

MKR-SAK 26/02: LVFS GENERALFORSAMLING

Saksbehandler: Vebjørn Horsfjord

## Dokumenter:

- Rapport fra MKR til KM etter generalforsamlingen i LVF i 1997 (*tidl. utsendt*)
- Dokument om generalforsamlingens tema lagt fram for LVFs Rådsmøte 2001 (*tidl. utsendt*)
- Oversikt over Den norske kirkes delegater (*tidl. utsendt*)
- Forslag til prosess fram mot LVFs generalforsamling 2003 (*vedlagt*)

Det Lutherske Verdensforbund avholder sin 10. generalforsamling 21. – 31. juli 2003 i Winnipeg, Canada. Temaet er "For the healing of the world". Både i tid og i tematisk fokus ligger generalforsamlingen tett opp til KEKs generalforsamling. Derfor er det naturlig å se etter positive samvirkeeffekter.

Den norske kirkes 13 delegater ble oppnevnt av Kirkemøtet 2001. Fire av disse delegatplassene er i en viss forstand ex-officio-plasser (Bispemøtets representant i Mellomkirkelig råd, Mellomkirkelig råds leder, et annet medlem av Mellomkirkelig råd og et medlem av Kirkerådet (alle per 1.1.2003)). Bispemøtets representant vil være avklart i september, Mellomkirkelig råds leder velges på Kirkemøtet, mens de to siste først kan oppnevnes av Mellomkirkelig råd på februarmøtet 2003. På dette møtet oppnevnes også delegasjonslederen (kf. KM 2/01). Derfor bør hovedtyngden av delegasjonens forberedelsesarbeid legges til perioden februar til juli 2003.

De tre første av sakens dokumenter danner bakgrunn for Mellomkirkelig råds videre behandling. "Forslag til prosess" inneholder sekretariatets forslag til hovedmålsetninger for arbeidet fram til generalforsamlingen, samt et forslag til tidsplan. Det er naturlig at det første delegasjonsmøtet blant annet brukes til å gjøre planen mer konkret.

LVFs Nasjonalkomité behandlet en tidligere utgave av "Forslag til prosess" 19. mars. Teologisk Nemnd behandlet 12. april et utkast til innledningskapittel i *LWF Assembly Study Book*. Studieboken ventes ferdig fra LVF i november.

**Forslag til vedtak:**

*Mellomkirkelig råd gir sin tilslutning til hovedtrekkene i notatet "Forslag til prosess fram mot LVFs generalforsamling 2003", og ber sekretariatet legge dette til grunn for det videre arbeidet.*





MKR

Dato 07.03.02      Vår ref. / - VLH      Deres ref.      Deres dato

## Forslag til prosess fram mot LVFs generalforsamling 2003

### Målsetning (med kommentarer)

#### (1) Forberede deltakerne best mulig slik at det norske bidraget under generalforsamlingen blir optimalt.

*Kommentar:* I rapporten fra Hong Kong sies det at en av styrkene til den norske delegasjonen var at utspill og innlegg var godt samkjørt. Det er et mål for forberedelsesprosessen at vi bygger en god lagånd blant delegatene. Erfarne medlemmer av delegasjonen må dele sin innsikt og kunnskap, samtidig som de mindre erfarne må få lov til å se både LVF og sakene med friske øyne, slik at ny innsikt slipper til og beriker delegasjonens arbeid.

Forberedelsen av delegasjonen må gjelde:

- Innføring i LVFs organisasjon og generalforsamlingens forretningsorden og prosedyrer.
- Strategi i forhold til potensielt kontroversielle saker (blant annet valg, bytte av navn, samordning av generalforsamling (tid/sted) med for eksempel Kirkenes Verdensråd).
- Arbeid med generalforsamlingens tema og studiedokument.
- Annen forberedelse som vi påtar oss for LVF (for eksempel gudstjenesteforberedelse).
- Forberedelse til den canadiske konteksten.

#### (2) Avklare norske standpunkter vedrørende saker som skal opp

*Kommentar:* Kan gjelde valg, nytt navn, forståelsen av LVF som *communio* etc.

#### (3) Bygge allianser for å få mest mulig gjennomslag for våre synspunkter.

*Kommentar:* Dette gjelder blant annet koordinering på nordisk nivå.

#### (4) Sikre dialog med utvalgte søsterkirker i Sør gjennom hele prosessen.

*Kommentar:* Det bør tas kontakt med de lutherske kirkene Dnk har eller forbereder særskilte partnerskapsavtaler med (Brasil og Etiopia), eventuelt også en kirke i Asia (for eksempel Thailand). Erfaringer fra disse kirkene bør trekkes inn i arbeidet med tema og studiedokument. Dette kan gjøres ved utveksling av innspill per brev og elektronisk, men det bør også vurderes å

invitere representanter fra disse kirkene til ett av delegasjonens forberedelsesmøter.

**(5) Skape positive ringvirkninger i Norge ved blant annet å:**

- Invitere diakoniinstitusjonene og –organisasjonene samt de teologiske lærestedene inn i arbeidet med temaet.
- Integrere misjonsorganisasjonene i arbeidet.

**(6) Forankre delegatenes deltakelse i deres lokale kontekst.**

*Kommentar:* Før forrige generalforsamling ble delegatene bedt om å etablere grupper rundt seg i sitt lokalmiljø hvor de kunne ta opp bestemte temaer de var utvalgt til å følge. Det er usikkert hvor godt dette fungerer. Dersom en slik metode skal velges, bør sekretariatet antakelig bistå med å utvikle enkelt prosessmaterieell.

**(7) Legge en plan for etterarbeid etter generalforsamlingen.**

### ***Ressurser og begrensninger***

Til å nå disse målsetningene disponerer vi blant annet disse ressursene:

- Delegater med solid forankring i sine lokalmiljø og i organisasjoner.
- Mange personer med bred erfaring fra arbeid med LVF.
- Tette kontakt med LVFs sekretariat i Genève.
- LVFs Nasjonalkomiteé og andre etablerte fora for kontakt mellom kirkestruktur og diakoni- og misjonsorganisasjoner/-institusjoner.
- Forberedelsesprosessen fram mot KEKs generalforsamling i Trondheim. Temaet i Trondheim ("Jesus Christ heals and reconciles. Our witness in Europe") likner Winnipegs tema ("For the healing of the world").
- MKRs sekretariat
- MKR har satt av kr. 50.000 på budsjettet for 2002 til formålet. Tildeling for 2003 er ikke avklart.

Blant forhold som legger begrensninger på arbeidet er følgende:

- Alle involverte har rikelig med oppgaver og begrenset med tid.
- Økonomi
- Et nytt Mellomkirkelig råd begynner sitt arbeid januar 2003 og trenger tid til å bli kjent med sakene.
- De fire siste delegasjonsmedlemmene blir først klare etter Kirkemøtet i november.
- Begrensede personalressurser i sekretariatet.

### ***Tidsplan***

Eksemplet Hong Kong 1997:

Forberedelsesprosessen fram mot Hong Kong hadde disse viktige møtepunktene:

- Oktober 1996: Første norske delegasjonsmøte.
- Februar 1997: Europeisk Pre-Assembly i Polen. To norske delegater deltok.
- Mars 1997: Nordisk Pre-Assembly i Danmark. Fire norske delegater deltok.
- April 1997: Andre norske delegasjonsmøte.

Det var planlagt et tredje delegasjonsmøte i juni. Dette ble avlyst med den begrunnelse at det ikke var behov.

#### Forslag til tidsplan:

- 6. – 7. mai 2002: Første behandling i MKR
- 12. juni: Felles delegatmøte for LVF- og KEK-delegasjonene i Tøyenkirka, Oslo, med fokus på "healing" som felles tema. Også separate møter for de to delegasjonene.
- 14. juni 2002: Nordisk rådslagning om LVF på generalsekretærnivå. Begynnende samtale om fordeling av verv mellom de nordiske kirkene.
- September 2002: Sittende MKR har sitt siste møte, og retningslinjene for Dnks deltakelse bør i all hovedsak være lagt.
- Februar 2003 (for eksempel i tilknytning til MKRs møte): Andre delegatmøte (dette er den første muligheten til å samle alle delegatene, siden de fire siste er ex-officio-plasser for verv som det er valg til på Kirkemøtet i november.) Til dette møtet bør representant(er) fra søsterkirke(r) i Sør inviteres.

#### ***Nordisk koordinering***

Fellesmøter på nordisk og europeisk nivå er ikke avklart. De nordiske kirkene ønsker et nordisk Pre-Assembly i januar/februar 2003. Som den nordiske kirken med sete i eksekutivkomiteen, har Den norske kirke ansvar for den nordiske koordineringen.

De nordiske LVF-kirkene koordinerer sine forslag til kandidater til verv i eksekutivkomiteen og i rådet. I inneværende periode har Den norske kirke det nordiske medlemmet i eksekutivkomiteen (Sigrun Møgedal (treasurer), deretter Inger Johanne Wremer). Det er ikke hensiktsmessig å forsøke å få en representant for vår kirke inn i eksekutivkomiteen i neste periode (kf. vedtak i MKR/AU 4. desember 2001).

I perioden 1990 – 1997 var Olga Dysthe vår representant i LVFs råd. I perioden 1983 – 1990 var vi representert ved biskop Andreas Aarflot. Vi må være forberedt på å bli utfordret til å stille med en ungdomsrepresentant i kommende periode. Det er ikke et formelt krav at rådsmedlemmer velges blant delegatene til generalforsamlingen.



Rapport fra European Ecumenical Assembly II (EEAII) og  
Konferansen av Europeiske Kirkers (KEK)  
Generalforsamling i Graz, Østerrike, 23. juni - 4. juli 1997

Rapport fra Det Lutherske Verdensforbunds (LVF)  
Generalforsamling i Hong Kong, Kina, 8.- 19. juli 1997

Denne rapporten er basert på evalueringen som Mellomkirkelig Råd har gjort på sitt møte 8.-9. september - på bakgrunn av rapporter fra delegater og rådgivere til de tre økumeniske og internasjonale stormøtene sommeren 1997. Sammen er de uttrykk for at den økumeniske bevegelse lever og arbeider for kirkens synlige enhet "forat verden skal tro" og at dette skjer midt i en verden med store politiske utfordringer og endringer.

EEA II møttes under tema "Forsoning - Guds gave og kilde til nytt liv" på et tidspunkt da Europas nasjoner står midt oppe i omfattende samarbeidsprosjekt og kirkene utfordres av en økende nasjonalisme som næres av konfesjon og religion. Møtet samlet 350 offisielle delegater fra Europas protestantiske og ortodokse kirker (KEKs medlemsgrunnlag) og 350 fra det katolske Europa - utpekt gjennom Den katolske biskopskonferanse i Europa. I tillegg deltok 10 000 mennesker, et flertall fra kirkene i østlige og sørlige deler av kontinentet. EEA II var det mest representative økumeniske møtet i Europa siden de oldkirkelige konsilenes tid. På KEKs generalforsamling i etterkant av EEA II møttes denne kirkeorganisasjonens 118 medlemskirker i Europa for å velge nye styringsorganer og for å se dette kirkefelleskapets arbeidsoppgaver i Europa i lys av den brede all-kristne agenda som EEA II pekte på.

Da 1000 lutheranere fra 123 medlemskirker over hele verden møttes i Hong Kong, møttes man i Kina. Det var en av Kinas nye ledere - Tung Chee-hwa - som ønsket velkommen, garanterte fortsatt religionsfrihet og forsikret om at kirkenes virksomhet vil kunne fortsette som tidligere. For første gang i sin 50 årige historie var LVF samlet til generalforsamling på det asiatiske kontinent hvor kristendommen er en minoritet og den lutherske konfesjon en minoritet i minoriteten. Hva kan vissheten om å være "I Kristus-kalt til vitnesbyrd" bety i denne situasjon?

Den norske kirkes delegasjon til Hong Kong besto - i tillegg til de Kirkemøteoppnevnte delegater - av 4 rådgivere fra Samarbeidsrådet for Menighet og Misjon (SMM) og Kirkens Nødhjelp, utpekt av Mellomkirkelig Råd. Delegasjonen var godt forberedt gjennom individuell forberedelse og 3 forberedelsesmøter, samt deltakelse fra deler av delegasjonen i forberedelsesmøter både for europeiske og nordiske delegater. I de norske møtene la man vekt på å hente inn kompetanse på asiatisk kirkeliv og spiritualitet og menneskerettighetssituasjon i Asia generelt og i Kina spesielt. Det ble også laget en liste over hvilke spørsmål delegasjonen spesielt skulle være oppmerksom på og arbeide for i de 10 "issue-gruppene" som dannet bakgrunn for Generalforsamlingens "Message".

Det ble også lagt vekt på å skape motivasjon for et "lag-arbeid" hvor innspill, innlegg og markeringer var avtalt og prioritert. Dette viste seg å være en viktig investering ettersom vår kirkes delegater av denne grunn hadde bakgrunn for å holde sine innlegg "på vegne av Den norske kirkes delegasjon". Slik skapte en lydhørhet og tyngde som ble bemerket av mange delegater fra andre kirker.

Under generalforsamlingen hadde delegasjonen utstrakt kontakt med representanter for norsk misjonsvirksomhet i Hong Kong. Et eget møte ble avholdt med dem og de var velkomne til å delta på den daglige norske arbeidsmøtet. Generalforsamlingen kom med en viktig understreking av at misjon skal være et sentralt anliggende for LVF. Dette skjerper utfordringene til norske misjonsorganisasjoner om i større grad å se LVF-fellesskapet som en arena for kanalisering av misjonsinnsats og NMS har allerede gitt signaler om å orientere seg nærmere LVF. I tiden som kommer ligger det derfor an til en interessant utvikling i vår kirke rundt tematikken misjonsorganisasjonenes samarbeid med internasjonale økumeniske organisasjoner.

Det var skuffende at generalforsamlingen ikke åpent våget å kritisere menneskerettighetsbrudd i Kina. I et forslag til uttalelse - laget med norsk medvikning - roste man blant annet lokale kinesiske demokratiltak og at Kinas økonomiske politikk de siste 15 år har ført til store forbedringer i levestandard for store deler av kinesiske folk. I et omstridt avsnitt het det imidlertid at "medlemskirkerne i LVF er bekymret for Kinas behandling og fengsling av opposisjonelle, den økende bruk av dødsstraff, mangelen på rettferdig rettergang i kriminalsaker og fortsatt bruk av arrestasjoner uten lov og dom." Det er tankevekkende at ikke generalforsamlingen hadde mot til å stå fast på nødvendigheten av å avgi en slik uttalelse og ikke hadde tolkingsnøkkel til å forstå hvorfor de kinesiske delegatene, men ett unntak - advarte så sterkt mot dette som de gjorde. Dette førte til at et flertall stemte for å ta ut det kritiske avsnittet. På norsk initiativ ble da hele uttalelsen trukket.

Ulike holdninger til kvinneprestespørsmålet i LVFs medlemskirker kom også klart til uttrykk. Med stort flertall vedtok man imidlertid at kun teologiske utdanningsinstitusjoner som er åpne både for kvinner og menn skal være berettiget til å motta økonomisk støtte fra fellesskapet.



Noe uventet, valgte generalforsamlingen den tyske biskop Christian Krause til president trass i at LVF denne gang hadde mulighet til å velge mellom en mannlig og kvinnelig kandidat fra Asia.

Vår kirkes kandidat til LVFs Råd, Sigrun Møgedal, ble innvalgt der. Under Rådets første møte umiddelbart etter generalforsamlingens avslutning ble hun så valgt til LVFs Treasurer; dvs. den tillitsvalgte ansvarsperson til å overvåke organisasjonens finanser og økonomiske utvikling. Oppgavene som er knyttet til dette vervet er nedfelt i LVFs konstitusjon og gir ex-officio sete i Eksekutivkomiteen. Dermed har Den norske kirke fått en sentral rolle i den viktige videreutviklingen av LVF i den kommende generalforsamlingsperiode.

Den norske kirkes delegasjon til EEA II ble tiltrådt av Lars Erik Nordby fra Metodistkirken som representerte United Methodist Church og av Morten Eriksen fra Norges kristne råd. En håndfull nordmenn deltok på egen hånd utover dette. Den katolske kirke i Norge hadde også 2 offisielle delegater på EEA II. Det lyktes ikke i særlig grad å få til bredere økumenisk deltakelse fra andre kirkesamfunn i Norge, ei heller en norsk ungdomsmønstring til EEAI. I motsetning til andre land har vi lite tradisjoner på dette, men dermed går vi også glipp av impulser som kan virke motiverende for nasjonalt og lokalt økumenisk arbeid i Norge.

Gjennom flere forberedelsesmøter i delegasjonen kunne MKR bidra aktivt med kommentarer og innspill i utarbeidelsen av det store forsoningsdokumentet "Christian commitment to reconciliation" som ble vedtatt på EEA II etter en omfattende og dynamisk redaksjonsprosess i protestantiske, ortodokse og katolske kirker på forhånd. Dokumentet vil bli oversatt til norsk og inngå i en bok om EEA II-temaet som er under arbeid. Boka vil også inneholde bidrag under overskriften "Forsoning på norsk".

En egen delegasjon fra Trondheim var på plass i Graz og deltok med ulike programinnslag rundt tema "Pilegrim i Europa mot år 2000". Det viste seg med all tydelighet at det som skjedde i sommer rundt vår egen 1000-års markering i Trondheim bare er en del av en større åndelig bevegelse som går på tvers av kirkesamfunn og landegrenser i Europa.

På generalforsamlingen ble biskop Finn Wagle innvalgt i Sentralkomiteen. Generalforsamlingen vedtok at en styrking av samarbeidet med Rådet for Katolske Biskopskonferanser i Europa skal være et prioritert arbeidsfelt for organisasjonen. Videre vil KEK prioritere arbeid med majoritets- og minoritetskirkespørsmål da dette er et felt hvor KEK har helt spesielle forutsetninger for å arbeide konstruktivt. I dette arbeidet vil Den norske kirke også delta fordi vi både har ting å lære og å lære bort. Likeledes vil KEK søke å styrke den kritiske kirkelige røsten inn i et kontinent hvor kløften mellom den velstående del og den fattige del øker. Dette søkes oppnådd blant annet gjennom en nyopprettet Kommisjon for kirke og samfunn.

Utfordringene fra Graz og Hong Kong til Den norske kirke er mange. Oppsummeringsvis kan det være naturlig å peke på følgende: I et norsk forsoningsperspektiv må Den norske kirke arbeide mer målrettet med tema rundt at Norge er blitt et flerkulturelt og flerreligiøst samfunn. Likeledes vil det være behov for å utvikle vår kirkes kontakt med den russisk ortodokse kirke.

Fra Hong Kong kommer behovet for større avklaring av hva vi skal arbeide med i rammen av et konfesjonelt fellesskap og hva vi bør prioritere å bruke Kirkenes Verdensråd til. Videre viste debatten om kvinners plass i kirken at det er viktig å finne en god balanse mellom at fellesskapet LVF har en tydelig profil som forplikter den til å stille kritiske spørsmål til medlemskirkers praksis og det å ikke bruke press for å få fram ønskede løsninger.

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## OUTLINE OF THE ASSEMBLY CONTENT

### I. Reflections on the theme, "For the healing of the world"

#### A. *What is meant by healing?*

- (1) First and foremost, this theme points to what God does. "Healing" is closely connected with other central theological themes such as forgiveness, salvation, liberation, and reconciliation. Salvation, for example, can be seen as a type of healing, or reconciling what sin has fractured. The aim of healing is to make right, sound, or whole, to create or restore wellbeing, to include those who have been excluded from community.
- (2) In the Gospels, "healing" is depicted as being a central part of Jesus' ministry. Healing ministries have been an important aspect of what the Church in its diaconal work has carried on throughout its history, including by establishing what became the first hospitals, and supporting ministries of pastoral care. Healing through prayer, the laying on of hands, and anointing with oil have long been a part of the Church's liturgical traditions.
- (3) In the modern Western world, "healing" today often lacks these religious connotations. It is most readily associated with physical or mental sickness, which health care professionals and institutions are expected to heal or cure. Because so much of the world continues to lack adequate, affordable health care, the church's involvement in and advocacy for good health care continues to be crucial.
- (4) Although the Assembly content will need to give attention to these familiar understandings of healing, the theme "for the healing of the world" also suggests much broader associations that go beyond the usual meaning. Healing has social, economic, political, and environmental implications for the whole world. Injustice, conflict, and exploitation often lie behind individual and interpersonal "sicknesses." The significance of the healing God gives for the sake of *the whole world*, and not only individuals within it, must be reiterated. The effects of sin and brokenness are social, economic, and political, as well as personal.
- (5) Understood in this wider sense, healing is another way of talking about God's holistic mission in the world. How might those touched by the Assembly catch a sense of how these different dimensions are inter-related as aspects of the healing, salvific, transforming, reconciling mission of God in our world today? It is important that these various dimensions of healing be developed and unfolded throughout the preparation, worship, content, and processes related to the Assembly as a whole.

*B. From what does the world need to be healed?*

- (6) What in the world is in need of healing? What are the specific cries, pains, laments, memories? What are the "diseases," "illnesses" and "wounds" from which the world suffers, and within it, the Lutheran communion? The Assembly must allow time and safe space for these to be named and discussed, from the vastly different perspectives represented there, if the gift of God's healing, forgiveness, or reconciliation is to be experienced by those gathered. Otherwise the danger is that this theme could become only a pious platitude.
- (7) What afflicts us include, first of all, *diseases* acquired that are primarily physical (such as HIV/AIDS), as well as those that are more mental or spiritual. Jesus was clear that disease or illness is not the result of a sin that has been committed (Luke 13:1-5; John 9:2-3). What is reflective of sin are the ways those with diseases or disabilities are separated or alienated from the community (as lepers were in Jesus' day). Some diseases result in deep scars and disabilities that last a lifetime, and will never be cured. Some "diseases" deeply afflict how we think, see, or act, such as when economic measures become all that matter under economic globalization. Parts of the world suffer from the "disease" of excessive individualism and consumerism. We become "polluted" and thus ill because of the vary air we breathe, both literally and figuratively.
- (8) Secondly, others inflict *wounds* on us -- various forms of violence and injustice, whether covert or overt, interpersonal or institutional. We are sinned against. The memories fester, and can lead to resentment if not violence. Some wounds are inflicted by those as close at hand as family members, as occurs in domestic violence, others by more distant political and economic powers. Patriarchy wounds both females and males. Economic globalization increases disparities, fragments communities, and exploit nature. Entrenched poverty continues to haunt billions. The seemingly intractable conflicts raging in the world today, and the deep scars they make on all of creation cry out for reconciliation that does far more than paper over differences. Natural disasters leave millions homeless every year. As part of the Assembly, all these and more of the world's wounds need to be raised up liturgically as a collective lament to God.
- (9) Thirdly, *walls* are erected between people because of their different ethnicity, race, gender, economic status, or politics. This leads to further injustices. Out of our sickness (or sin) we erect walls that separate on distinctions such as race, ethnicity, caste, gender, or sexual orientation. Such culturally-erected walls can be especially difficult to talk about. Consideration needs to be given to how Christ breaks down, transforms, overcomes these entrenched walls that are so deeply rooted in cultures. Not only did he break cultural taboos related to women, but he transformed the assumptions and life of men who had been shaped ("polluted") by the social world of his and of our day.
- (10) Although healing is usually assumed to be what the church is about, the reality is that churches have sometimes been among those who have legitimated or inflicted the wounds, and perpetuated the illnesses in persons and societies. For example, people are blamed for their condition, or theology is used to endorse rather than critique the worst features of affluence. Bible passages have been misused to keep women and others in their places. Christian theology has been misused to denounce other faiths. Churches aligned with certain ethnic groups or nations have inflicted massive suffering on others, especially on those who do not share "their" faith. The divisions within and among churches, and walls of animosity

with those of other faiths must be addressed. Christians' silence in the face of oppression and exploitation of people and lands has resulted in untold deaths and devastation. If the witness of Lutherans gathered at this Assembly is to be credible, there must be honest naming, confessing, and critiquing of how we as churches have been complicit in what needs to be brought to light and healed.

*C. How does the healing occur?*

- (11) The message and overall emphases of the Assembly must move beyond the naming of the ills and wounds. The public witness of the Assembly will be in what it communicates that is "*for* the healing of the world." Healing comes through the God we know in Jesus Christ, whose Spirit heals us and all of creation. Healing is made possible by the power of God's Spirit, as an expression of God's love and grace. Healing restores right relationship with God, with other persons, peoples, and communities, and with the rest of creation. While we affirm the signs of healing in our day, we "wait with eager longing" (Romans 8: 19ff) for God's promised healing or redemption of all creation.
- (12) Many themes of past Assemblies have been explicitly Second Article (Christ) in focus. Certainly healing (and forgiveness) was central in Jesus' ministry. The life and ministry of Jesus provide models of ministry that lead to healing. We need to consider how Jesus' own practice of healing, which leads to transformation, informs our own practice of addressing illness, wounds, and broken relationships which are spiritual, physical and social. But this theme also suggests possibilities of a more Trinitarian approach, with more attention than Lutherans have tended to give to both the First Article (Creator) and the Third Article (Spirit). Healing points to all the ways through which people are liberated and reconciled in the world, and how the world itself is healed.
- (13) Healing is an important aspect of what it means to be the Church. It often is a long ongoing process. Healing is not synonymous with curing; the wound or condition can persist. Disabling conditions may remain, but what can be transformed is how people are received as whole persons in community. Restoration to live faithfully in community is what healing seeks. Just as forgiveness does not necessarily mean forgetting, healing does not mean the disappearance of all signs of the disease or wound. Painful memories may be healed only after the source of the pain is re-visited again and again.
- (14) Healing can be a way of understanding what forgiveness, in its deeper sense, entails. This involves far more than trite expressions of "I'm sorry." Forgiveness points to a process that includes both the perpetrator and the offended. Jesus not only forgave, but he identified with the victims, healing and freeing them, so that their dignity was restored. Forgiveness points toward liberation from oppression, healing of pain, critique of the unjust use of power, and the mending of broken relationships. Genuine reconciliation is a mutual process in which both are changed in the encounter. It paves the way for new relationships, for new ways of being together, for a new future that is not tied to the pains of the past.

## II. The process or methodology of the Assembly

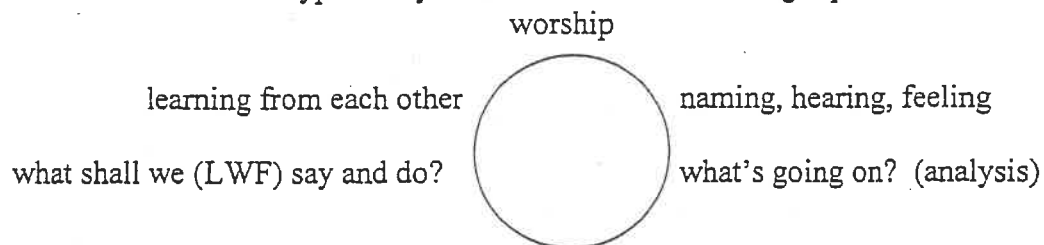
### A. Can the Assembly itself be healing?

- (15) The healing theme of such an Assembly should be reflected in the overall process of what is *experienced* and not just talked about at the Assembly. *Given the holistic nature of what healing entails, it is important that this become more than just an Assembly of many words, but also of embodied actions and experiences.* For example, the healing of memories, relationships, and persons often occurs through the sharing of stories, songs, and symbolic rituals, as well as through conversation with one another. It does not occur primarily by being "talked at" in long plenary lectures.
- (16) Participants will be bringing a lot of concerns for healing, and many examples of how healing is occurring in their context. We need to be able to hear and learn from one another, to *communicate* across the boundaries that usually separate us and our particular concerns. In these ways, what it means for the LWF to be a communion can mature or be significantly deepened.
- (17) Because the people gathering bring with them so many different cultures and experiences, the ways in which these often collide and generate misunderstandings and power inequities should not be ignored. These very differences are a central aspect of the healing needed in our communion, and through it to the world. How can we talk about these differences and the divergent pieties and moral positions we have as churches in such diverse cultural settings? How might healing be embodied in how we "do business" with one another? How can we move beyond what can be caricatures of churches in "the North" or "the South" to more authentic relationships of sharing and vulnerability? Might there be some public symbolic acts of reconciliation that go beyond the convention hall? How can this Assembly inspire and empower member churches and local congregations to become healing communities who are themselves equipped for a array of healing ministries in the world?

### B. The development of the theme in a day at the Assembly

- (18) How might the whole cycle of a typical Assembly day reflect something of the healing process? By beginning each day with Holy Communion, our grounding, identity, and source of all healing will be made clear. We begin with praise for the gifts of God we receive through bread and wine -- earthly elements. Here, who and whose we are is made clear. We become Christ's body in the world, where we are empowered to face together the painful realities in need of healing.
- (19) ° The theme would especially be developed during the **plenary program and Bible study sessions** (see below).
- ° Village groups would meet for several sessions to focus on particular aspects of the theme, especially as related to the ongoing work of the LWF (see below).
- ° After the evening meal, more informal opportunities could be provided on one or two evenings for participants to share particular models, means, or approaches to "healing" from traditions and practices in their contexts. Through these demonstrations or workshop formats we might interact and learn from each other.

Thus a typical day could include the following aspects:



God's Word speaks to us: how healing occurs

- (20) Through such an overall methodology, it is hoped that we would actually be *participating in* contextual theology, rather than only talking about the need for it, living out a healing process, rather than only talking about the need for healing. Through such an approach, Bible and theology can come alive in the midst of and speak to our situation today with new poignancy and public relevance. They become *more* central. The key, of course, will be in finding those who are effective communicators in enabling that to happen through such a process.

### C. The plenary program and Bible study sessions

- (21) On approximately seven days of the Assembly, aspects or implications of the theme would be developed in a plenary block of time that would be centered in Bible studies presented by the different regions. An eighth one might be presented by the youth. The intention is that these sessions would incorporate stories or examples from different parts of the world, exemplifying the specific needs for healing, lifted up in plenary as a means of making this aspect of the theme more concrete or real for people, and in relation to the Biblical texts for that day. Efforts would also be made to include some time for small group reflections around the tables to share how this is present in other contexts, and to reflect and pray together as to how God's Word speaks to us and the situations in need of healing.
- (22) These plenary sessions on different days might include emphases such as the following:
- Biblical, theological, spiritual foundations "for the healing of the world" (the keynote).
  - How is God healing the diseases, wounds, and disabilities in our world?
  - How is God healing how creation and indigenous peoples have been violated?
  - How is God reconciling people and healing the wounds of violence and conflict?
  - How is God transforming the power and effects of economic globalization?
  - How is God uniting the Church ecumenical?
  - How is God transforming barriers (e.g., of ethnicity, race, class, gender, religion) for the sake of mission in the world?
  - How is God healing our divisions and deepening what it means to be a communion?
- (23) Biblical scholars in select Lutheran-related theological institutions around the world have been invited to discuss and recommend biblical texts that would be particularly revelatory and provocative in relation to this theme and its different emphases. Many of these texts are likely to be narratives. The Bible studies each day could include both an Old and New Testament text, and correspond to the aspect of the theme being emphasized that day. For example, a text such as Revelation 22:2 ("for the healing of the nations") could be linked

with Ezekiel 47:1-12. Texts included would go beyond those in which healing is specifically mentioned, dealing also with themes such as forgiveness, salvation, liberation, reconciliation.

### III. Village groups

#### A. The intent of the village groups

- (24) In addition to attention to the theme in plenary sessions, its implications will be pursued more deeply through the work of village groups, which will meet several times during the Assembly. These will become a kind of home base for the delegates, where they can speak and be heard and develop relationships with those from other parts of the communion. Their task will be to focus on important areas where healing, reconciliation, and justice are needed in our world today, as part of the mission of God. In addition to inter-cultural deliberations on a given focus (with attention to how this is experienced in specific contexts, analyses, and biblical/theological reflections on such), each village group will review and bring forth recommendations for directing ongoing LWF-related work. Background material will be drafted ahead of time to facilitate this, as well as guidance for how this can be processed in participatory ways in the group (see IV. B.). Consideration will be given to what the LWF currently is doing in relation to this focus, and what should be done in the future.
- (25) The overall intent is that through the work of these groups, and from them to the plenary, LWF commitments, strategies, and directions will be developed that can (a) deepen the experience, understanding, profile, and implications of what it means to be a communion of churches, and (b) guide the work done through the LWF Secretariat for the coming period. The work done in and through these village groups will be key in what comes out of this Assembly, that is, in what its actual impact will be.
- (26) *Each of these groups will involve significant theological content and reflection.* Certain threads would cut across and expect to be addressed in each focus group, such as globalization, gender, and spirituality. There is also the possibility of breaking into smaller groups to deal with particular issues within a given focus.

#### B. Preparing leadership teams for the village groups

- (27) Each village group would be led by a team of a chair, vice-chair, staff, and rapporteur from different regions and areas of expertise. The chairs and staff would meet in late 2002 for the purpose of shaping the purpose, content, and process of what is to occur in and through the village groups. Those responsible would be expected to develop a background paper which can become the basis of their group's work. This paper would:
- Survey and analyze more deeply the issues and implications at stake,
  - Develop theological and ethical perspectives for deliberation on these challenges,
  - Review what already has been or is being done through the LWF in this area,
  - Propose possible recommendations for future LWF-related work. The expectation is that such a paper could be shared with group members before the Assembly, so that prior discussion and reflection can undergird what occurs and is acted on at the Assembly.



C. The foci of the groups

- (28) The groups would focus on *key healing challenges in our world today* (not in priority): *Talk*
- (29) 1. Healing diseases and accepting disabilities: Diseases such as HIV/AIDS continue to ravage the population in many countries. People with disabilities continue to be stigmatized. How can they live with dignity in community with others? What are the appropriate roles of the church in healing? How can the challenges of prevention and adequate health care be met? What should the LWF be saying and doing?
- (30) 2. Caring for the disaster-stricken: Floods, droughts, earthquakes, and other natural disasters traumatize millions each year, especially when they lose their homes and family. Through the church's diaconal work, assistance is provided and healing of those who have been traumatized. What are the challenges this work faces now and in the future?
- (31) 3. Breaking down walls that separate: Walls of ethnicity, race, caste and class separate people from one another. How is this manifest in our personal lives, in our communities, and in political life? Christ breaks down these walls, and calls instead for forgiveness and reconciliation with those we have seen as "enemies." How do we address the walls of separation, tension, and animosity that still exist? How does Christ transform them? What does this imply for the church's mission?
- (32) 4. Reconciling conflict and healing the wounds of violence: Violence in families, as well as in political conflicts, inflicts deep wounds on especially women and children. Conflict within and between countries not only devastates the land, but also the people. Refugees and displaced persons grow in number. How can these festering wounds be healed? How can peace be brought to age-old disputes? Is there a role for sanctions or intervention? How should member churches of the LWF work with others for peace and reconciliation? *Talk*
- (33) 5. Pursuing economic justice: Processes of economic globalization are increasing disparities between people, as well as fragmenting communities, and exploiting nature. What can we as a communion do to address this? How can we hold economic globalization and one another more accountable for decisions that are made and their impact on especially the most vulnerable? How can the church more effectively serve and empower those who live in endemic poverty? *HWH*
- (34) 6. Healing our relationships with creation: Human beings are created in relationship to the rest of creation, but we have despoiled so much of the land, water, forests, animals, and air. Economic forces accelerate this. How does our theology address this? Who do these natural resources belong to anyway? How are competing claims dealt with? How can our relationships with nature be healed? What can we learn from indigenous peoples? What is the role of sustainable development?
- (35) 7. Justice and healing in personal relationships: Families throughout the world are broken, with wider social causes and effects. Tensions between the generations are heightened. As women's roles change, men need to search for a new sense of identity. People seek personal wholeness and intimacy. Traditional sexual ethics are challenged, and new forms of family are emerging. How can we live with our differences? How can churches respond on the basis of the Christian faith?

- (36) 8. *Healing divisions for the sake of the unity of the Church:* Although considerable progress has been made in ecumenical relations in recent years, healing of old divisions must continue. New questions have arisen about the profile or identity of Lutherans in these ecumenical relations. New challenges also arise from Christians with whom we have not been in dialogue. How is the LWF involved and how might it be involved in new ecumenical pursuits?
- (37) 9. *Transformative dialogue with people of other faiths and traditions:* People of other faiths increasingly are our neighbors, but we often know little about them and their faith, much less interact with them. How do we relate to the traditions of more indigenous peoples in our midst? How can interfaith dialogue and common action be expanded, and become transformative of all involved? What are the implications for mission?
- (38) 10. *Communicating in a technological society:* Technologies have transformed our world, human life, and how we relate to one another. What theological and ethical challenges do these technologies pose, and how should we respond? What are the implications for preaching and teaching? How should communication technologies be put to better use for the sake of the communion and its witness in society?

#### IV. Preparing material and processes

##### A. The study book

- (39) The different dimensions of the theme, as suggested in the above sections of this paper, will be much further developed in the Assembly study book. This will include social-analytical, biblical, theological-ethical, and other aspects, written in such a way as to inspire and provoke creative thinking and interaction. The writing team to be convened in coming months will include writers from different areas, some of whom will be LWF staff persons. Some biblical study material would be developed as a part of this book, rather than as a separate publication. (The Bible studies to be presented in plenaries could be published later). This study book, to be completed by mid-2002, will become the basic resource for content preparation at the Pre-Assembly meetings, as well as for the Assembly itself.

##### B. More effective processes for inter-cultural deliberation

- (40) Given how multicultural the Assembly and each of the village groups will be, it is important that there be some preparation for how to talk together about these difficult healing challenges, each of which is laden with cultural assumptions and differences.
- (41) Although in the past the LWF and member churches have addressed a large number of theological issues and social challenges, processes or methods for arriving at positions on these and related themes have often not been that transparent. Discussion with those who disagree with positions taken becomes difficult. Different cultural assumptions, values, and styles often underlie these differences. We need attitudes, skills, and practice for talking together about underlying differences on especially contentious ethical questions. Not only is this the case within our highly diverse global communion, but also within many of our member churches. This need not and cannot be the case if we take seriously our call to be a communion in society, there to face, deliberate, and act on the challenges we face.

- (42) It is proposed that understandings and approaches to intercultural deliberation be developed in connection with the Assembly preparations, so that these might be incorporated in the table discussions, village groups, and other Assembly processes. The hope is that this would enhance the quality of what occurs during and comes out of the group work.

**C. Involving member churches**

- (43) It is important that member churches participate in preparing for the content of this Assembly early on, and that means be developed for stimulating this to occur. It is hoped that this theme will be talked about in various venues in the member churches over the next two years, and the results of such conversations brought to the pre-assembly gatherings and to the Assembly itself.





DEN NORSKE KIRKE  
Mellomkirkelig råd

Dato  
08.03.02

Vår ref.  
/ - VLH

Deres ref.

Deres dato

**Oversikt over Den norske kirkes delegater til LVFs  
Generalforsamling 2003 (per mars 2002)**

Delegate: Inger Anne Naterstad Substitute: Jorunn Øxnevad Lie
Delegate: Tore Johnsen Substitute: Bierna Bientie
Delegate: Henrik M. Kiærbech Substitute: Torjer Berglund
Delegate: Kristina Rødahl Substitute: Anne Enger Lahnstein
Delegate: Marit Halvorsen Hougsnæs Substitute: Ingvild Osberg
Delegate: Helge Aarseth Substitute: Jørn Sørvig
Delegate: Katinka Solli-Schøien Brodin Substitute: Kristin Moen
Delegate: Kjetil Aano Substitute: Svein Granerud
Delegate: Jan Olav Henriksen Substitute: Leif Gunnar Engedal
Navn på de fire siste delegatene vil være klare i november 2002. Dette gjelder (very per 01.01.2003):
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The Church of Norway Bishops' Conference' representative in the Church of Norway Council on Ecumenical and International Relations</li><li>▪ The President of the Church of Norway Council on Ecumenical and International Relations.</li><li>▪ One more representative from the Church of Norway Council on Ecumenical and International Relations</li><li>▪ One representative from the Church of Norway National Council</li></ul>
Rådgiver for Den norske kirkes delegasjon (forslag): Knud Jørgensen
Rådgiver for LVFs råd: Kjell Nordstokke

