

Covenant For Cooperative Mission

**between the
Evangelical Church of
the Lutheran
Confession in Brazil
and the
Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

1. Preamble

1.1 The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil (IECLB) confess our common faith in the triune God, and together affirm that we are called, sent, and empowered to participate in God's mission in the world.

1.2 We confess together that the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as found in Holy Scripture and as interpreted and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and the Lutheran Confessions, is the power of God that creates, equips, and sustains the Church for faithful mission.

1.3 As churches who have received abundant gifts and resources for

mission and
ministry from Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, we affirm our
common commitment
to accompany each other in faithful mission to the world God loves
through the sharing
of those gifts and resources.

1.4 As member churches of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and
the World
Council of Churches (WCC) we affirm our common commitment to
cooperative
mission in the spirit of accompaniment both within the Lutheran
communion and
within the larger ecumenical arena.

1.5 With gratitude for the abundant grace and gifts of God, we join
together in this
Covenant for Cooperative Mission and commit ourselves to a
relationship of mutual
respect as we seek together to hear, understand, and respond to God's
call to mission.

2. Background

2.1 On February 1, 1990, the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA and the
Pastor President
of the IECLB signed an agreement for the sharing of ministries and
programs between
the churches. The document stipulated that the agreement would be in
effect for 10 years,
after which its terms should be reappraised. With the mutual consent of
both churches, a
review of cooperative mission during the ten year term of the
agreement was undertaken

in the year 2000.

2.2 Both the ELCA and the IECLB expressed a desire to continue, to strengthen, and to expand cooperative activities in mission and, through a process of consultations in both Chicago and Porto Alegre, have concluded the present agreement.

3. Terms of the Agreement

3.1 Confident that the Holy Spirit is leading us toward greater unity as we accompany each other in mission and ministry, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil agree that, with the help of God, we will:

3.1.1 Share resources for mission and ministry within our respective churches in the following programmatic areas:

3.1.1.a Social ministries, programs, and projects, including those in support of peace, justice, and the integrity of creation, and advocacy and education on human rights issues.

3.1.1.b Congregational ministries, including worship, Christian education, stewardship, and evangelism resources.

3.1.1.c Domestic mission programs, including congregational renewal, new congregational starts, and outreach among ethnic and immigrant

communities.

3.1.1.d Programs and projects that lead to and support sustainable development.

3.1.1.e Leadership development programs for both lay and clergy within the churches.

3.1.11 Theological scholarship and education, including, but not limited to, sabbatical assistance, scholarships, and faculty and student exchanges.

3.1.1.g Graduate and undergraduate education, including, but not limited to, faculty and student exchanges.

3.1.2 Encourage and facilitate the development of relationships between synods, congregations, and church-related institutions and agencies, including, but not limited to, both educational and service-related visits by members of our respective churches.

3.1.3 Share information through a variety of communications media with both the membership of our respective churches and the larger Lutheran communion in order to keep them informed about our joint ventures in mission and ministry.

3.1.4 Promote the strengthening of ecumenical relationships, cooperative mission, and resource sharing both among the Lutheran churches in Central America, the Caribbean, South America, and North America and within the wider ecumenical

arena, including the encouragement and facilitation of South-to-South and South-to-North exchanges of mission personnel.

3.1.5 Work together, in exercising our mutual public responsibility, by co-developing documents, e.g., study documents and messages, that address social, economic, political, and ethical issues affecting church and society.

3.2 Appendix I lists, in general terms, those areas of mission and ministry, coming under these five commitments, that our churches will explore as having potential for cooperative work. As particular programs, ministries, or projects are agreed upon, guidelines governing the relationship will be developed between the cooperating divisions, departments, synods, congregations or agencies. Such guidelines will then be appended to this document.

4. Evaluation and Reporting

4.1 It is agreed that all cooperative ministries, programs, and projects developed under the terms of this covenant will include evaluative and reporting procedures to ensure both continuing mission- effectiveness and cost-effectiveness in the allocation of mutual resources for mission.

4.2 This covenant shall be in effect for 10 years, from the date of its signing, at the end of

which time a comprehensive evaluation of the impact of the Covenant on the mission and ministries of our respective churches will be made. Following such evaluation, this covenant will be revised, renewed, or rescinded, at the mutual consent of the churches.

5. Revision or Rescission of the Covenant

5.1 This *Covenant for Cooperative Mission* may be revised, totally or in part, at any time at the request of either church, and with the mutual consent of both churches.

5.2 Individual ministries, programs, or projects developed under the terms of this covenant may be discontinued at the request of either party after due consultation without abrogating the covenant.

5.3 This *Covenant for Cooperative Mission* may be rescinded at the request of either party with the agreement that, should the Covenant be rescinded, the churches will settle their existing accounts within a period of one year.

Signed this 11th day of August, 2001, at Indianapolis, Indiana on the occasion of the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Rev. Herberto Kirchheim
Pastor President

Rev. Dr. H. George Anderson
Presiding Bishop

Evangelical Church of the
Lutheran
Confession in Brazil

Evangelical Lutheran Church in
America