

# Full Communion Partners



The Episcopal Church is in full communion with partners around the world. Our primary, active, full communion relationships are with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Moravian Church (Northern and Southern provinces). Our work together includes regular coordinating committee meetings, a vibrant exchange of clergy, joint parishes, shared ministries, resources, and advocacy work. The Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht are our oldest partner, with strong relationships in the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe, followed by the Philippine Independent Church, the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar, and the Church of Sweden.

## What is full communion?

We understand full communion to be a relation between distinct churches in which each recognizes the other as a catholic and apostolic church holding the essentials of the Christian faith.

Within this new relation, churches become interdependent while remaining autonomous. Diversity is preserved, but this diversity is not static. Neither church seeks to remake the other in its own image, but each is open to the gifts of the other as it seeks to be faithful to Christ and his mission. They are together committed to a visible unity in the church's mission to proclaim the Word and administer the Sacraments.

Learn more at [iam.ec/fullcommunion](http://iam.ec/fullcommunion).

## It all started at Bonn

Full communion was first reached by provinces of the Anglican Communion with the Old Catholic Church of the Union of Utrecht on the basis of the [Bonn Agreement](#) in 1931. The agreement held the following:

- Each Communion recognizes the catholicity and independence of the other and maintains its own;
- Each Communion agrees to admit members of the other Communion to participate in the Sacraments;
- Full Communion does not require from either Communion the acceptance of all doctrinal opinion, sacramental devotion, or liturgical practice characteristic of the other but implies that each believes the other to hold all the essentials of the Christian faith.

# Our Full Communion Partners

The Evangelical  
Lutheran Church in  
America

On January 6, 2001, The Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America entered into a relationship of full communion on the basis of the document, “Called to Common Mission.”

The Moravian  
Church - Northern  
and Southern  
Provinces

In 2009, the General Convention approved “Finding Our Delight in the Lord,” a proposal for full communion between The Episcopal Church and the Moravian Church. The Moravian Church approved the proposal in 2010 at its provincial synods.

Mar Thoma Syrian  
Church of Malabar,  
India

Since 1979, the clergy of the Mar Thoma Church may be licensed to serve in Episcopal Church dioceses. Episcopal diocesan bishops may exercise oversight of Mar Thoma congregations when requested by their metropolitan.

Old Catholic  
Churches of the  
Union of Utrecht

In 1934, The Episcopal Church entered into full communion with the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht. We have ecumenical relationships but not full communion relationships with other Independent Catholic Churches.

Philippine  
Independent  
Church

In 1961, the Philippine Independent Church (PIC), which is now known as the Iglesia Filipina Independiente (IFI) and The Episcopal Church agreed “to establish a concordat of Full Communion.”

Church of  
Sweden

The Episcopal Church and the Church of Sweden acknowledged a formal relationship in 2015, mutually receiving the Report on the Grounds for Future Relations between the Church of Sweden and the Episcopal Church.



ECUMENICAL  
INTERRELIGIOUS

*The ecumenical movement is The Episcopal Church’s response to Jesus’ prayer for his disciples in John 17:21 - “that they may all be one.” The Office for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations offers prayers for unity and participates in formal dialogues to nurture a spirit of understanding and respect, while collaborating actively in mission and ministry opportunities.*