MEETING OF THE PRIMATES AND PRESIDING BISHOPS OF THE PORVOO COMMUNION
LAMBETH PALACE, LONDON
6 TO 8 OCTOBER 2026

Primates' and Presiding Bishops' statement on transitivity

The primates and presiding bishops of the Porvoo Communion, meeting in Lambeth Palace, London, between 6 and 8 October 2026, agreed unanimously that the Porvoo Communion should pursue a relationship of ecumenical transitivity with Anglican/Episcopalian and Lutheran churches of North America known collectively as Churches Beyond Borders (namely the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; the Episcopal Church; the Anglican Church of Canada; and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada). The primates and presiding bishops appreciated the theological work that had been achieved, both within the Porvoo Communion and Churches Beyond Borders, which had led them to be able to agree this common position. They pledged to advance this move in their respective churches by whatever means were deemed necessary and expedient in order to enable transitivity to happen. The resultant recognition of ordained ministries would open the possibility of ministers serving across Anglican and Lutheran jurisdictions, subject in each case to the canonical, legal and other requirements of the receiving church. Moreover, any church wishing to advance would not be impeded by any sister Porvoo church still discerning the way forward.

The primates and presiding bishops are convinced that this development does not contravene the Porvoo Common Statement. Rather, the Porvoo Communion is being invited to affirm that the agreements which underlie the theological and ecclesiological foundations of Churches Beyond Borders in North America are parallel, equivalent and wholly consistent with those of the Porvoo Communion. Moreover, a development of this kind follows the lead of the global Anglican-Lutheran International Commission in its 2014 report "To Love and Serve the Lord" which calls for the growth of relationships of transitivity in order to allow the practice of ordained ministry across the Anglican and Lutheran traditions (see page 52). Certain member churches of the Porvoo Communion – such as the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, the Church of Sweden and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark – have already taken concrete steps in this direction. Hence, this invitation to all the churches of the Porvoo Communion marks a further development in a movement already underway. The primates and presiding bishops of the Porvoo Communion agree that these developments have an urgency in this 30th year of Porvoo with respect to ministry, mission and community globally.

This common statement was affirmed by the primates and presiding bishops present at Lambeth Palace on 8 October 2026.

The statement was drafted by the Co-Chairs and Co-Secretaries of the Porvoo Communion:

The Most Revd. Dr Michael Jackson, Anglican Co-Chair
The Rt. Revd. Dr Matti Repo, Lutheran Co-Chair
The Rev'd. Canon Dr Ainsley Griffiths, Anglican Co-Secretary
The Revd Dr Thorsten Rørbæk, Lutheran Co-Secretary