

## ***Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee:***

### **Concerning Voice and Vote for Ordained Ministers of Word and Sacrament Serving Under Exchangeability Provisions of Full-Communion Relationships**

#### ***Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:***

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America specifies in its churchwide bylaws the following (8.72.14.): “An ordained minister from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by a Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be granted the privilege of both voice and vote in the Synod Assembly during the period of that ordained minister’s service in a congregation of this church....”

As was communicated to all synods of the ELCA upon adoption of full-communion agreements, this bylaw applies to all synods of the ELCA, including those where provision has not been made as yet in the synod’s constitution.

The ELCA’s *Constitution for Synods* contains the following recommended provision for each synod (S7.27.): “This synod may establish processes through the Synod Council to grant an ordained minister from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America the privilege of voice and vote in the Synod Assembly during the period of that ordained minister’s service in a congregation of this church.”

As previously indicated to ELCA synods, the process for granting voice and vote is determined by the Synod Council. Such options for granting voice and vote include one of the following possibilities: (1) action of the council itself, (2) a decision of a credentials committee, (3) provision in the Synod Assembly’s Rules of Organization and Procedure; or (4) a specific resolution adopted at the opening plenary session of any assembly.

Note that the provision applies only to ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament from full-communion partner church bodies who are currently serving in ELCA congregations.

The Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee encourages the full implementation of this possibility in synods of the ELCA.

## **Concerning Voice and Vote for Clergy Serving Under Exchangeability Provisions of Full Communion Relationships**

### **The Episcopal Church:**

“Called to Common Mission” permits “the full interchangeability and reciprocity of all (ELCA) pastors as priests or presbyters within the Episcopal Church without any further ordination or re-ordination or supplemental ordination whatsoever, subject always to canonically or constitutionally approved invitation.” (Paragraph 16, CCM)

Article VIII of the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church states that “A bishop may permit a minister ordained in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its predecessor bodies who has made the promise of conformity required by that Church in place of the foregoing declaration to officiate on a temporary basis as an ordained minister of this church.”

Although the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church are silent on whether this includes seat, voice and vote in Diocesan Conventions, many dioceses have included such provision in their diocesan constitution and/or canons. An example from the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of Iowa reads:

“A minister ordained in the ELCA who with the permission of the bishop, serves a congregation in this diocese shall have seat, (voice) and vote in this Convention.”

Another option, short of amending Constitutions and Canons, would be for the Diocesan Conventions to grant such clergy seat, voice and vote at the beginning of each annual Convention for that legislative assembly.

The Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee encourages the full implementation of such possibilities in all dioceses of the Episcopal Church.