



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

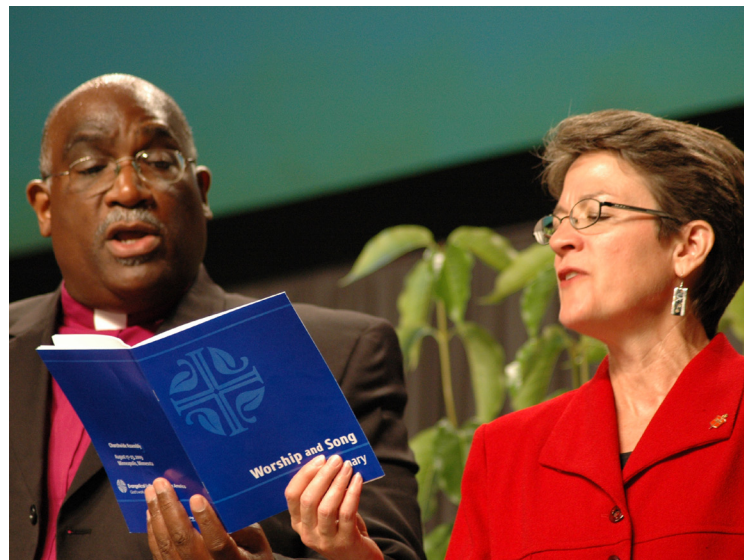


Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.
The people of The United Methodist Church®

LIVING AND GROWING INTO FULL COMMUNION

A model for local celebration, formation
and theological reflection

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and
The United Methodist Church



A model for local celebration, formation and theological reflection

VISION FOR THE DAY:

Using a mini-retreat model, we of the ELCA-UMC Coordinating Committee envision a several-hour occasion for Lutherans and Methodists in local communities to get together for conversation, worship, study and a shared meal with the aim of growing in experiential knowledge of each others' traditions as a way of living into our full communion agreement. It is also true that we grow in understanding of ourselves through encounters with others. Thus, this model contributes to the deeper formation of people in our own traditions, along with deepening our full communion relationships.

SAMPLE SCHEDULE/FORMAT FOR THE DAY(S):

Note: this event could happen on a Saturday, a Sunday afternoon/evening, a weekday evening or be adapted for other occasions. (Or what follows could be a series of events.) The event could take place over the course of a few to several hours, the length of time depending on local circumstances. The following elements can be adapted for the decided upon time frames and formats, excluding, for example, some elements for briefer gatherings. Consider what follows a menu from which to choose relationship-building activities appropriate for your local contexts.

Gathering (30 minutes):

- Sign in (if people register); receive nametags
- Mingling and informal conversation over refreshments
- Gathering prayer
- Introductions (30 minutes, depending on attendance size):
 - People share their name;
 - Briefly their faith journey, particularly how they ended up and remained in either the Lutheran or Methodist tradition; and
 - Share their favorite thing(s) about being a Lutheran or Methodist.

Historical overview (15 – 30 minutes):

- Leader(s) offer a brief review of the historical circumstances that birthed the Lutheran and Wesleyan/Methodist traditions
- Leaders then outline the nature of the full communion agreement between the ELCA and UMC

Bible study (30 – 45 minutes):

Conversational engagement with two scriptural passages, one central to the Methodist/Wesleyan tradition and one central to the Lutheran tradition.

Here are some scriptural texts important in the Methodist tradition and/or evocative of Wesleyan themes from which to choose:

- Matthew 5-7 (Sermon on the Mount)
- Romans 8:1-17 (Life in the Spirit)
- 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 (Love is Greatest)
- Titus 2:11-14 (Grace for All and for Training in Holiness)
- 1 Peter 1:15-16 (Call to Holiness)
- 1 John 4:7-21 (God is Love)
- Psalm 145:6-9 (God's Compassion and Awesome Deeds)
- Micah 6:6-8 (Doing Justice, Loving Kindness, Walking Humbly with God)

Here are some scriptural texts important in the Lutheran tradition and/or evocative of Lutheran themes from which to choose:

- Luke 15:11-32 (Prodigal Son)
- Luke 24:13-35 (Road to Emmaus)
- John 1:1-18 (Prologue about the Word)
- Romans 3:21-26 (Justification by Grace Effective Through Faith)
- Romans 7:14-25 (Paul's Inner Struggle; Christ's Rescue)
- Romans 8:31-39 (No Separation from God's Love)
- 1 Corinthians 1:18-2:1-5 (Paradox of the Cross' Wisdom)
- Ephesians 4:11-16 (Maturity in Christ as Head)

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND CONVERSATION:

1. What is the distinctive historical and theological significance of each passage for each tradition?
2. What in these passages do we share with each other and with wider Christian traditions?
3. How might we read these passages differently and similarly as Lutherans and Methodists?
4. What is the ongoing importance of these passages for mission today?

Reading and discussion of brief passages from Luther, Wesley or others in our traditions (30 – 45 minutes):

Conversational engagement with excerpts of key texts from Luther, Wesley, and others (choose the length of excerpts appropriate to local context).

LUTHER/LUTHERAN TEXTS FROM WHICH TO CHOOSE:

- “Freedom of a Christian”
- “Small Catechism”
- “A Simple Way to Pray”
- “Preface to the Epistle to the Romans”
- “Costly Grace” in *The Cost of Discipleship* (Dietrich Bonhoeffer)

WESLEY/METHODIST TEXTS FROM WHICH TO CHOOSE:

- “The Scripture Way of Salvation” (Sermon 43, Ephesians 2:8)
- “Christian Perfection” (Sermon 40, Philippians 3:12)
- “On the Danger of Increasing Riches” (Sermon 126, Psalm 62:10)
- “Catholic Spirit” (Sermon 39, 2 Kings 10:15)
- “Three Simple Rules” (Reuben Job)

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND CONVERSATION:

1. What is the historical and theological significance of each passage for each tradition?
2. What in these passages do we share with each other and with wider Christian traditions?
3. What do Methodists see in Luther’s/Lutheran writing that Lutherans may overlook? What do Lutherans see in Wesley’s/Methodist writing that Methodists may overlook?
4. What is the ongoing importance of these passages for mission today?

Meal (45 – 60 minutes):

- Menu: perhaps feature foods that may be associated with the local Lutheran and Methodist traditions.
- Encourage people from the two traditions to mingle at tables together for informal conversation.

Conversation about features of Methodist and Lutheran faith practices (30 – 45 minutes):

Leaders facilitate a conversation about common Lutheran and Methodist faith practices, how we live out our discipleship day to day and in our local communities.

SOME FAITH PRACTICES DISTINCTIVE IN THE WESLEYAN/UNITED METHODIST TRADITION:

- Practices related to the Methodist understanding of the means of grace
 - Instituted means of grace: Baptism, Communion, Scripture Reading, Fasting, Prayer
 - Prudential means of grace: Christian Conversation, Conferencing, Pious Reading, Varied other edifying Christian practices
- Practices that highlight features of the Wesleyan Quadrilateral: Scripture, Reason, Tradition, Experience
- Small group discipleship accountability
- Testimonials
- Sanctification in growing in Christian perfection, but also “backsliding”
- Pledge to give through prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness
- Working for justice
- Three Simple Rules
- Hymn singing
- What other Wesleyan/Methodist faith practices would you add?

SOME FAITH PRACTICES DISTINCTIVE IN THE LUTHERAN TRADITION:

- Practices related to the Lutheran understanding of the means of grace:
 - Preaching/Proclamation
 - Baptism with baptismal affirmation, remembrance and thanksgiving
 - Eucharist
 - Confession and Forgiveness
 - Mutual Conversation and Consolation
- Seven faith practices emphasized by the ELCA: Pray, Study, Worship, Invite, Encourage, Serve, Give
- Liturgical worship
- Catechetical instruction in Confirmation programs
- Works of mercy in social ministries
- Pastoral care within Christian community
- Hymn singing and music
- What other Lutheran faith practices would you add?

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS FOR CONVERSATION:

1. How do we live out the distinctive faith practices in our local setting?
2. What are the similarities and differences between our faith practices?
3. How do features of our respective polities govern life in the local congregation? (For example, you may want to discuss how congregations get pastors.)
4. Pastors could share what it's like to be a Lutheran pastor, a Methodist pastor. Likewise other professional leaders.
5. What is it like to be a Methodist lay leader? A Lutheran lay leader?

Hymn sing (30 – 45 minutes):

Take time for devotional engagement with hymns associated with our traditions. Here is a sample format, taking each movement in turn with each hymn:

- Presentation: a leader gives historical background for the hymn text and tune
- Conversation: personal associations with the hymn
- Pray with the hymn text
- Sing the hymn

Note that the following hymn suggestions derive from historical and classic Lutheran and Methodist sources. Current-day hymns and songs from our traditions may not appear on the following lists. Please choose hymns and songs appropriate to your local cultural context.

LUTHERAN HYMN SUGGESTIONS:

- Prepare the Royal Highway
- From Heaven Above
- O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright
- Ah, Holy Jesus
- Awake, My Heart, with Gladness
- Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord
- A Mighty Fortress is Our God
- All Glory be to God on High
- We All Believe in One True God
- Dearest Jesus, We Are Here
- Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness
- Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice
- O Day Full of Grace
- Built on a Rock
- Evening and Morning
- Day by Day, Your Mercies, Lord, Attend Me
- Christ Has Risen, Alleluia

METHODIST HYMN SUGGESTIONS:

- Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus
- Hark! The Herald Angel Sings
- Christ the Lord is Risen Today
- He Lives
- Rejoice, for Christ is King!
- Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending
- O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing
- And Can it be that I Should Gain?
- Love Divine, all Loves Excelling
- Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine
- I am Thine, O Lord
- Leaning on the Everlasting Arms
- Great is Thy Faithfulness
- Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing
- Pues Si Vivimos
- God of Grace and God of Glory

Living out full communion in mission together (30 – 45 minutes):

- Engage in a conversation about local ministry and mission.
- Here are some sample questions to guide conversation:
 1. What are the key features of our respective local ministries and mission?
 2. What are we already doing together ecumenically?
 3. What are the community's needs we might address together?
 4. What might we plan to do together in the future to address the local context and its needs, its people?

Holy Communion (60 minutes):

Celebrate Holy Communion together consistent with protocols provided in our full communion agreement implementing materials and appropriate to local context, see: download.elca.org/ELCAResourceRepository/Guidelines_Lutheran_Methodist.pdf.

For further information concerning the full communion relationship between the United Methodist Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and for assistance in planning local events and worship services, see: <http://www.elca.org/Who-We-Are/Our-Three-Expressions/Churchwide-Organization/Office-of-the-Presiding-Bishop/Ecumenical-and-Inter-Religious-Relations/Full-Communion-Partners/United-Methodist-Church.aspx>.



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