



Saksbehandler: Beate Fagerli

Saksdokumenter:

Rapport fra møte i GEKE-rådet i Genève 2.-4.10.2009 og møtet i presidiet i Zürich 15.-16.11.2009

Responses to the Doctrinal Conversations of the CPCE

Guidelines for Responses. Doctrinal Discussion "Stand up for justice!"

Guidelines for Responses. Doctrinal Discussions "Scripture, Confession, Church"

Dokumentene "Stand up for justice!" og "Scripture, Confession, Church" sendes MKRs medlemmer i PDF-fil på e-post

Saker i de økumeniske organisasjonene

GEKE [Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE)]

Sammendrag

I 2008 avsluttet en arbeidsgruppe sitt arbeid om kirkenes engasjement i arbeid for rettferdighet. Fra Norge deltok Gard Lindseth som også var medlem av skrivegruppen. Dokumentet ble i 2009 bearbeidet av GEKE-rådet, og er nå sendt ut til høring i kirkene. Høringsfristen er 31.12.2010.

Høsten 2008 arrangerte GEKE en teologisk konsultasjon om Skrift, bekjennelse, kirke. Idar Kjølsvik og Beate Fagerli deltok fra Norge. Et dokument var utarbeidet på forhånd, men dette ble sendt tilbake for omskriving. Etter to behandlinger i GEKE-rådet foreligger nå dokumentet for høring. Høringsfristen er juni 2011.

Stephanie Dietrich som er ko-president i GEKE, vil komme med en muntlig orientering på møtet.

Forslag til vedtak

- 1) MKR ber Komiteen for internasjonale spørsmål (KISP) utarbeide utkast til høringssvar for dokumentet "Stand up for justice!" til MKRs møte 6.-7. september 2010.
- 2) MKR ber Teologisk nemnd utarbeide utkast til høringssvar for dokumentet "Scripture, Confession, Church" til MKRs møte i februar 2011.
- 3) MKR tar øvrige rapporter til orientering.

Rapport fra møte i GEKE-rådet i Genève 2.-4.10.2009 og møtet i presidiet i Zürich 15.-16.11.2009 (Gemeinschaft evangelischer Kirchen in Europa/Community of Protestant Churches in Europe, Leuenberg kirkefellesskapet)
v/Stephanie Dietrich

Bakgrunn

Rådet møtes ca. hver 9. måned, presidiet ca. tre ganger i året. Denne gangen ble begge møter avholdt i Sveits. Møtet i Genève inneholdt også møter med generalsekretærene i KV, KEK, WARC og ass. gen.sekr. i LVF. På det møtet ble forholdet mellom de forskjellige organisasjoners Europaarbeid drøftet (se pressemelding, vedlegg). Min rolle: Som medlem av presidiet ledet jeg deler av rådsmøtet samt panelsamtalen mellom organisasjonslederne. Rådet ba meg om å bli med i forberedelseskomiteen til generalforsamlingen 2012, hvilket innebærer noe økt reisevirksomhet i tiden frem til generalforsamlingen (2-3 møter).

Møtet i presidiet i november oppsummerte rådsmøtet, fattet vedtak om den konkrete oppfølgingen av rådets vedtak samt diskuterte spørsmålet om organisasjonens fremtid og personalsituasjonen.

Rådsmøtet

Møtet fant sted midt mellom to generalforsamlinger (Budapest 2006 og Firenze 2012). Hovedoppgaven lå derfor i å få en vurdering av hva vi har gjort hittil og hvordan generalforsamlingens vedtak er fulgt opp, samt planlegge de resterende tre årene. Det innebar også beslutninger om hvilke oppgaver som må opp - eller nedprioriteres, eventuelt ikke kan følges opp.

Av det innholdsmessige arbeidet vil jeg fremheve følgende i utvalg:

a. Læresamtalene

Læresamtalene om "Skrift, bekjennelse og tradisjon" samt om "Embete, ordinasjon og episkopé" er godt i gang og skal sendes på høring til medlemskirkene i løpet av neste år. Det er nok sistnevnte læresamtale, der MKRs egen Sven Oppegaard gjør en fremragende jobb, som skaper de største kontroverser, også innad i rådet. Det er tydelig at dette både handler om et stort økumenisk problem generelt, men også at det er stor uenighet innenprotestantisk om embetsteologien. Desto viktigere er det at GEKE har satt temaet på dagsorden igjen, også for om mulig å oppnå større tydelighet overfor GEKEs økumeniske partnere og søsterkirker.

Videre er en læresamtale om kirkens sosiale ansvar, utført av en gruppe yngre fagfolk (deriblant MKRs forhenværende medarbeider Gard Lindseth), avsluttet, samt at en ny gruppe har påbegynt arbeidet sitt om "ecclesia semper reformanda", kirken er alltid en kirke som reformerer seg, kirken skal stadig fornye seg i takt med tiden og konteksten.

GEKE har alltid lagt stor vekt på læresamtalene som en avgjørende del av fellesskapets arbeid, og som en nødvendig oppfølging av konkordien. Det er flott at Dnk er involvert med medarbeidere i alle disse læresamtalene.

Til oppfølging: Dnk/MKR bes om høringssvar til læresamtalene. Tekstene vil foreligge våren 2010.

b. Nemndsarbeid

GEKE har to fagnemnder, en for **etikk** og en for **økumenikk**. I Etikknemnda er professor Ulla Schmidt (KIFO/TF) en sentral medarbeider. Etikknemnda har i det siste arbeidet spesielt med temaet **menneskerettigheter** (der det er kommet i stand en spennende utveksling med den russisk-ortodokse kirken som sannsynligvis skal videreføres gjennom en konsultasjon i Strasbourg og samtaler i Moskva) samt med temaet **eutanasi**. Siden GEKE med sine 105 medlemskirker fører sammen erfaringer fra svært forskjellige land (alt fra Nederland, Belgia og Sveits til Polen, Norge og Skottland), er det et spennende, krevende, men også veldig nødvendig prosjekt å si noe samlet om temaet etikk i livets grenseland. Ulla Schmidt har spilt en avgjørende rolle i dette arbeidet, og vært med på å utarbeide et svært nyansert dokument som søker å føre sammen noe av den protestantiske etiske tenkningen omkring vern om liv og menneskets autonomi. **Dokumentet vil bli sendt på høring til kirkene i begynnelsen av 2010, og MKR og KR bør allerede nå merke seg dette dokumentet som et viktig ressurs- og samtaledokument.** I en høringsprosess kunne man for eksempel også tenke seg å involvere diakonale kirkelige aktører som daglig må ta stilling til spørsmål som angår grenselandet mellom liv og død.

Til oppfølging: Dnk/MKR bes om høringssvar. Det bør vurderes om man vil lage en bredere høringsprosess rundt eutanasideokumentet "A time to live and a time to die", evt. i samarbeid med Kirkerådet/diakonale institusjoner/fakultetene.

c. Regionalgrupper

Et viktig ledd i GEKEs arbeid er regionalgruppene (nordvest, sørøst, kirkene langs Rhinen, groupe latin og nordgruppen). Gruppene velger selv tematikken de arbeider med, i samråd med rådet og presidiet. Det arbeides for tiden også med **etableringen av en nordeuropeisk gruppe** som omfatter kirkene på de britiske øyer, spesielt Church of Scotland, de nordiske og baltiske kirkene og kirken i Nord-Tyskland. Mai 2010 arrangerer den danske folkekirken et første møte i København til temaet "**gudstjenestens teologi**", der også Dnk er invitert til å sende representanter. Der kommer man også til å diskutere en *eventuell etablering av en fremtidig regionalgruppe* som møtes ca. en gang i året.

Jeg tror at en regionalgruppe nord vil kunne bidra til en arena for samtale, teologisk arbeid og fellesskap mellom kirkene i denne regionen som er viktig for at det protestantiske fellesskapet kan utfolde seg "i fellesskap og tjeneste" slik konkordien sier. I og med at det er andre kirker enn i Porvoofellesskapet, en annen tematikk og et annet fokus, tror jeg at man kan unngå en uheldig etablering av en ny struktur som bare gjentar det som allerede finnes innenfor for eksempel rammen av Porvoofellesskapet. Også kirkene i Sverige og Finland, som per i dag ikke er medlemmer i GEKE, vil være invitert til å delta. I tillegg er Metodistkirken i Norden medlem i GEKE og vil være en naturlig og viktig representant inn i regionalgruppearbeidet. **Til oppfølging:** MKR bør diskutere etableringen av og involveringen i en regionalgruppe nord.

d. Interkonfesjonelle relasjoner og økumenisk samarbeid

GEKE er ikke en kirke, men et fellesskap av kirker. GEKE verken kan eller vil føre interkonfesjonelle dialoger på vegne av medlemskirkene eller på vegne av seg selv. Det har allikevel vært ønskelig å ha en jevn kontakt og utveksling med andre tradisjoner. Man har

derfor hatt en rekke samtaler om spesifikke GEKE-emner i årenes løp med **anglikanerne, de ortodokse innenfor KEK og baptistene.**

Samtalen med **anglikanerne** har i all hovedsak drøftet spørsmål om økumenisk hermeneutikk og forståelse av kirkefelleskap i lys av anglikansk og protestantisk teologi, og i forhold til avtalene fra Meissen, Reuilly og Porvoo. Samtalene videreføres hvert tredje år på et heller uformelt plan, organisert av Strasbourg-instituttet ved André Birmele.

Samtalene med **baptistene** ble sluttført i forrige rådsperiode før generalforsamlingen i Budapest med et heller lavmælt resultat når det gjelder muligheten for nært samarbeid. Kontakten er allikevel opprettholdt, for å finne ut om baptistene i Europa kan delta som *gjester* i en del områder av GEKEs arbeid. Baptistene selv har et sterkt ønske om samarbeid på det sosialetiske plan/Europaarbeid. På grunn av den grunnleggende divergensen i dåpsspørsmålet har man per i dag ikke kommet til en enighet omkring mulige samarbeidsformer. Personlig har jeg argumentert for en høy grad av tilbakeholdenhet når det gjelder samarbeid, fordi medlemskirkene gjennom konkordien anerkjenner en grunnleggende enighet omkring Confessio Augustanas kriterier for kirkelig enhet, nemlig enigheten omkring Ord og Sakrament (CA VII). Dette fører til en full gjensidig anerkjennelse som kirker og alter- og prekestolfellesskap som danner basisen for fellesskapet mellom kirkene i GEKE. På dette grunnlaget vil det per i dag være umulig å enes med baptistene. Derfor mener jeg at man må være veldig nøye med å synliggjøre både mulighetene og grensene for samarbeid.

Når det gjelder samtalen med de **ortodokse** i KEK (Churches in Dialogue), førte samtalen i 2008 fram til en oppsiktsvekkende tekst om gjensidig anerkjennelse av hverandres dåp. Jeg legger den ved dette referatet en gang til, fordi teksten ikke bør gå i glemmeboken, og jeg er usikker på hvorvidt den er blitt tilstrekkelig registrert i norsk kontekst (se vedlegg). Samtalen skal antakeligvis videreføres, litt avhengig av utviklingen i KEK og prioriteringene fremover.

Når det gjelder samtalen med den **romersk-katolske kirken**, har man per i dag ikke funnet en adekvat ramme for dialogen, blant annet fordi den romersk-katolske kirken i utgangspunktet ikke ser på GEKE som en samtalepartner. Kardinal Kaspers til dels heftige kritikk av GEKEs økumeniske modell ("enhet i forsonet mangfold") i forskjellige fora bør allikevel i det minste kunne danne grunnlag for en samtale. De forskjellige økumeniske instituttene på både protestantisk og katolsk side (Strasbourg, Bensheim og Paderborn) utfordres nå til å ta opp ballen. Slik kan man kanskje få en viss utveksling på et akademisk plan.

GEKE er en liten organisasjon. Vi er veldig bevisste på at GEKE ikke skal prøve å gjøre alt, men gjøre det som bare GEKE kan og det som GEKE er best til å gjøre. Derfor skjer det en stadig prioritering av oppgaver, og man søker nye samarbeidsmuligheter som kan skape en synergieffekt i arbeidet. Et eksempel er at GEKE har en representant i Church and Society Commission (KEK) i Brussel, fordi man ønsker at det europeiske arbeidet i forhold til sosialetiske spørsmål skal kanaliseres gjennom KEK som ansvarlig organ. Dr. Dieter Heidtmann (prest utsendt og betalt fra den württembergiske kirken) gjør en utmerket jobb som medlem i KEK-staben og representant for GEKE.

Videre må det understrekes at GEKE ikke ønsker en protestantisk konsolidering i Europa som blokkdannelse, men dog arbeider for synlighet og tydelighet av det protestantiske kirkefelleskapet i europeisk kontekst. Generalforsamlingen i Budapest understreket at

satsingen på KEK som de kristne kirkers stemme i Europa, er viktig og nødvendig. President i GEKE, kirkepresident Thomas Wipf, er også interimspresident i KEK for tiden og medlem av KEKs presidium. Samarbeidet med KEK er godt på flere plan, og i den nåværende krisesituasjonen i KEK ønsker GEKE å bidra til å støtte opp under organisasjonen for å sikre dens fremtid.

Genève: Rådsmøtet i Genève var preget av Calvinjubileet og møtet med de økumeniske organisasjonene. Vertskapet for møtet var den sveitsiske reformerte kirken. På søndag deltok vi på gudstjeneste i en av hovedkirkene. Rådsmøtene inneholder alltid, om mulig, deltakelse ved lokal menighets- og gudstjenesteliv i en av medlemskirkene. Dette er viktig- også for å bevisstgjøre seg at GEKE ikke bare handler om læresamtaler og politisk arbeid, men først og fremst om gudstjenestefellesskap.

Vedlagt følger pressemeldingene fra rådsmøtet i Genève.

Møtet i presidiet

På møtet i presidiet drøftet vi den konkrete oppfølgingen av rådsmøtets vedtak, samt personalspørsmål. Ved utløp av inneværende rådsperiode (2012) utløper i prinsippet alle engasjementer, inklusive generalsekretærværet, som den østerrikske biskopen Michael Beinker innehar. De fleste stillinger er åremålsstillinger, og medarbeiderne er betalt av de utsendende kirker, ikke av GEKE. Det er et problem for organisasjonen og dens langsiktige planlegging at alt arbeid beror på kirkenes goodwill til å fristille og betale medarbeidere for en periode. Det er også et problem at det per i dag kun er de tyske kirkene som har bidratt på denne måten, samtidig som organisasjonen høster kritikk for å være "for tysk". I tillegg er det en ekstrem sårbar konstruksjon. Hvis de tyske kirkene ikke fornyer sitt engasjement, må hele arbeidet i siste konsekvens legges ned.

Videre er det kun de tyske kirkene og kirken i Sveits som bidrar med store medlemsbeløp (se vedlagte oversikt). Man har per i dag ikke funnet en god økonomisk løsning i forhold til medlemskontingenter, fordi mange av de over 100 kirkene er svært ressursfattede små minoritetskirker. Ikke alle er villige til å bidra, bidragene skjer etter eget skjønn (jfr. Dnks bidrag), og en fastsettelse av bidrag i forhold til medlemstall vil muligens føre til en drastisk reduksjon av bidragene fra de tyske kirkene, samtidig som man ikke kan være sikker på at alle vil øke sine bidrag i samsvar med medlemstallet. På denne måten er fellesskapets fremtid svært usikker, samtidig som arbeidet per i dag går veldig bra, og det utrettes mye med få midler etter rådets vurdering.

I presidiet drøftet vi også arbeidet med reformasjonsjubileet. Det planlegges en reformasjonsdekade mot 2017, der reformasjonsbyer over hele Europa utfordres til samarbeid. Temaet på generalforsamlingen i Firenze i 2012 relateres antakeligvis til denne tematikken: Hva vil det si å være reformatoriske kirker i dag? Hva er det som styrer våre kirkers reformprosesser? Hvordan ønsker vi å reformere våre kirker? Hvordan kan vi stå sammen som kirker i den reformatoriske tradisjonen for å være kirker for både nåtid og fremtid?

Oppfølging: MKR bør drøfte sitt engasjement i GEKE, både organisatorisk og økonomisk.

Jeg takker MKR for tilliten og håper at rådet og Den norske kirke vil engasjere seg både i høringssakene som vil bli utsendt i de neste månedene, samt i GEKEs fremtid.

Oslo, 18.11.2009

Vedlegg:

- Pressemeldinger rådsmøte Genève
- Avsluttende dokument om gjensidig dåpsanerkjennelse fra samtalen med ortodokse kirker høsten 2008 (vedlagt som fil)
- Oversikt over bidragsutviklingen til GEKE fra medlemskirkene

CPCE Council meets in the ecumenical city of Geneva



7th General Assembly 20-25 September 2012 in Florence – common position of the CPCE churches on euthanasia in preparation – study process for young ecumenists begins 16-18 October 2009 – consultation on the future of the church fellowship 15-19 September 2010.

Press release 22/2009

The Council of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE) met in the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva from 2-4 October. Items on the agenda included the half-time stocktaking between the General Assemblies of Budapest 2006 and Florence 2012. The coming Seventh General Assembly of the CPCE is to take place in the Convitto della Calza conference centre in Florence from 20-25 September 2012. The Council has appointed a working party to prepare for it. The next meeting of the Council in Edinburgh in May 2010 will settle the theme of the General Assembly.

The "Specialist Group on Ethics", the advisory body of the CPCE on ethical questions, has presented the draft of a statement by the Protestant churches in Europe on euthanasia to the Council. One aim of the study is said to be to offer church governments theological orientation and help in political processes. The position will contain concrete examples of how to deal with people in crisis situations. The text is now being sent to the member churches of the CPCE for their reactions. In autumn 2010 there will be a Europe-wide consultation on the topic, to which specialists from the member churches will be invited. After this consultation the text will be published.

Under the title "Ecclesia semper reformanda. Ecclesiological considerations on the renewal of the Protestant churches in Europe", from 16-18 October 2009 in Berlin there will be the start of a study process for young theologians. The consultation process, which will last until 2011, will make a theological analysis of the different processes of church reform in Europe and investigate whether there are possibilities of collaboration. Special attention will be paid to the challenges from charismatic movements on the one hand and increasing secularization on the other. "The question of the shaping of the church is of vital interest for the future of the churches throughout Europe," remarked the CPCE Co-President Michael Beintker. Financial support will be given to the project by the Evangelical Church in the Rhineland.

The "Specialist Group on Ecumenical Matters" founded this year is to advise the CPCE on ecumenical questions. One concrete project is a consultation in collaboration with the Evangelical Church in Hesse and Nassau on the future of the model of the church fellowship after the Leuenberg Agreement, the foundation document of the CPCE. This consultation will be held in Arnoldsheim from 15-19 September 2010.

The 13-member Council is the executive organ of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE). It meets approximately every nine months. Currently the Council with its representative members is meeting in Geneva from 2-4 October. The next meeting of the Council is in Edinburgh in May 2010.

'We are one church. But we must also live as one church'



In a conversation with top representatives of the ecumenical organizations based in Geneva the CPCE put critical questions about the coexistence and cooperation of the confessional ecumene in Europe.

Press release 21/2009

“We are already one church. But we must also live as one church.” With these words Thomas Wipf, President of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE), opened the ecumenical summit meeting between the CPCE and top representatives of the World Council of Churches, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, the Lutheran World Federation in Europe and the Conference of European Churches, on 2 October. The conversation took place in the framework of the meeting of the CPCE Council in the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva from 2-4 October.

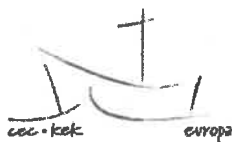
Peter Bukowski, Moderator of the Reformed Alliance in Germany and a member of the CPCE Council, said that there are forces in Europe which are “pursuing a sustained theory of ecumenical fragmentation”. In his view any strengthening of collaboration was being “pushed back years”. It was essential for the confessional world alliances to maintain the plan for close collaboration.

Any duplication of work was “not a good testimony to ourselves”, said Samuel Kobia, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches. Kobia hopes that the next General Assemblies of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the Lutheran World Federation will be the last to be held without confessional partners. It is his vision to celebrate a common General Assembly of all the ecumenical organizations in ten years' time.

Setri Nyomi, General Secretary of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, supported the CPCE initiatives. One challenge was that those member churches of the confessional alliances with diminishing resources were running the risk of turning away from ecumenical involvement. This was supported by Colin Williams, General Secretary of the Conference of European Churches. One problem was that the churches were “getting used to” the situation of division.

General Secretary Michael Bünker emphasized the “structural interest of the CPCE in good collaboration” between the ecumenical organizations. The CPCE fed the voice of the Protestant Church into the Conference of European Churches and thus into dialogue at a European level. Without this cooperation the minority churches in particular had “no chance of being heard”.

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Conference of European Churches
Community of Protestant Churches in Europe



- **Leuenberg Church Fellowship** -

4th CPCE/Eastern Orthodox Consultation on Baptism in the Life of our Churches

Vienna, October 30th – November 1st, 2008

Communiqué

1. A consultation on the theme of “Baptism in the Life of our Churches” was held in Vienna, from October 30th to November 1st, 2008, organised jointly by the Conference of European Churches (CEC) and the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE) – the former Leuenberg Church Fellowship. This consultation continued the discussions started in the Orthodox Academy of Crete in 2002, and continued in Luther’s city of Wittenberg in 2004 and in Phanar in Istanbul in 2006, on the ecumenical significance of the doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ. This fourth meeting was again attended by bishops and theologians, both male and female, from the Orthodox Churches as well as from the Lutheran, Reformed and United Churches of the CPCE. There also was an observer each from the Armenian Apostolic Church and from the Porvoo Church Fellowship.. All the churches represented are members of the CEC.
2. The co-moderators of the meeting were Metropolitan Prof. Dr. Gennadios of Sassima (for the CEC) and Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Michael Beintker (for the CPCE).
3. Two introductory lectures presented the results of the discussions of Baptism in the bi- and multi-lateral ecumenical dialogues of the past decades. P. Prof. Dr. Viorel Ionita reported on baptism in the Orthodox/Lutheran dialogues, Prof. Dr. Michael Beintker on the Orthodox/Reformed dialogues. All these dialogues had achieved far-reaching agreements about the nature of Christian baptism.
4. Metropolitan Gennadios of Sassima described baptism in the life of the Orthodox Church. He emphasised that now was the kairós (the right moment) to find a common understanding of baptism in order to reach full Eucharistic communion in the foreseeable future. He developed in detail the basic characteristics of the Orthodox doctrine of baptism, particularly in connection with Chrismation and the Eucharist, and outlined the ecclesiological perspectives for mutual recognition of baptism. For this to happen it would be necessary to take note of, and study the Orthodox reservations vis-a-vis certain aspects of the Western tradition’s baptismal theology and practice. P. Prof. Dr. Nicolae Mosoiu spoke about the Ordo of the Holy Mystery of Baptism in the Orthodox Church and explained the riches of the Orthodox baptismal liturgy and its connection with Holy Scripture and church tradition,

particularly with the writings of the church fathers. He described the role of Baptism in the process of salvation and explained its place in the contexts of the life of the Church. He pointed out that a special characteristic of the Orthodox understanding of Baptism is both the inner unity of, and the difference between, Baptism and Chrismation. Prof. Mosoiu affirmed that, through Baptism and Chrismation, Christ takes shape (morphé) in the candidates whom, consequently, God the Father accepts as his sons and daughters.

5. On behalf of the CPCE Prof. Dr. Friederike Nüssel spoke about Baptism and the administration of Baptism in the Protestant Churches, and Prof. Dr. Martin Wallraff about impulses from the theology of the church fathers for the Protestant understanding of Baptism. Starting with the empirical investigation of the actual meaning of Baptism for Protestant churches Prof. Nüssel developed the Protestant doctrine of Baptism and the elements of Protestant baptismal practice. She said that Baptism administered according to the Gospel does not become valid through public recognition but through God's promise and act in it. Public recognition of Baptism can mean nothing more than the acceptance of God's promise. Exemplary is the mutual recognition of Baptism between eleven churches in Germany, in which Baptism is acknowledged as a "sign of unity" because those who are baptised are united both with Christ and with his people of all times and in all places. Prof. Wallraff drew attention to the consensus in the early church, manifested in Canon 7 of the Second Ecumenical Council of Constantinople (381), according to which every Baptism with water, administered in the name of the triune God, has to be considered to be valid. The Protestant understanding also agrees with the patristic tradition in holding that Baptism is grounded in faith, and also pre-supposes faith. Through the example of Augustine Prof. Wallraff demonstrated the connection between Baptism, evangelisation and education which is particularly relevant today.
6. The consultation confirmed the importance of the theme: Baptism is of central importance for the life of the church. Both sides re-confirmed the conviction that Baptism with water, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, cannot be repeated. There is agreement between the two traditions about the nature of Baptism. There is also agreement that, as a rule, Baptism is administered by ordained persons. It was possible to work out the essential elements of the administration of Baptism in greater detail: creed, baptismal questions, renunciation of evil, commitment to a life in accordance with the baptismal promises, and the blessing. The rich diversity of liturgical forms is not church divisive; it can be enriching. There also was agreement that Baptism should be administered in the presence of the whole congregation. Because of the common understanding of Baptism and the present state reached in ecumenical dialogues it is appropriate to use the Niceno-Constantinopolitan creed. Despite the differences between the traditions it is notable that, just as, on the one hand, Baptism, Chrismation and Eucharist belong together so, on the other hand, there is a link between Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Communion. According to Orthodox understanding, Baptism and Chrismation find their fulfilment in the

Eucharist. Both traditions are faced with the task of explaining the significance of Baptism and faith in their Christian teaching, in view of modern people's quest for the meaning of life, and of clarifying the message of the Gospel.

7. In both traditions there are good arguments in favour of the mutual recognition of Baptism. Regardless of all the remaining differences we recommend to our churches to initiate steps towards the mutual recognition of Baptism where this is not yet the case. In view of the existing differences we realise that fundamental agreement on Baptism and its mutual recognition will have ecclesiological consequences that will require further study. Closer rapprochement is needed, for instance, between the different understandings of Chrismation and confirmation.
8. The meeting was held in a very constructive, open and hospitable atmosphere. On October 30th the participants were the guests of the Austrian Evangelical Churches at their Reformation-day reception. On October 31st, the commemoration of the Reformation, they visited the festive service in the Lutheran city church in Vienna. Later they were received by his Eminence the Metropolitan of Austria, Dr. Michael Staikos, at his official residence. During the audience the Metropolitan, on behalf of his all-holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, invested the bishop of the Evangelical Church A.B. in Austria and General Secretary of CPCE, Dr. Michael Bünker, with the order of the cross of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The metropolitan warmly welcomed the process of theological consultation between the Orthodox churches within the CEC and the churches in the CPCE, and emphasised that, in Austria, mutual recognition of Baptism is a matter of course. Common prayer was an important part of the consultation. Personal encounters and the common theological work have considerably strengthened the community between the participants in the consultation process and deepened their understanding of each other's traditions. The participants therefore are in favour of continuing the consultation process.

Vienna, November 1st, 2008

Delegates:

CEC-Delegation: Dr. Ciprian Burlacioiu (Romanian Orthodox Church; Munich), Metropolitan Prof. Dr. Gennadios of Sassima (Ecumenical Patriarchate; Istanbul), Prof. Dr. Anestis Keselopoulos (Church of Greece; Thessaloniki), Prof. Dr. Dimitra Koukoura (Ecumenical Patriarchate; Thessaloniki), Prof. Dr. Grigorios Larentzakis (Ecumenical Patriarchate; Graz), Metropolitan Dr. Michael of Austria (Ecumenical Patriarchate; Vienna), P. Dr. Nicolae Mosoiu (Romanian Orthodox Church; Brasov), Archpriest Veikko Purmonen (Orthodox Church Finland; Helsinki), Archimandrit Athenagoras Ziliaskopoulos (Ecumenical Patriarchate; Frankfurt/Main).

CPCE-Delegation: Prof. Dr. Michael Beintker (EKD; Münster), Rev. Stefanië Dietrich (Church of Norway; Oslo), Rev. Caterina Duprè (Chiesa evangelica valdese; Verona), Prof. Dr. Hans-Peter Großhans (CPCE; Germany), Dr. Olga Lukàcs (CPCE; Romania), Rev. Dr. Peter McEnhill (Church of Scotland; Kilmacollm, Scotland), Prof. Dr. Friederike Nüssel (EKD, Münster), Rev. Marita Tuomi (Evang. Lutheran Church Finland; Nokia), Prof. Dr. Martin Wallraff (Ev.-Lutheran Church Italy; Basel).

Observer:

The Rt Rev. Michael Geoffrey Jackson, M.A.,PH.D., D.Phil., (Church of Ireland; Tyrone Northern Ireland), Erzbischof Mesrop Krikorian (Armenian Apostolic Church, Vienna)

Staff:

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Member Churches CPCE

Wien, 22.12.2009

Az: GEKE 01-2-2826-2009
Bei Beantwortung bitte angeben

Responses to the Doctrinal Conversations of the CPCE

Ladies and Gentlemen, dear Sisters and Brothers,

A full half of the period between the CPCE General Assemblies in 2006 and 2012 lies behind us. I am glad that with this message I can present you in good time with the first results of the work agreed in 2006.

The Assembly in Budapest commissioned three doctrinal conversations. The first provisional drafts on the two themes, "Scripture, Confession, Church" and "New Challenges in Social Justice for the Protestant Churches", are now before us. Your church is requested to express a position on these results. They are then to be revised on the basis of your responses and laid before the Assembly in 2012. Please find further details on the themes, the procedure and the questions for the responses in the accompanying documents appended to this letter. Just another word on languages: You receive the CPCE communications in one of our three official languages, English, German or French. If you also wish to draw in your responses on the original language versions (English for "Stand up for Justice", German for "Scripture, Confession, Church") these can be ordered from the CPCE office.

Please note the necessary time-limits for the continuing work: A response

- to "Stand up for Justice" ought to be submitted by 31.12.2010,
- to "Scripture, Confession, Church" by 01.06.2011.

Please let us know if a response is delayed.

Otherwise than we had planned, we cannot yet present a first version of the third text of the doctrinal conversations, "Ministry, Ordination, Episcopate". The drafting has unfortunately been delayed. You can reckon with the text in the summer of 2010. Please note for your planning that then only about a year will be available for the response.

We would draw your attention to a further text which will reach you in the coming weeks. On the basis of the available statements of the member churches, the CPCE working group on ethics has

worked out a position paper on the theme of "euthanasia" ("A Time to Live and a Time to Die"), to which the Council of CPCE will also be requesting the responses of the member churches

A decision has also been made on the minimum duration of the next CPCE General Assembly at Florence in September 2012: this should last from the 20th to the 25th September 2012. It is possible that it will be further extended by one day.

I would also draw your attention to our quarterly magazine "CPCE Focus" as well as to our web page (www.leuenberg.eu), where you can inform yourselves on the current work of CPCE.

With best wishes for a blessed Christmas,



Bishop Michael Bünker
General Secretary

Appended:

Text of "Stand up for justice"
plus accompanying guidelines

Text of "Scripture, Confession, Church"
plus accompanying guidelines



Guidelines for Responses

Doctrinal Discussion "Stand up for Justice!" – Ethical Discernment and Social Commitment of the Protestant Churches in Europe

The Leuenberg Agreement encourages the churches to *"responsible service in the world"*: *"They stand up for temporal justice and peace between individuals and nations. To do this they have to join with others in seeking rational and, appropriate criteria and play their part in applying these criteria. They do so in the confidence that God sustains the world and as those who are accountable on him."* (Art 11)

The General Assembly of CPCE in September 2009 in Budapest commissioned the CPCE Council to clarify in a doctrinal conversation on "New challenges in social justice for the Protestant Churches" the "specific Protestant presuppositions and criteria for reaching ethical judgments"¹. The Council gave a group of younger delegates from the CPCE member churches the task of working out the doctrinal conversation text "Stand up for Justice", which was received by the CPCE Council. They now wish to deliver this text for the response procedure of the member churches.

Within the framework of its work over two years the doctrinal conversation group analysed about 80 statements of the Protestant churches in Europe on social and community questions. The result is a fundamental analysis of the social responsibility of the Protestant churches in Europe.

The member churches are asked to consider the following points in their response:

1. On the sighting of the church statements

- Are there important statements of the own church on social questions which still ought to be taken into account in the doctrinal conversation?

2. On the theological foundations

The result of the doctrinal conversation describes paradigmatically the theological foundations of these statements.

- Are there in the view of the own church important additions to be made here?

One conclusion from the analysis of the church statements is that there is no divisive confessional difference between the Protestant churches in their defining of the relationship to state and society.

- Does this conform to the experience in cooperation with other churches within CPCE?

3. On ethical orientation

The doctrinal conversation describes how many church statements remain on a middle level between fundamental values and specific recommendations. The differences between various church positions often first become apparent when it is attempted to derive specific recommendations from fundamental agreement on the level of general principles and values.

- Has the own church had experiences in concretising church statements which she would wish to introduce as an example to the church fellowship of CPCE?

¹ Freedom is binding. Final Report of the 6th CPCE General Assembly, § 2.2.1.3.

4. Recommendations of the doctrinal discussion group

From its analysis of the Protestant positions the doctrinal conversation group develops inter alia the following recommendations to the member churches of CPCE:

- Actively to recognise their social responsibility.
- To intercede for others.
- The churches should work together as closely as possible and represent their positions together before political institutions.

These recommendations follow on from the decisions of the General Assembly in Budapest 2006 on the deepening of community between our churches and from the results of the doctrinal conversation on "Shape and Shaping of Protestant churches in a Changing Europe"² In the mean time the church fellowship is half way to the coming General Assembly in Florence in 2012. The member churches therefore are asked also to reflect on this doctrinal conversation in their response.

- How far could a deepening of the church fellowship be realised up till now in the single church?
- What more should be done on this before the next General Assembly?
- What contribution to this does the single church expect from CPCE?

The member churches are asked to send their response by 31.12.2010

The office of CPCE will gladly support them in their deliberations, for example by suggesting speakers for their deliberation process.

The Council of CPCE consciously entrusted this doctrinal conversation to a group of younger delegates from the member churches. They would like to thank all the members of the doctrinal conversation group and the churches which sent them for the production of this comprehensive and weighty text. They are glad that the work of CPCE is now being carried onward by a new generation in the churches.

The Presidency of CPCE
Council President Thomas Wipf, Reverend, Bern
Dr. theol. Stephanie Dietrich, Oslo
Dr. theol. Michael Beintker, Professor, Münster

² Cf. § 2.1.2, § 2.2.2.1 and §4 of the decisions of the General Assembly.



Gemeinschaft Evangelischer Kirchen in Europa (GEKE)
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Guidelines for Responses

Doctrinal discussions "Scripture, Confession, Church"

In their responses churches are free to address whatever seems to them to deserve mention.

In order to strengthen and deepen our communion within CPCE, particular weight should be given to the question of a possible reception of such a result of our conversations in the individual churches. Along with the theological working-out of the text, the doctrinal conversation group *Scripture, Confession, Church* was from the beginning concerned for this reception in the churches. Thus already in an early phase a first brief draft was sent to the churches, many initial responses were received with gratitude, and a fresh draft was presented and worked on in a larger consultation of church representatives in Berlin in September 2008. Out of that emerged this new version in the spring of 2009. It would now be very important to receive by the end of May 2011 responses from the churches which should be worked in so that the CPCE Assembly in 2012 can be presented with a document which already rests upon a broad reception throughout our churches.

To enable this, the decisive leading question for the churches' responses should be the following:

Is what is said in this document in harmony with what is confessed and taught about Scripture, Confession and Church in the different churches of CPCE? Which statements are particularly important for your church and which should be reworked again?

This could be done in three stages:

1. The relation Scripture – Word of God/Gospel. The Leuenberg Agreement speaks of "the heart of the Scriptures" (LA 12) and is aware of the distinction between the Gospel and its testimony in Holy Scripture (LA 13). The text attempts to explain this theologically and deals particularly with the question of interpretation and hermeneutical rules in churches of the Reformation. Does this attempt correspond to the doctrine and practice of your church?
2. In a second stage the text deals with the church's confession. Even if all the churches emphasise the significance of this confession, the approach to confessional documents varies in our traditions. While welcoming this legitimate diversity the document develops approaches which are common to all CPCE churches. Can your church recognise itself in the types presented there?
3. In its closing sections the text develops a connexion between the authority of Scripture and Confession on the one hand and the important question of what is binding within CPCE. There still remains much to be done here over and above this document. It would, however, be important to know if the approaches presented here could constitute first steps on the way to a more binding obligation and a greater mutual commitment within the CPCE.

(Approved by the Council of the CPCE on 03.10.2009)

