal confession. Both, however, see lex orandi and lex credendi as closely related. The Augsburg Confession and the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion were produced in different circumstances to meet different needs, and they do not play an identical role in the life of the churches. They contain much common formulation and bear common witness to the faith of the Church through the ages. Building on this foundation, modern ecumenical contact and exchange have substantially helped to clarify certain residual questions, bringing out with greater precision the degree to which we retain a common understanding of the nature and purpose of the Church and a fundamental agreement in faith. We are now called to a deepening of fellowship, to new steps on the way to visible unity and a new coherence in our common witness in word and deed to one Lord, one faith and one baptism.
30. To this end, we set out the substantial agreement in faith that exists between us. Here we draw upon Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (the Lima text) and the official responses of our churches to that text. We also draw upon previous attempts to specify the range and nature of Anglican-Lutheran agreement. These include the Pullach Report of 1973, the Helsinki Report of 1983, the Cold Ash Report of 1983, Implications of the Gospel of 1988, The Meissen Common Statement of 1988 and the Niagara Report of 1988. These texts all testify to a substantial unity in faith between Anglicans and Lutherans. We have benefited from the insights from these texts as a contribution to our agreement in faith. Furthermore, we have made considerable use of the results of the respective Anglican - Roman Catholic and Roman Catholic - Lutheran dialogues.
31. The agreement in faith reached in the Anglican-Lutheran texts was affirmed in a resolution of the Lambeth Conference of 1988, where it is stated that the Conference
'recognises, on the basis of the high degree of consensus reached in international, regional and national dialogues between Anglicans and Lutherans and in the light of the communion centred around Word and Sacrament that has been experienced in each other's traditions, the presence of the Church of Jesus Christ in the Lutheran Communion as in our own'.

There is a parallel affirmation in a resolution of the Eighth Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation in Curitiba in February 1990:

'This Assembly resolves that the LWF renew its commitment to the goal of full communion with the churches of the Anglican Communion, and that it urge LWF member churches to take appropriate steps towards its realization... that the LWF note with thanksgiving the steps towards church fellowship with

national/regional Anglican counterparts which LWF member churches have been able to take already and that it encourage them to proceed.'

32. 32 Here we declare in summary form the principal beliefs and practices that we have in common:
    a. We accept the canonical scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments to be the sufficient, inspired and authoritative record and witness, prophetic and apostolic, to God's revelation in Jesus Christ. We read the Scriptures as part of public worship in the language of the people, believing that in the Scriptures as the Word of God and testifying to the gospel eternal life is offered to all humanity, and that they contain everything necessary to salvation.
    b. We believe that God's will and commandment are essential to Christian proclamation, faith and life. God's commandment commits us to love God and our neighbour, and to live and serve to his praise and glory. At the same time God's commandment reveals our sins and our constant need for his mercy.
    c. We believe and proclaim the gospel, that in Jesus Christ God loves and redeems the world. We *'share a common understanding of God's justifying grace, i.e. that we are accounted righteous and are made righteous before God only by grace through faith because of the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and not on account of our works or merits.... Both our traditions affirm that justification leads and must lead to "good works"; authentic faith issues in love'*. We receive the Holy Spirit who renews our hearts and equips us for and calls us to good works. As justification and sanctification are aspects of the same divine act, so also living faith and love are inseparable in the believer.
    d. We accept the faith of the Church through the ages set forth in the Niceno-Constantinopolitan and Apostles' Creeds and confess the basic trinitarian and Christological dogmas to which these creeds testify. That is, we believe that Jesus of Nazareth is true God and true Man, and that God is one God in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This faith is explicitly confirmed both in the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, and in the Augsburg Confession.
    e. We confess and celebrate the apostolic faith in liturgical worship. We acknowledge in the liturgy both a celebration of salvation through Christ and a significant factor in forming the consensus fidelium. We rejoice at the extent of our *'common tradition of spirituality, liturgy and sacramental life'* which has given us similar forms of worship and common texts, hymns, canticles and prayers. We are influenced by a common liturgical renewal and by the variety of expression shown in different cultural settings.
    f. We believe that the Church is constituted and sustained by the Triune God through God's saving action in word and sacraments. We believe that the Church is a sign, instrument and foretaste of the Kingdom of God. But we also recognize that it stands in constant need of reform and renewal.
    g. We believe that through baptism with water in the name of the Trinity God unites the one baptized with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, initiates into the One Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, and confers the gracious gift of new life in the Spirit. Since we in our

churches practise and value infant baptism we also take seriously our catechetical task for the nurture of baptized children to mature commitment to Christ. In all our traditions baptism is followed by a rite of confirmation. We recognise two practices in our churches, both of which have precedents in earlier centuries: in Anglican churches, confirmation administered by the bishop; in the Nordic and Baltic churches, confirmation usually administered by a local priest. In all our churches this includes invocation of the Triune God, renewal of the baptismal profession of faith and a prayer that through the renewal of the grace of baptism the candidate may be strengthened now and for ever.

h. We believe that the body and blood of Christ are truly present, distributed and received under the forms of bread and wine in the Lord's Supper (Eucharist). In this way we receive the body and blood of Christ, crucified and risen, and in him the forgiveness of sins and all other benefits of his passion. The eucharistic memorial is no mere calling to mind of a past event or of its significance, but the Church's effectual proclamation of God's mighty acts. Although we are unable to offer to God a worthy sacrifice, Christ unites us with himself in his self-offering to the Father, the one, full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice which he has offered for us all. In the eucharist God himself acts, giving life to the body of Christ and renewing each member. Celebrating the eucharist, the church is reconstituted and nourished, strengthened in faith and hope, in witness and service in daily life. Here we already have a foretaste of the eternal joy of God's Kingdom.
i. We believe that all members of the church are called to participate in its apostolic mission. All the baptized are therefore given various gifts and ministries by the Holy Spirit. They are called to offer their being as *'a living sacrifice'* and to intercede for the Church and the salvation of the world. This is the corporate priesthood of the whole people of God and the calling to ministry and service (I Peter 2: 5).
j. We believe that within the community of the Church the ordained ministry exists to serve the ministry of the whole people of God. We hold the ordained ministry of word and sacrament to be an office of divine institution and as such a gift of God to his Church. Ordained ministers are related, as are all Christians, both to the priesthood of Christ and to the priesthood of the Church. This basic oneness of the ordained ministry is expressed in the service of word and sacrament. In the life of the Church, this unity has taken a differentiated form. The threefold ministry of bishop, priest and deacon became the general pattern in the Church of the early centuries and is still retained by many churches, though often in partial form. *'The threefold ministry of bishop, presbyter and deacon may serve today as an expression of the unity we seek and also as a means for achieving it'.*
k. We believe that a ministry of pastoral oversight (episcope), exercised in personal, collegial and communal ways, is necessary as witness to and safeguard of the unity and apostolicity of the Church. Further, we retain and employ the episcopal office as a sign of our intention, under God, to ensure the continuity of the Church in apostolic life and

witness. For these reasons, all our churches have a personally exercised episcopal office.

l. We share a common hope in the final consummation of the Kingdom of God, and believe that in this eschatological perspective we are called to work now for the furtherance of justice, to seek peace and to care for the created world. The obligations of the Kingdom are to govern our life in the Church and our concern for the world. *'The Christian faith is that God has made peace through Jesus "by the blood of his cross" (Col. 1: 20), so establishing the one valid centre for the unity of the whole human family'.*

33. This summary witnesses to a high degree of unity in faith and doctrine. Whilst this does not require each tradition to accept every doctrinal formulation characteristic of our distinctive traditions, it does require us to face and overcome the remaining obstacles to still closer communion.

4 - Episcopacy in the Service of the Apostolicity of the Church

34. There is a long-standing problem about episcopal ministry and its relation to succession. At the time of the Reformation all our churches ordained bishops (sometimes the term superintendent was used as a synonym for bishop) to the existing sees of the Catholic Church, indicating their intention to continue the life and ministry of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. In some of the territories the historic succession of bishops was maintained by episcopal ordination, whereas elsewhere on a few occasions bishops or superintendents were consecrated by priests following what was believed to be the precedent of the early Church. One consequence of this was a lack of unity between the ministries of our churches and thus a hindrance to our common witness, service and mission. The interruption of the episcopal succession has, nevertheless, in these particular churches always been accompanied by the intention and by measures to secure the apostolic continuity of the Church as a Church of the gospel served by an episcopal ministry. The subsequent tradition of these churches demonstrates their faithfulness to the apostolicity of the Church. In the last one hundred years all our churches have felt a growing need to overcome this difficulty and to give common expression to their continuous participation in the life of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.
35. Because of this difficulty we now set out at greater length an understanding of the apostolicity of the whole Church and within that the apostolic ministry, succession in the episcopal office and the historic succession as a sign. All of these are interrelated.

A. The Apostolicity of the Whole Church

36. *'In the Creed, the Church confesses itself to be apostolic. The Church lives in continuity with the apostles and their proclamation. The same Lord who sent the apostles continues to be present in the Church. The Spirit keeps the Church in the apostolic tradition until the fulfilment of history in the Kingdom of God. Apostolic tradition in the Church means continuity in the permanent characteristics of the Church of the apostles: witness to the apostolic faith, proclamation and fresh interpretation of the Gospel, celebration of baptism and the eucharist, the transmission of ministerial responsibilities, communion in prayer, love, joy and suffering, service to the sick and needy, unity among the local churches and sharing the gifts which the Lord has given to each'.*
37. The Church today is charged, as were the apostles, to proclaim the gospel to all nations, because the good news about Jesus Christ is the disclosure of God's eternal plan for the reconciliation of all things in his Son. The Church is called to faithfulness to the normative apostolic witness to the life, death, resurrection and exaltation of its Lord. The Church receives its mission and the power to fulfil this mission as a gift of the risen Christ. The Church is thus apostolic as a whole. *'Apostolicity means that the Church is sent by Jesus to be for the world, to participate in his mission and therefore in the mission of the One who sent Jesus, to participate in the mission of the Father and the Son through the dynamic of the Holy Spirit'.*
38. God the Holy Spirit pours out his gifts upon the whole Church (Eph. 4: 11-13, I Cor. 12: 4-11), and raises up men and women, both lay and ordained, to

contribute to the nurture of the community. Thus the whole Church, and every member, participates in and contributes to the communication of the gospel, by their faithful expression and embodiment of the permanent characteristics of the Church of the apostles in a given time and place. Essential to its testimony are not merely its words, but the love of its members for one another, the quality of its service of those in need, its use of financial and other resources, the justice and effectiveness of its life and its means of discipline, its distribution and exercise of power, and its assemblies for worship. All these are means of communication which must be focused upon Christ, the true Word of God, and spring from life in the Holy Spirit.

39. Thus the primary manifestation of apostolic succession is to be found in the apostolic tradition of the Church as a whole. The succession is an expression of the permanence and, therefore, of the continuity of Christ's own mission in which the Church participates.
40. Within the apostolicity of the whole Church is an apostolic succession of the ministry which serves and is a focus of the continuity of the Church in its life in Christ and its faithfulness to the words and acts of Jesus transmitted by the apostles. The ordained ministry has a particular responsibility for witnessing to this tradition and for proclaiming it afresh with authority in every generation.

B. Apostolic Ministry

41. To nourish the Church, God has given the apostolic ministry, instituted by our Lord and transmitted through the apostles. The chief responsibility of the ordained ministry is to assemble and build up the body of Christ by proclaiming and teaching the Word of God, by celebrating the sacraments and by guiding the life of the community in its worship, its mission and its caring ministry. The setting aside of a person to a lifelong ordained office by prayer, invocation of the Holy Spirit and the laying on of hands reminds the Church that it receives its mission from Christ himself and expresses the Church's firm intention to live in fidelity to and gratitude for that commission and gift. The different tasks of the one ministry find expression in its structuring. The threefold ministry of bishops, priests and deacons became the general pattern of ordained ministry in the early Church, though subsequently it underwent considerable change in its practical exercise and is still developing today.
42. The diversity of God's gifts requires their co-ordination so that they enrich the whole Church and its unity. This diversity and the multiplicity of tasks involved in serving it calls for a ministry of co-ordination. This is the ministry of oversight, episcope, a caring for the life of a whole community, a pastoring of the pastors and a true feeding of Christ's flock, in accordance with Christ's command across the ages and in unity with Christians in other places. Episcope (oversight) is a requirement of the whole Church and its faithful exercise in the light of the Gospel is of fundamental importance to its life.
43. Oversight of the Church and its mission is the particular responsibility of the bishop. The bishop's office is one of service and communication within the community of believers and, together with the whole community, to the world. Bishops preach the word, preside at the sacraments, and administer discipline in such a way as to be representative pastoral ministers of oversight, continuity and unity in the Church. They have pastoral oversight of the area to which

they are called. They serve the apostolicity, catholicity and unity of the Church's teaching, worship and sacramental life. They have responsibility for leadership in the Church's mission. None of these tasks should be carried out in isolation from the whole Church.

44. The ministry of oversight is exercised personally, collegially and communally. It is personal because the presence of Christ among his people can most effectively be pointed to by the person ordained to proclaim the gospel and call the community to serve the Lord in unity of life and witness. It is collegial, first because the bishop gathers together those who are ordained to share in the tasks of ministry and to represent the concerns of the community; secondly, because through the collegiality of bishops the Christian community in local areas is related to the wider Church, and the universal Church to that community. It is communal, because the exercise of ordained ministry is rooted in the life of the community and requires the community's effective participation in the discovery of God's will and the guidance of the Spirit. In most of our churches today this takes synodical form. Bishops, together with other ministers and the whole community, are responsible for the orderly transfer of ministerial authority in the Church.
45. The personal, collegial and communal dimensions of oversight find expression at the local, regional and universal levels of the Church's life.

C. The Episcopal Office in the Service of the Apostolic Succession

46. The ultimate ground of the fidelity of the Church, in continuity with the apostles, is the promise of the Lord and the presence of the Holy Spirit at work in the whole Church. The continuity of the ministry of oversight is to be understood within the continuity of the apostolic life and mission of the whole Church. Apostolic succession in the episcopal office is a visible and personal way of focusing the apostolicity of the whole Church.
47. Continuity in apostolic succession is signified in the ordination or consecration of a bishop. In this act the people of God gather to affirm the choice of and pray for the chosen candidate. At the laying on of hands by the ordaining bishop and other representatives with prayer, the whole Church calls upon God in confidence of His promise to pour out the Holy Spirit on his covenant people (Is. 11: 1-3, cf. Veni Creator Spiritus). The biblical act of laying on of hands is rich in significance. It may mean (among other things) identification, commissioning or welcome. It is used in a variety of contexts: confirmation, reconciliation, healing and ordination. On the one hand, by the laying on of hands with prayer a gift of grace already given by God is recognized and confirmed; on the other hand it is perfected for service. The precise significance or intention of the laying on of hands as a sign is determined by the prayer or declaration which accompanies it. In the case of the episcopate, to ordain by prayer and the laying on of hands is to do what the apostles did, and the Church through the ages.
48. In the consecration of a bishop the sign is effective in four ways: first it bears witness to the Church's trust in God's faithfulness to his people and in the promised presence of Christ with his Church, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to the end of time; secondly, it expresses the Church's intention to be faithful to God's initiative and gift, by living in the continuity of the apostolic faith and tradition; thirdly, the participation of a group of bishops in the laying

on of hands signifies their and their churches' acceptance of the new bishop and so of the catholicity of the churches: fourthly, it transmits ministerial office and its authority in accordance with God's will and institution. Thus in the act of consecration a bishop receives the sign of divine approval and a permanent commission to lead his particular church in the common faith and apostolic life of all the churches.

49. The continuity signified in the consecration of a bishop to episcopal ministry cannot be divorced from the continuity of life and witness of the diocese to which he is called. In the particular circumstances of our churches, the continuity represented by the occupation of the historic sees is more than personal. The care to maintain a diocesan and parochial pattern of pastoral life and ministry reflects an intention of the churches to continue to exercise the apostolic ministry of word and sacrament of the universal Church.

D. The Historic Episcopal Succession as Sign

50. The whole Church is a sign of the Kingdom of God; the act of ordination is a sign of God's faithfulness to his Church, especially in relation to the oversight of its mission. To ordain a bishop in historic succession (that is, in intended continuity from the apostles themselves) is also a sign. In so doing the Church communicates its care for continuity in the whole of its life and mission, and reinforces its determination to manifest the permanent characteristics of the Church of the apostles. To make the meaning of the sign fully intelligible it is necessary to include in the service of ordination a public declaration of the faith of the Church and an exposition of the ministry to which the new bishop is called. In this way the sign of historic episcopal succession is placed clearly in its full context of the continuity of proclamation of the gospel of Christ and the mission of his Church.
51. The use of the sign of the historic episcopal succession does not by itself guarantee the fidelity of a church to every aspect of the apostolic faith, life and mission. There have been schisms in the history of churches using the sign of historic succession. Nor does the sign guarantee the personal faithfulness of the bishop. Nonetheless, the retention of the sign remains a permanent challenge to fidelity and to unity, a summons to witness to, and a commission to realise more fully, the permanent characteristics of the Church of the apostles.
52. Faithfulness to the apostolic calling of the whole Church is carried by more than one means of continuity. Therefore a church which has preserved the sign of historic episcopal succession is free to acknowledge an authentic episcopal ministry in a church which has preserved continuity in the episcopal office by an occasional priestly/presbyterial ordination at the time of the Reformation. Similarly a church which has preserved continuity through such a succession is free to enter a relationship of mutual participation in episcopal ordinations with a church which has retained the historical episcopal succession, and to embrace this sign, without denying its past apostolic continuity.
53. The mutual acknowledgement of our churches and ministries is theologically prior to the use of the sign of the laying on of hands in the historic succession. Resumption of the use of the sign does not imply an adverse judgement on the ministries of those churches which did not previously make use of the sign. It

is rather a means of making more visible the unity and continuity of the Church at all times and in all places.

54. To the degree to which our ministries have been separated all our churches have lacked something of that fullness which God desires for his people (Eph. 1: 23 and 3: 17-19). By moving together, and by being served by a reconciled and mutually recognized episcopal ministry, our churches will be both more faithful to their calling and also more conscious of their need for renewal. By the sharing of our life and ministries in closer visible unity, we shall be strengthened for the continuation of Christ's mission in the world.

E. A New Stage

55. By the far-reaching character of our agreement recorded in the previous paragraphs it is apparent that we have reached a new stage in our journey together in faith. We have agreed on the nature and purpose of the church (Chapter II), on its faith and doctrine (Chapter III), specifically on the apostolicity of the whole Church, on the apostolic ministry within it, and on the episcopal office in the service of the Church (Chapter IV).
56. On the basis of this agreement we believe
    that our churches should confidently acknowledge one another as churches and enter into a new relationship;
    that each church as a whole has maintained an authentic apostolic succession of witness and service (IV A);
    that each church has had transmitted to it an apostolic ministry of word and sacrament by prayer and the laying on of hands (IV B);
    that each church has maintained an orderly succession of episcopal ministry within the continuity of its pastoral life, focused in the consecrations of bishops and in the experience and witness of the historic sees (IV C).
57. In the light of all this we find that the time has come when all our churches can affirm together the value and use of the sign of the historic episcopal succession (IV D). This means that those churches in which the sign has at some time not been used are free to recognise the value of the sign and should embrace it without denying their own apostolic continuity. This also means that those churches in which the sign has been used are free to recognise the reality of the episcopal office and should affirm the apostolic continuity of those churches in which the sign of episcopal succession has at some time not been used.

5 - Towards Closer Unity

A. Joint Declaration

58. We recommend that our churches jointly make the following Declaration:

THE PORVOO DECLARATION

We, the Church of Denmark, the Church of England, the Estonian Evangelical-Lutheran Church, the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland, the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Iceland, the Church of Ireland, the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Latvia, the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Lithuania, the Church of Norway, the Scottish Episcopal Church, the Church of Sweden and the Church in Wales, on the basis of our common understanding of the nature and purpose of the Church, fundamental agreement in faith and our agreement on episcopacy in the service of the apostolicity of the Church, contained in Chapters II-IV of The Porvoo Common Statement, make the following acknowledgements and commitments:

a. 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 his grace and as possessing not only the inward call of the Spirit, but also Christ's commission through his Body, the Church;

   v we acknowledge that personal, collegial and communal oversight (episcope) is embodied and exercised in all our churches in a variety of forms, in continuity of apostolic life, mission and ministry;

   vi we acknowledge that the episcopal office is valued and maintained in all our churches as a visible sign expressing and serving the Church's unity and continuity in apostolic life, mission and ministry.

b. We commit ourselves:
   i to share a common life in mission and service, to pray for and with one another, and to share resources;

   ii to welcome one another's members to receive sacramental and other pastoral ministrations;

   iii to regard baptized members of all our churches as members of our

own;

iv to welcome diaspora congregations into the life of the indigenous churches, to their mutual enrichment;

v to welcome persons episcopally ordained in any of our churches to the office of bishop, priest or deacon to serve, by invitation and in accordance with any regulations which may from time to time be in force, in that ministry in the receiving church without re-ordination;

vi to invite one another's bishops normally to participate in the laying on of hands at the ordination of bishops as a sign of the unity and continuity of the Church;

vii to work towards a common understanding of diaconal ministry;

viii to establish appropriate forms of collegial and conciliar consultation on significant matters of faith and order, life and work;

ix to encourage consultations of representatives of our churches, and to facilitate learning and exchange of ideas and information in theological and pastoral matters;

x to establish a contact group to nurture our growth in communion and to co-ordinate the implementation of this agreement.

B Liturgical Celebration

59. We recommend that this agreement and our new relationship be inaugurated and affirmed by three central celebrations of the eucharist at which all our churches would be represented. These celebrations would be a sign of:
    our joyful acceptance of one another;
    our joint commitment in the faith and sacramental life of the Church;
    our welcome of the ministers and members of the other churches as our own;
    our commitment to engage in mission together.
    These celebrations would include:
    the reading and signing of the Porvoo Declaration;
    a central prayer of thanksgiving for the past and petition for the future, offered by Lutherans for Anglicans and Anglicans for Lutherans;
    the exchange of the Peace;
    a jointly celebrated eucharist;
    other verbal and ceremonial signs of our common life.

C Wider Ecumenical Commitment

60. We rejoice in our agreement and the form of visible unity it makes possible. We see in it a step towards the visible unity which all churches committed to the ecumenical movement seek to manifest. We do not regard our move to closer communion as an end in itself, but as part of the pursuit of a wider

unity. This pursuit will involve the following:

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

deepening relationships within and between our two world communions and supporting efforts towards closer communion between Anglican and Lutheran churches in other regions, especially in relation to agreements being developed in Africa and North America;

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

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

61. 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.