

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS  
ABOUT  
THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN  
THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
AND  
THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)**

**1. Why is this agreement necessary?**

While we are not able to fully make interchangeable the ordained ministries of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and The Episcopal Church, this agreement allow our churches to recognize as valid the ministries of one another's churches. For the sake of mission, it will allow a presbytery and a diocesan bishop to give special authorization for ministers of Word and Sacrament and Episcopal priests to carry out task of their office in the congregations of each other's churches.

**2. Is this similar to the Full Communion Relationship we have through the Formula of Agreement and the Orderly Exchange of Ministers process?**

No. In our Full Communion Relationship we have with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Reformed Church in America and the United Church of Christ, the ordering of our ministries is not a church dividing issue and our ministers of Word and Sacrament are reconciled and able to fully serve as requested in one another's churches.

In this Agreement with the Episcopal Church, we have not yet achieved Full Communion and our ministries are not yet reconciled or fully interchangeable.

**3. Why do the bishop and the presbytery have to authorize ministers to celebrate Communion in Episcopal and Presbyterian congregations? Isn't this usually the responsibility of a session in the PCUSA?**

Episcopal priests may preside at the Eucharist in congregations outside the Episcopal Church and their Full Communion partners with the authorization of the diocesan bishop. The counterpart to the bishop in the Presbyterian Church USA is the presbytery. It is the expectation of this Agreement is that dioceses and presbyteries will develop patterns of shared authorization for one another's pastors.

**4. Why must ministers only use liturgies of their Church? Doesn't this seem to contradict the spirit of this agreement?**

The Book of Common Prayer is the only authorized liturgy that Episcopal priests may use and it is related to their particular ordination. Until Full Communion and Interchangeability of ministers is established, Ministers not in Full Communion with the Episcopal Church are not allowed to use liturgy in the Book of Common Prayer for the Lord's Supper. However, it should be noted that there are several liturgies in the Book of Common Worship that are very close in language and order to liturgies found in the Book of Common Prayer.

**5. Doesn't G-14.0514 already permit ministers from other denominations to serve temporarily in PCUSA congregations and to celebrate the Lord's Supper?**

Yes, it does. This Agreement builds on this provision in the Book of Order and provisions in the Episcopal Church's Canon to mutually agree upon and make possible the service of each other's ministers to one another for the sake of mission. What is most significant is the mutuality of this Agreement.

**6. When will this Agreement become effective?**

This Agreement requires the ratification of the majority of presbyteries in the PCUSA and the approval of the Episcopal Church General Convention in 2009. It would then become effective by 2010.

**7. How will this impact our other ecumenical relationships and partnerships?**

This is an ecumenical agreement between the PC (USA) and the Episcopal Church. It is binding only on our two churches. Each of our churches has Full Communion and Covenant Relationships with other churches (e.g., the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Moravian Church, the Korean Presbyterian Church in America, etc.) While it does not change any of our other ecumenical agreements or partnerships, we pray that it becomes a constructive model for living together and sharing in the ministry of Christ for the glory of God.

**8. What can I do to help make this Agreement meaningful?**

If there are Episcopal congregations within the geographical bounds of your presbytery, reach out to meet the pastors and members of these congregations and learn how God is working through them. If you are already in ecumenical partnership with Episcopal congregations consider having shared Services of the Lord's Supper together. Begin to hold this Agreement in prayer, both personally and in the corporate prayer life of your congregation and presbytery. Share ideas for ways that we might faithfully honor this covenant with the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations.