

AGENDA 14.6

Anglican – Lutheran Dialogue Report

REGARDING THE REPUBLICATION OF THE REVISED BOOKLET *COMMON GROUND* INCLUDING THE ADDENDUM *PERSPECTIVES ON MISSION*

PREAMBLE

As the Christian churches of Australia and New Zealand find it increasingly difficult to continue serving their cities, towns and rural areas, working together is increasing in importance. Indeed, unless we do, some communities will have no organised Christian presence at all. Formal dialogues between churches help prepare the way for local cooperation in ministry and mission. As part of the process flowing out of *Common Ground*, we entered formal covenants with the Anglican Church in Tennant Creek (2002) and Katherine in the Northern Territory (2006) and included Anglicans in the Uniting–Lutheran Covenant in Wudinna in South Australia in 2013.

The first printing of the document *Common Ground* included only brief references to mission, and the current round of the dialogue (2013 to the present) was tasked with exploring this and have produced the statement *Perspective on Mission* as a third addendum to *Common Ground*. This will assist our congregations as they work to join God’s mission to his world in their local contexts.

ECUMENICAL DIALOGUE

In the process of dialogue we ask our friends—in this case the Anglicans—to help us to be better Lutherans. That is of course a two-way street. We each ask our partner what they can contribute to our life, ministry and mission. They also seek to receive from us. Today that is generally called ‘receptive ecumenism’. One fruit of such discussions is an agreed statement, such as *Perspectives on Mission*, which is now being presented to this Synod.

You will find that there are parts of the statements that were prepared by the Anglican team. We asked questions and at times, as we worked on it together, clearer forms of expression were found, so that both Lutherans and Anglicans accurately understand what is being said. Likewise, the sections prepared by our Lutheran team were discussed and clarified as necessary. Sometime this also identifies issues where we have somewhat different perspectives, and more work is required. There are of course also sections where we express our shared faith and understanding. This means that a statement by Lutherans alone would at times be expressed differently. However, this is a shared document, and the wording reflects that.

FIFTY YEARS OF BLESSING EACH OTHER

Anglicans and Lutherans have engaged in fruitful formal dialogue in Australia for fifty years. The first statement was on the *Eucharist* and adopted in 1973. Since then there have been agreed statements on *Ministry* (1975), *Baptism* (1981), *Anglican-Lutheran Marriages* (1983) and *Episcopate and Unity* (1993). In 2001 our two churches entered a process for covenanting for mutual recognition and reconciliation and issued a document called *Common Ground*. This document built on the previous agreements and led to formal agreements to work together in specific ministry contexts. *Common Ground* includes two appendices: the first is an agreement in faith and order, and the second an agreement on ministry. The proposal is now to add a third, *Perspectives on Mission*. The final section, Glossary of Terms, will then become Appendix 4.

To remain current, *Common Ground* also required slight revisions to take into account the LCANZ decision to change from calling our District and Churchwide leaders ‘presidents’ to ‘bishops’. The list of participants in the dialogue over the years also has been updated. As part of the process, each dialogue team regularly confers with the responsible bodies in their church. In the case of the Anglicans, that is with their doctrinal and ecumenical commissions, and in our case with the Commission on Theology and Inter-Church Relations.

The Anglican General Synod met on the Gold Coast on 8-13 May 2022 and resolved to adopt *Perspectives on Mission* as a third appendix to *Common Ground*, and it encouraged members of the Anglican Church of Australia to study *Common Ground* and *Perspectives on Mission* and to foster closer cooperation and relations with the Lutheran Church of Australia.

THE ADDENDUM *PERSPECTIVES ON MISSION*

Receptive ecumenism involves careful listening. We learned about the Anglican Communion’s Five Marks of Mission: The mission of the Church is the mission of Christ

- to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
- to teach, baptise and nurture new believers
- to respond to human need by loving service
- to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation
- to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth

<https://www.anglicancommunion.org/mission/marks-of-mission.aspx>

We heard that for Anglicans the first Mark of Mission, identified with personal evangelism, is a summary of what all mission is about, because it is based on Jesus’ own summary of his mission. It is therefore the key statement about everything we do in mission. As Lutherans we were able to share that in understanding mission we distinguish between justification and sanctification, and the work of ‘God’s two hands’, or the ‘two kingdoms’, and so other aspects such as service, justice and the care of creation flow from the core teaching of justification.

Among the other topics considered in depth are *missio Dei*, vocation, the diaconate, creation and redemption, evangelists and catechists, and Shalom. As well as the work of the Anglican–Lutheran International Coordinating Committee (of which Anglican Co-Chair Bishop Tim Harris was a member) we also consulted various Anglican-Lutheran agreements from other parts of the world.

Perspectives on Mission (published on the following page) builds on the previous agreements, notably those on baptism, ministry and oversight, as we considered how this might work out in practice in the congregations and ministries of our churches. The dialogue therefore also listed several current opportunities for collaboration in ministry and mission (see 12.1 in the appendix). It is the dialogue’s hope and prayer that these may grow as actions and not merely theory, and that the possibilities may multiply in the years to come.

CONCLUSION

The dialogue commends the updated *Common Ground*, including *Perspectives on Mission*, to Synod, so that it may assist our bishops, mission departments, congregations and other ministries in collaborating with the Anglicans and other traditions in joining God’s mission to his world in their contexts. Our thanks are given to those who worked as part of the Lutheran team for this round of dialogue. At present they are Rev Ben Pfeiffer, Rev Matthew Thomas, Rev James Winderlich and

Rev Dr Steen Olsen (Lutheran Co-Chair). In earlier meetings of the dialogue Rev Richard Haar, Rev Dr Michael Lockwood, Rev Dr Andrew Ruddell, Rev Dr Michael Semmler, and Rev Dr Stephen Pietsch were also members.

COMMON GROUND

APPENDIX 3 PERSPECTIVES ON MISSION

FOUNDATIONS

1 One God

- 1.1 From eternity to eternity there is one God—strong, pure and holy, good and righteous, true and loving, revealed to us as:
- the Father—from whom and for whom all things exist
 - the Father's Son, God's powerful Word, incarnate in Jesus Christ—all things exist through him and for him
 - the Holy Spirit—who brings to us all that is of the Father and the Son.
- Father, Son and Spirit love, serve, honour and give to one another, and to us.¹

2 God's Purpose

- 2.1 All creation reflects God's nature and character. In particular, human beings are made in God's own image and likeness, in relationship with God and each other. God has blessed humanity, male and female alike, to fill and exercise responsible stewardship of the earth, until the earth is filled with the glory of God. God's ultimate intention is to have a gathered and united people, children known and loved as God's family, transformed into the image of the Son, holy and blameless, abiding in God's love, in a renewed and fulfilled creation.
- 2.2 At the instigation of the evil one, in thankless defiance of God's will and purpose, humanity has sought to go its own way, for its own glory. This sinful state has given rise to all kinds of evil and has subjected us to God's judgment, resulting in death.
- 2.3 God, as our eternal Father and Redeemer, nonetheless has persisted in bringing his creational purpose to fulfilment, by redemptive saving grace upon all creation and the holy people of God, through the giving of the Son, and the sending of the Spirit.²

3 God's Mission

- 3.1 The Old and New Testament scriptures tell us all we need to know and experience of God's salvation. God renewed the blessings of creation in and through the offspring of Abraham, realised in the covenantal people of Israel, that they might be a blessing to all peoples. Abraham, Moses, David and the prophets were among those who knew God's justification, redemption and calling—forgiveness of sin, and righteousness from God, through faith—and were shown something of the one who would come to make this reality possible. Such righteousness is to be received and lived, both personally and communally.
- 3.2 At the right time, God sent the Son, named Jesus, as one of us in human flesh, to make God known as Abba Father, by his life, teachings and miracles, and particularly in his sufferings, crucifixion, and resurrection. On the cross, Jesus bore the sin of the world, with its terrible consequences, and defeated evil and death, to bring us reconciliation and new life with God. In his resurrection and ascension, Jesus convicted the world, triumphed

¹ Psalm 90:2; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 1 Chronicles 29:12; Isaiah 5:16; 14:25; Psalm 36:5–6; Mark 10:18; Revelation 15:3; 1 John 4:8–10, 16; John 1:1–3, 14; Hebrews 1:2–3; Colossians 1:16; Matthew 10:20; Galatians 4:6; 1 Corinthians 2:10; John 3:35; 5:22–23; 10:17; 14:31; 16:13–15; 17:24, 26; Acts 17:25.

² Genesis 1:1–2:3; 5:1–3; Luke 3:38; Romans 1:19–20; Numbers 14:20; Habakkuk 2:14; Ephesians 1:4–6; Romans 8:29; Matthew 19:28; Revelation 21:1–22:5; Genesis 2:4–3:24, Romans 1:18, 21; Ephesians 2:1–3; Romans 5:12; Isaiah 63:16; John 3:16–17; Romans 8:1–4.

over evil, injustice, terror and abuse, and became the first fruits of the resurrection and the new creation.

- 3.3 This reality is conveyed to us, in the word and experience of the gospel, by the Holy Spirit, through the gifts of repentance and faith, bringing us into direct relationship with the Son and the Father, with the love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control that are the fruit of the Spirit, as a present foretaste of the sure and certain hope of the resurrection life to come.³

4 Mission and Church

- 4.1 God lives and works in, with and through his multi-ethnic family, the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church of Christ. This church is a witness to the world and a foretaste of God's ultimate intention to bring the countless multitude from all nations, tribes, peoples and languages into one saved and cleansed community that worships in the presence of God. The church is also God's chosen means of bringing this about. Christ has given his disciples God's authoritative word, to live by and to proclaim, and the dominical sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper, by which people are brought into and sustained in the life of God.
- 4.2 God has commissioned us to convey in word and action the good news to the whole creation and make disciples of all nations. We have the protective and active elements of God's armour in the gospel, and all necessary gifts of the Spirit, to be able to engage in this spiritual struggle.
- 4.3 The participation of God's people in the unity of the Spirit, which is ours in the love-relationship of the Father and the Son, is essential for the effectiveness of God's mission through his church. As people respond to the gospel in the power of the Spirit, practical life together flows from the love of God—within the church, and out into the wider community.⁴

AN ANGLICAN PERSPECTIVE

- 5.1 In recent times Anglicans have come to express their understanding of mission through the identification of 'five marks of mission'. While the first two marks come from a stance of Christian faith, overall the marks reflect responses to God's grace available to and invited of all people. Marks 3-5 are framed in terms of the church providing exemplary commitment regarding responsibilities and concerns enjoined on all humanity, and all marks are to be addressed collectively.
- 5.2 The Five Marks of Mission are:
1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
 2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
 3. To respond to human need by loving service
 4. To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation
 5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth

³ 2 Timothy 3:15; Genesis 12:1-3; 15:1-21; 22:1-19; 2 Samuel 7:1-29; 12:13; Psalm 32; 51; Isaiah 6:1-8; 26:2; 52:13-53:12; Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 3:21-26; 4:1-25; Philippians 3:7-11; Galatians 4:4-5; John 1:14, 18; 14:6-7; 17:6-8; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18; Galatians 3:13-14; Romans 8:1-4; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 1:3-5; 10-12; 1 Thessalonians 1:5; John 6:39; Acts 2:38; 5:31-32; 11:18; 15:8-9; 16:30-31; 1 Corinthians 12:3; Ephesians 2:18; Romans 8:15-17; Galatians 4:6; 5:22-25; Ephesians 1:13-14; 1 Corinthians 2:9-10; Romans 8:11.

⁴ 1 Corinthians 12:4-6, 12-13; 15:20-28; Revelation 7:9-17; Mark 16:15, 19-20; Luke 24:44-49; Acts 1:8; John 17:14; Matthew 10:7-8; Mark 6:7-13; Matthew 28:16-20; 26:26-29; 1 Corinthians 10:14-17; 11:17-34; 1 Peter 4:10-11; Ephesians 1:3; 4:3, 7-16; 6:10-20; 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, 27-31; 13:1-13; 2 Corinthians 6:2-10; 10:3-5; John 17:11, 20-26; Leviticus 19:1-37; Acts 2:43-47; 4:32-34; 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12; 2 Thessalonians 1:3-4; Colossians 3:12-4:6; 1 Peter 2:11-3:16.

- 5.3 As noted on the Anglican Communion website, the first mark of mission 'is really a summary of what all mission is about, because it is based on Jesus' own summary of his mission (Matthew 4:17, Mark 1:14-15, Luke 4:18, Luke 7:22; cf. John 3:14-17). Instead of being just one (albeit the first) of five distinct activities, this should be the key statement about everything we do in mission', encompassing both evangelism (encouraging people in gospel faith) and evangelisation (the outworking of the gospel within society and culture), empowered and transformed through the Holy Spirit.

A LUTHERAN PERSPECTIVE

- 6.1 Lutherans articulate mission in terms of proclaiming the gospel of justification by grace, through faith, on account of Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, which brings forgiveness of sins and righteousness before God and therefore gives birth to believers and gathers them into the church. Other matters, such as service, justice, equality and care of creation flow from this central dynamic of justification.
- 6.2 When we reflect on service, justice, equality and care of creation, Lutherans distinguish between two aspects of God's work; often spoken of as the work of God's left hand in providing government, law, structure and care for the world (Rom 13:1-4, Eph 6:1-9), and the work of God's right hand through the law and the gospel of Jesus Christ to bring people to repentance and faith so that they may be reconciled to God (2 Cor 5:18-21, John 20:21-23). These two aspects of God's work are to be distinguished but not confused or separated. It is the same God who works in both spheres and Christians participate in both spheres. The church is primarily called to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to the world.

OUR COMMON CALLING AND VOCATION FOR MISSION

7 Our Baptismal Identity

- 7.1 The church is constituted and sustained by the triune God, at work through his word and sacraments.⁵
- 7.2 In Holy Baptism we are united with Christ and with one another.⁶
- 7.3 The rite of baptism implies further instruction in the faith.⁷ Therefore our mission is not only to those outside the church but also to those within it. So Christian activities such as catechesis, confirmation and adult instruction, can rightly be called participation in God's mission.⁸
- 7.4 In the Eucharist God nourishes the body of Christ in faith and hope and strengthens it for witness and service in daily life.⁹ Therefore the Eucharist is both preparation for, and participation in, God's mission.¹⁰ New believers sharing in the Eucharist is a goal of missionary activity.

⁵ Common Ground 13.1

⁶ Common Ground 14.1

⁷ Common Ground 14.2

⁸ See also the Great Commission in Matthew 28:16-20. These words highlight the important connection between baptism and an ongoing life of learning and discipleship. Both Anglicans and Lutherans include these words in their baptismal rites and recognise them as foundational to an understanding of baptismal identity.

⁹ Common Ground 15.4

¹⁰ See 1 Corinthians 11:26

- 7.5 All members of the church are called to participate in the apostolic mission according to their God-given gifts.¹¹ When God calls us into the Christian church through Holy Baptism, God also sends us out to be part of his mission.

8 Our Personal Callings

- 8.1 The ordained ministry of word and sacrament is a divinely instituted gift to the church. This ordained ministry is essential to the mission of the church, and enables the mission of the whole people of God.¹²
- 8.2 Every Christian, as part of the priesthood of the baptised, is called to offer prayer and praise to God, to intercede for the church and the world, to witness to the gospel and its impact in their life, and to serve their neighbour in love.
- 8.3 The way Christians participate in God's mission will necessarily be different depending on their God-given gifts, abilities and opportunities.¹³
- 8.4 The Lutheran Church recognises the authority of the church to establish auxiliary offices within the church to serve its life and mission such as evangelists. Similarly, the Anglican Church licenses and authorises various lay ministries including in collaborative team ministry.
- 8.5 Every age looks for the distinctive gifting of evangelists as an essential ministry of gospel mission and similarly we encourage the rediscovery of the calling of catechists as instructors and coaches in Christian faith and living.¹⁴
- 8.6 The Anglican Church has identified *diakonia* as a key missional sphere and mode of ministry for the whole people of God, with specific training, deployment and support. In the Anglican Church, this ministry is embodied in the order of deacons. Deacons minister in a sphere that bridges the gap between the church and the wider community, between liturgy and outreach. The role of deacons therefore provides special opportunity for witness, acts of mercy, ecumenical cooperation and the furthering of God's mission to the world.¹⁵
- 8.7 The Lutheran Church has identified a Christian's personal situation in life, with its relationships and callings (stations and vocations) as a key sphere for mission. A Christian's various roles in the local congregation, family, workplace and society provide the setting in which God's mission can be carried out. Simple examples might be parents leading their children in home devotions, or one colleague providing a Christian witness to another at work.¹⁶

9 Our Collective Callings

- 9.1 Beyond these unique and personal callings, we also have collective or communal callings. By sharing time, talents and treasures, by careful planning and prayer, groups of Christians are called to participate in God's mission in ways that Christians working alone may find difficult.
- 9.2 The primary example of this is the local congregation or Christian gathering, which is called to serve and witness in a particular location. This brings specific opportunities for mission. Congregations can establish missional communities to engage with people in

¹¹ Common Ground 16.1

¹² See Common Ground 17.1, 17.2 and 18.1

¹³ 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, Ephesians 4:11-13, 1 Peter 4:10-11

¹⁴ See Bleby, Martin, *Evangelists and Catechists* 2018

¹⁵ See Lee-Barker, Jane, *Diakonia and Mission: For Discussion on the implications for missional training, deployment and support* 2014

¹⁶ See Pfeiffer, Ben, *Vocation and Mission: A Lutheran Perspective* 2014

their locality or begin other endeavours to build relationships with those who are not yet Christian.

- 9.3 The way these local congregations and gatherings relate to one another is also significant when it comes to mission, both exemplifying gospel fellowship and enabling a greater missional diversity and identity.
- 9.4 The Anglican Church has affirmed a diocese to be its unit of organisation, under Episcopal oversight, together with synodical governance, with responsibility for leading the missional activity across a number of local congregations, Anglican entities or a particular geographical area.
- 9.5 The Lutheran Church has established its synod as its highest constitutional authority, under oversight of the bishop of the Church, and working together with its districts and their bishops, and mission boards, with responsibility for leading missional activity across a number of local congregations, Lutheran entities (especially schools and aged care facilities) or a particular geographical location.
- 9.6 Together we recognise a comparable ministry of oversight, as stated in Common Ground 17.2. Our diocesan bishops and district bishops work together for the sake of cooperation in mission, for example, in overseeing shared pastoral care and Eucharistic hospitality agreements in their areas.

MISSION AND THE GOAL OF ECUMENICAL RELATIONSHIPS

- 10.1 Full unity and communion is not the ecumenical goal in and of itself. It is a spiritual reality already established in Christ. Our mandate by God's grace is to most effectively participate in the mission of God. *Koinonia* in mission serves that end as a sign, foretaste and instrument of that mission, the full realisation of the Kingdom of God.

OUR SHARED CONTEXT, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR MISSION

- 11.1 We affirm our calling to minister as partners in the gospel and mission, as an expression of our fellowship in Christ.
- 11.2 We recognise we share the same mission field, and face a range of common challenges as we seek to respond and undertake, in God's grace, our participation in the creational and redemptive mission of God. This is a constantly changing context throughout Australia, as social, demographic and geographic movements reshape the neighbourhoods, regions, towns and cities we inhabit. There are many instances where we live and minister alongside one another as local churches and allied ministries, and more intentional consideration of partnership and strategic approaches would serve the work of the Kingdom.
- 11.3 In like measure, our appraisal of limited resources and facilities also has much in common, and as we undertake ongoing review of strategic missional priorities and initiatives, we recognise the value of greater collaboration, consultation and training. Such questions ought be asked in all contexts we share in common, but particularly so in areas where resources are scarce and viable church communities difficult to sustain.

OPPORTUNITIES TO SEEK MOST EFFECTIVE AVENUES FOR COLLABORATION IN MISSION AND MINISTRY

- 12.1 There is a range of areas where in the spirit of receptive ecumenism we challenge ourselves to explore opportunities for greater collaboration, partnership and mutual recognition. The following are provided as possible examples to encourage ongoing

specific discussion about local, regional and church-wide opportunities:

- Rural and remote ministry and mission.
- Congregational renewal in mission.
- Greenfield, inner urban and suburban church planting.
- Joint establishment of missional communities.
- Workshops, seminars and mentoring for evangelists and church planting teams.
- Joint sponsorship of events with significant local and international presenters.
- Defence force and industrial chaplaincy.
- Joint enlistment, training and resourcing of catechists.
- Training of teachers and staff for schools, and staff for aged and community care ministries.
- Training of clergy and church workers.

Our commitment to greater and intentional *koinonia* in mission

13.1 Informed by the above, our respective churches hereby commit ourselves to encourage greater awareness and understanding of each other's self-identity, values and commitment to gospel mission and ministry, as expressed in local contexts. Fellowship is a relational term, so we undertake to explore opportunities to pray, study, worship, evangelise and serve with one another. As we recognise the grace of God in and through each other, we affirm our calling to consult, encourage, support and collaborate in our discernment of mission and ministry vision and strategic priorities. We encourage greater use of covenants for eucharistic hospitality, pastoral care, evangelistic endeavours and local shared ministry or team arrangements.