

Proposed Amendment to the Canons of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts

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PROPOSED:

Canon 16B
Of the Status of Federated Episcopal/ELCA Parishes

Worshipping communities that have joined together under the provisions of *Called to Common Mission* and that have entered ecclesiastically approved operational agreements are considered as Parish Congregations, all clergy and all members thereof eligible to participate in and subject to the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts.

EXPLANATION:

CALLED TO COMMON MISSION: A Relationship of Full Communion between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The Episcopal Church was adopted by the 1999 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the 2000 General Convention of The Episcopal Church.

The understanding that Lutherans may worship as full members of an Episcopal church and Episcopalians may worship as full members of a Lutheran church is now two decades old. This understanding has led to the combining of worshipping communities of the ELCA and TEC in some locales—allowing sustainable congregations to further Christ’s mission.

In our Diocese, Christ/Trinity Church in Sheffield and Epiphany/Christ the King Church in Wilbraham are healthy, self-sustaining worshipping communities.

This addition to our Diocesan Canons is proposed to uphold the rights of every member of such worshipping communities (whether they come from the ELCA or TEC or from another entry point) to participate in the work of Diocesan Convention and every other aspect of our Diocesan life.