

Ecumenical Co-operation (2016)

For several reasons it is likely that inter-church co-operation will be a growing concern in many parishes. As we become involved in these co-operative ventures, it is necessary to consider the diocese as a whole, being aware of the effect of what we do in all other parts of the diocese. In many parishes the movement towards unity among Christians will make it desirable to work closely with our Christian brothers and sisters in certain areas (i.e., Dioceses of Huron, Niagara, Toronto).

The following guidelines serve as criteria for clergy and parish leaders as we proceed to work with other churches.

1. The dioceses have not arrived at the stage of a fully ecumenical parish. Therefore, all experiments must have diocesan approval.
2. Anglican worship must be maintained and the sacraments administered by an Anglican priest to Anglicans. As a minimum, the Eucharist, according to Anglican usage, will be celebrated by an Anglican priest once a week, if possible, in the parish, but at least once a month. (But see also #9.)
3. We encourage non-sacramental joint services of worship to be held on special occasions in the community, such as Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Anniversaries, Remembrance Day, Cemetery Day, Harvest or other Thanksgiving services. Permission from the bishop is not required for these non-sacramental services.
4. The bishop does not give authorization for services of intercommunion except for the explicit purpose of fostering the spirit of unity. It is not to be inferred that these services can be held on any other than an occasional basis without this purpose being clearly in mind. Intercommunion presents problems which, when glossed over, compound exponentially inside ecumenical and interchurch relationships and dialogues which are ongoing.
5. Good stewardship is encouraged in the use of church buildings and, in some cases, joint use. No major building programme should be undertaken without a survey of available facilities in the community and, where advisable and possible, consultation with other churches in the community.
6. Co-operative and co-ordinated work is encouraged in such areas as youth work, social justice, ecological, church school, and social services. When there is to be a co-ordination of the education programme, the preparing of children for receiving the Eucharist and confirmation instruction for Anglicans are the responsibility of the parish priest, to be given by him/her or by an Anglican under his/her supervision.
7. A growing team relationship with other ministers in the community is encouraged with respect to such aspects of parish life as hospital visiting, planning and stewardship. The use of secretarial and janitorial services can be on a combined basis.



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8. Anglicans must be provided with the opportunity for sacramental and Eucharistic worship on a regular basis in our parishes. Permission is not given for joint services with churches of other denominations to take place during the summer months in order to facilitate vacation plans for the clergy, with the Anglican church being closed for the entire period. Where parishes have problems arranging for Sunday services in the summer, Anglican clergy and lay readers are available through appropriate channels. The local Archdeacon is a good place to start.
9. Special arrangements exist with respect to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC), in light of *Waterloo Agreement* adopted in 2001 by General Synod and by the National Convention of ELCIC. Please contact the bishop's office for further information.

