

Communiqué of the Episcopal Church-Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Dialogue

October 19, 2016

The dialogue partners met at the Nicholas Center of Saint James Episcopal Cathedral in Chicago. The PCUSA representatives were Dennis Hughes (co-convenor), Christian Boyd, Anne Bond, Kamal Hassan, Gordon Zerkel and Robina Winbush (administrative staff). The Episcopal Church representatives were Bishop Eugene Sutton (co-convenor), Joe Pagano, Elizabeth Ring, Tim Mulder, Joanne O'Donnell and Margaret Rose (administrative staff). Joseph Wolyniak, a new member of the Episcopal Church complement, joined the meeting on September 7. The dialogue team was joined by the Rev. James Farwell, Ph.D., Professor of Theology and Liturgy at Virginia Theological Seminary, who presented a paper that proposes ways in which the 2009 agreement between the churches may be implemented, particularly paragraphs 5 and 6 of the agreement. Rev. Jan Edmundston, co-moderator of the PCUSA General Assembly, met with the group briefly on Sept. 7.

The dialogue team joined the staff of Saint James Cathedral at its monthly Eucharist in Saint James Chapel on Wednesday, Sept. 7. The group also met for morning and evening prayer throughout the meeting. Members of the two denominations took turns leading the prayers.

The dialogue group spent the first day of the two-day meeting hearing from Dr. Farwell and considering his proposals for implementing paragraphs 5 and 6 of the agreement. Specifically, the group discussed ways in which Episcopalian and Presbyterian ministers may participate in one another's rites of word and table. This discussion turned to a great extent on the different relationships our two denominations have with their liturgical books—the PCUSA's Book of Common Worship and the Episcopal Church's Book of Common Prayer. On the second day of the meeting, the dialogue returned to the relationship between Baptism and Confirmation in our respective denominations, a topic that was introduced at our previous meeting. Dr. Farwell made helpful contributions to this discussion as well. The team also began to develop a set of Frequently Asked Questions about the Agreement.

The meeting adjourned on September 8 after scheduling further meetings in April and October 2017, in anticipation of the convocations of both denominations that will take place in 2018. The group outlined the contents of a possible booklet and video as products of this dialogue and as part of the final report to the two denominations.