



Saksbehandler: Beate Fagerli

Saksdokumenter:

Rapport nr. 20/2010 **Stephanie Dietrich**  
Rapport fra møter i Community of Protestant Churches in Europe  
(CPCE) og Det lutherske Verdensforbund (LVF) våren 2010  
Høringsdokumentet "Ministry -- Ordination - Episkopé"

## Saker i de økumeniske organisasjonene

### Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE)

#### Sammendrag

I CPCE har det vært ført læresamtaler om embete og ordinasjon. I 2009 ble en arbeidsgruppe nedsatt for å utarbeide en tekst. Sven Oppegaard representerte Den danske folkekirke og Den norske kirke i arbeidsgruppen. Arbeidsgruppen leverte sitt arbeid som nå er godkjent av CPCE-rådet, og dokumentet er sendt ut på høring til medlemskirkene. Frist for høringssvar er 1. juni 2011. Dokumentet følger vedlagt.

Stephanie Dietrich har skrevet en rapport om møter hun har deltatt i både i CPCE- og LVF-sammenheng, som følger vedlagt. Hun vil også komme på rådsmøtet og gi en oppdatering om CPCE.

#### Forslag til vedtak

1. MKR tar informasjonen om CPCE til orientering.
2. MKR ber Teologisk nemnd utarbeide forslag til høringssvar til MKR-møtet i februar 2011. MKR ber om at følgende innspill blir tatt i betraktning under arbeidet:

.....



## Rapport fra møter i Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE) og Det lutherske Verdensforbund (LVF) våren 2010

v/Stephanie Dietrich

Ved semesterslutt ønsker jeg å gi en kort rapport om vårens ”økumeniske reiser” i forskjellige sammenhenger.

### 1. Rapport fra rådsmøtet/møtet i presidiet i CPCE 7.-9.5.2010

Mai 2010 var det planlagt et CPCE rådsmøte i Skottland. Møtet måtte avlyses på grunn av askeskyen. I stedet ble det innkalt til et mindre arbeidsmøte mellom presidiet og sekretariatet i Wien for å fatte noen av de aktuelle beslutningene. Hovedfokus lå på arbeidet med diverse læresamtaler som enten er på vei til eller allerede er til høring hos kirkene. I tillegg drøftet vi nye eller pågående prosjekter: Reformasjonsmarkeringen over hele Europa i 2010; den påbegynte samtalen mellom yngre CPCE-teologer *Ecclesia semper reformanda*, neste konsultasjon om retningslinjer for teologisk utdanning i Europa november 2010, videre samtaler med de anglikanske og ortodokse kirkene, samt planlegging av et ekstraordinært rådsmøte november 2010 om hovedlinjer for den neste generalforsamlingen i Firenze 2012. Den neste generalforsamlingen vil antakeligvis ta for seg temaet ”**Reformasjonens kirker reformerer seg**” (eller noe slikt); kirkenes reform- og fornyelsesprosesser skal være i fokus.

Økonomi: Sekretariatet er preget av store personalforandringer. Hele driften står og faller på at enkeltkirker sender ut (og betaler) personell for en periode. Ordningen fungerer på godt og vondt. Den fører til en viss tysk dominans i sekretariatet fordi de tyske kirkene prioriterer dette arbeidet, samt til uforutsigbarhet i forhold til langsiktig planlegging. Samtidig benytter CPCE seg godt av bredden av mennesker som arbeider i sekretariatet for en viss periode (ett til tre år), samt at mye kompetanse tilbakeføres til kirkene. Spesielt viktig er posisjonen i Brussel, i KEKs sekretariat. Samarbeidet med KEK har fungert veldig godt og ønskes videreført som en god løsning både for KEK og CPCE, som fastholder at kirkenes representasjon i Brussel bør skje samlet, og gjennom KEK.

#### *Oppfølging:*

- Dokumentene om *Stand up for justice*, dokumentet om *Skrift, bekjennelse og tradisjon* og om læresamtalen om *embetet* er til høring hos Dnk og drøftes hos de fagansvarlige nemndene. Dnk/MKR har vært involvert gjennom forskjellige personers deltakelse i alle disse samtaleprosessene. Ikke minst i forhold til de siste to dokumentene vil det være svært viktig at Dnk kan gi noen føringer for det videre arbeid gjennom sine hørings svar.
- Dokumentet om eutanasi - *A time to live and a time to die* - er på vei og fortjener grundig behandling. Professor Ulla Schmidt har vært en svært viktig bidragsyter til denne utredningen. MKR bør vurdere egnete fora for drøfting (jfr. tidligere rapporter fra meg).

- MKR/Dnk bør vurdere ressursbruken i forhold til CPCE. Som en av de største medlemskirkene i CPCE må vårt årlige bidrag kunne anses som svært lite. Er det mulighet/vilje til å prioritere CPCE noe mer, ikke bare gjennom utsending av deltakere, men også gjennom det årlige medlemsbidraget?
- Det bør vurderes om Kirkemøtet våren 2011 er riktig instans for oppnevning av delegater til generalforsamlingen 2012, på samme måte som delegater til andre generalforsamlinger oppnevnes av KM. Tidligere har MKR oppnevnt direkte. Grunnen til det er antakeligvis at Dnk ikke ble formelt medlem av CPCE før 1999/2000, og derfor ble delegater som kun var observatører, oppnevnt på en mer uformell måte. (Det drøftes for øvrig om Dnk skal kunne ha tre (i stedet for to) delegater, på grunn av kirkens størrelse).

Vedlegg 1: To aktuelle pressemeldinger

## **2. Møte i den luthersk-ortodokse dialogkommisjonen (Preparatory Committee) i Betlehem mai 2010**

### **Bakgrunn:**

Som medlem i den luthersk-ortodokse dialogkommisjonen var jeg bedt om å holde et foredrag om "The Lutheran understanding of mission" som en forberedelse til neste års Plenary Committee Meeting i St.Petersburg. Foredraget mitt ble tatt svært godt imot av begge sider, og skal legges frem for neste års møte i lett bearbeidet form.

Tema for møtet vårt var nettopp "The Mission of the Church". Vi hadde også noen fruktbare samtaler om forholdet mellom misjon og proselytisme (et svært hett tema for de ortodokse).

Vertskap for møtet var den gresk-ortodokse patriarken i Jerusalem, og møtet fant sted på et luksuriøst hotell i Betlehem, like ved muren. Som alltid i Israel/Palestina, var kontrastene store...

Ved siden av arbeidet med tekstene møtte vi en rekke kirkeledere, både lutherske og ortodokse, samt besøkte en del av det lokale kirkelige arbeidet. Ettermiddagene og kveldene tilbrakte vi i klosteret ved fødselskirken hos den ortodokse biskopen i Betlehem. Møtet med befolkningen i Palestina, deres livssituasjon og håp midt i fortvilelsen, gjorde inntrykk på oss.

Klimaet under møtet vårt var til dels vanskelig og etterlot noe usikkerhet hos den lutherske delegasjonen når det gjelder den ortodokse delegasjonens ønske med dialogen.

Forhåpentligvis vil neste års Plenary Meeting lykkes bedre i så måte, siden det vil være til stede flere personer, også fra ortodoks side, som har et ønske om at dialogen vil føre oss videre på veien mot kirkelig enhet.

En av turens episoder: Under et besøk i et kloster utenfor Betlehem (adgang kun for menn - damene fikk stå utenfor i solsteken i halvannen time) sendte klosterets abbed de lutherske delegatene (to biskoper fra henholdsvis Zimbabwe og USA, pluss en tysk kirkeleder) på dør da metropolit Gennadios ville be en bønn i kirken, og henviste til at ikke-troende ikke fikk lov å være til stede under bønningen. Slikt fremmer ikke samtaleklimaet. Den russiske representanten i dialoggruppen sa til meg etterpå at dette bare var slik den ortodokse kirken

*egentlig* ser på lutherske kristne, og at de som var med i dialogen fra ortodokse side, ikke på noen måte representerte hovedlinjen i ortodoks tenkning.

*Samtidig* ble vi invitert med i den ortodokse prosesjonen til gravkirken gjennom gamlebyen søndag morgen - en stor flokk med ortodoks geistlighet og en liten flokk lutheranere med rundsnipp... togende inn i gravkirken bak de muslimske kirkevokterne som banet vei for oss. I følge lokalkjente var dette et nokså uvanlig syn...

Biskop Buthelezi ga for øvrig uttrykk for at han opplevde situasjonen i Palestina som langt verre enn situasjonen under apartheidstiden - som han hadde kjempet imot.

### **Oppfølging:**

Som fast medlem i denne kommisjonen har jeg et informasjonsbehov:

Møtene i kommisjonen gir ofte et speilbilde av det økumeniske klimaet mellom de lutherske kirkene og den ortodokse kirken. Hvorvidt står forholdet til de ortodokse kirkene på MKRs dagsorden, både nasjonalt (alle de små menighetene i Norge med forskjellig etnisk og nasjonal tilhørighet, som bare delvis er med i NKRs arbeid) og internasjonalt/bilateralt (spes. med den russisk-ortodokse kirken)? Hvordan fungerer Barentssamarbeidet for tiden?

Vedlegg 2: Communiqué

### **3. LVF konferanse om ekklesiologi i Münster, Tyskland**

Professor Grosshans (tidligere LVF-medarbeider) inviterte meg til å delta ved LVFs konsultasjon om ekklesiologi i Münster juni 2010 (på LVFs regning) til å holde et foredrag om Leuenbergmodellen som en modell for alter- og prekestolfellesskap mellom lutherske og reformerte kirker. (Foredrag følger vedlagt).

Konferansen bar preg av at ekklesiologien innenfor det lutherske kirkefellesskapet er svært tilpasset kontekstene den utfolder seg i. Det er nettopp denne evnen luthersk ekklesiologi har til å tilpasse seg og utfolde seg kontekstuellet som både kan være dens styrke - og en utfordring når det gjelder ønsket om å utforme en felles teologisk forståelse som kan danne et utgangspunkt for samtale med hverandre og med andre tradisjoner. Vedlagt følger teksten fra konsultasjonen. Foredragene vil bli publisert i en egen LVF-monografi senere.

### **Oppfølging:**

Jeg synes det var interessant å samtale med teologer fra hele verden om ekklesiologi, men lurer på hvorvidt de forskjellige avdelingene i LVF samarbeider om slike tema, samt om metoden for slike konsultasjoner (lange foredrag, korte diskusjoner, skriving av statement på nattetid) ikke burde revideres grundig. Kan MKRs representanter i LVFs forskjellige ledelsesstrukturer være med på utfordre LVF på begge punkter (samarbeid og metode)?

Vedlegg 3: Communiqué

Vedlegg 4: foredrag

#### 4. Rapport fra møte mellom CPCE og Finska Kyrkan, Svenska Kyrkan og Svenska Misjonskyrkan 21.-23.6.2010

##### Bakgrunn

Generalforsamlingen i CPCE i Budapest i 2006 ba sekretariatet og presidiet å følge opp relasjonen til kirkene som tradisjonelt har hatt et nært forhold til CPCE, men aldri undertegnet konkordien. På bakgrunn av dette besøkte en CPCE-delegasjon bestående av generalsekretær Michael Bünker, medlemmene i presidiet, Michael Beintker og undertegnede, kirkenes hovedsete i henholdsvis Helsinki, Uppsala og Stockholm.

I **Finland** møtte vi biskop Matti Repo (Tampere) og Toni Kartounen (teologisk rådgiver, Finska Kyrkans økumeniske avdeling). Finska Kyrkan har tradisjonelt hatt en del teologiske innvendinger mot Leuenbergkonkordien og kirkefelleskapets modell, enhet i forsonet mangfold. Samtalen med finnene handlet både om disse teologiske diskusjonene, men også om en del av det pågående arbeidet i CPCE: Læresamtalene som er til høring hos kirkene, arbeidet i forhold til sosialetiske spørsmål, avklaringen av medlemsstatus, deltakelse i det videre arbeid (reformasjonsjubileum, generalforsamling, læresamtaler). Samtalen var interessant, samtidig som det ikke var overraskende at finnene fortsatt er svært avmålte i forhold til CPCE. Avtalen om møtet var truffet for lenge siden med både Finska Kyrkans generalsekretær Risto Cantell og med erkebiskopen. Når begge disse ikke prioriterte samtalen, virket det som et signal om hvordan finnene ønsker å forholde seg til CPCE. Hovedgrunnen som ble nevnt var, som i Sverige, at Porvoo var en så viktig avtale, som var både bedre og mer vidtgående enn Leuenbergkonkordien, at man ikke ønsket å gå noe videre i utviklingen av sitt forhold til kirkene som hører til CPCE. Repo understreket allikevel at Finska Kyrkan fortsatt er interessert i å delta som gjester ved teologiske konsultasjonsprosesser, læresamtaler, etc.

Tirsdag 22.6. møtte vi representanter for **Svenska Kyrkan** i Uppsala. Ved siden av en del av de ansatte ved Kyrkans Hus, møtte vi erkebiskop Anders Wejryd og biskop em. Jonas Jonsson. Møtet var interessant, men ikke særlig oppløftende. Jonas Jonsson, en svært erfaren økumenisk teolog, har sitt hjerte i den romersk-katolske og anglikanske dialogen. Han førte ordet på vegne av Svenska Kyrkan. Blant annet understreket man Porvooavtalens enestående betydning for Svenska Kyrkan, de historiske forbindelseslinjene med andre episkopale kirker, sin egen ikke-reformatoriske tradisjon (sic!) og at man hadde svært lite til felles med andre kirker i Europa som forstår seg selv som reformatoriske kirker. Interessant var også at man først og fremst argumenterte mot CPCE ut fra historiske og pragmatiske årsaker, og bare i liten grad ut fra teologiske årsaker.

Onsdag 23.6. besøkte vi **Svenska Misjonsförbundet** i Stockholm. Kirkesamfunnet er for øyeblikket i samtale med Baptistkirken og Metodistkirken i Sverige om fusjon. De har fra før av en nær forbindelse til Svenska Kyrkan. Hvis de fusjonerer, er det blant annet i kirkefelleskap med Metodistkirken - som er medlem i CPCE. CPCE og denne kirken har frem til nå hatt liten kontakt med dette kirkesamfunnet. Misjonsförbundet er medlem i WARC, og det er derfor naturlig å drøfte videre samarbeidsmuligheter. De var også interessert i det at CPCE både har majoritetskirker og svært mange minoritetskirker som

medlemmer, og har fokus på minoritetskirkenes identitet. Siden kirkesamfunnet for øyeblikket er inne i sine fusjonsdrøftinger, er det ikke mulig for dem å gå noe videre med sine eksterne økumeniske relasjoner.

Mye kunne vært sagt i analysen av besøkene. Vårt inntrykk som delegasjon var at kirkene vi besøkte, for øyeblikket først og fremst er opptatt av sine egne interne og nasjonale prosesser. I forhold til våre nærmeste lutherske søsterkirker i Finland og Sverige satt jeg nok med et inntrykk av at de som møtte oss, ikke er interessert i noe kontakt med kirkene innenfor CPCE for øyeblikket. Det er deler av lederskapet i disse kirkene som har en annen økumenisk grunnforståelse enn dem vi møtte. Kirkene lot seg representere gjennom sine mest Leuenberg-kritiske representanter, hvilket i seg selv er et budskap om vurdering av forholdet til CPCE, som CPCE bare kan ta til etterretning.

### **Oppfølging:**

Den norske kirke har hele tiden vært opptatt av at man ikke ønsker kirkelige blokkdannelser i Europa, verken en Porvooblokk, en protestantisk blokk eller noen annen blokkdannelse. I så måte har Dnk, og også Den danske folkekirken og Metodistkirken i Norden, en viktig brobyggerfunksjon. Samtidig ser det også ut som om vi trenger en fornyet indrenordisk samtale om økumenisk profil, økumeniske modeller og betydningen av bispeembetet for kirkelig enhet.

MKR bes derfor om å vurdere hvordan dette kan settes på den økumeniske dagsorden i Norden.

Vedlegg 5: Pressemelding







## CPCE Press release

**Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE)  
- Leuenberg Church Fellowship -**

**Press release**

### **Bünker: Minorities characterise Europe**

**The Dealing of European Countries with Minorities is a Measure of their Constitutionality, said the General Secretary of the Community of Protestant Churches CPCE, Bishop Michael Bünker, during Celebrations in Zilina, Slovakia**

"The state has a duty to protect and advance religious liberty and to recognize the inalienable rights of all churches and religious communities." This was emphasised by the General Secretary of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe CPCE, Bishop Michael Bünker, on the occasion of the celebrations for "400 Years of the Synod in Zilina" on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2010 in Zilina, Slovakia, under the patronage of the Slovakian State President Ivan Gasparovic.

In 1606 the Lutheran and Reformed Evangelical Churches were given recognition in what was then Hungary. The Lutheran Church celebrated this in 1610 with the first Synod in today's Slovakia. Since then, these events in Hungary and Slovakia have been remembered as an example of the peaceful overcoming of religious and political differences. "The churches became the initiators of reconciliation because they subordinated their national identities to their common faith", stressed the host Bishop of the Lutheran Church in Slovakia, Milos Klatik, and Tamás Fabimy, Bishop of the Lutheran Church in Hungary.

In today's Europe the challenge of different forms of belief, of religious, cultural and ethnic diversity, is presenting itself anew, said Bünker. Several hundred minorities characterise Europe. "How the European countries deal with their minorities is a measure of their constitutionality." Around 15% of the European population is protestant, so the protestant churches in Europe feel themselves committed to raising their voice for the minorities.

For this reason the protestant churches in Europe explicitly welcomed the EU Treaty of Lisbon, Bünker emphasised. There the EU committed itself to a transparent, open and regular dialogue with the religions and world-views. Bünker: "The protestant churches make a contribution to life together in pluralistic societies; they teach attention and respect for the faith convictions of others and stand up for human rights."

Bünker described the celebrations in Zilina as a successful example of unity in reconciled diversity among the European protestant churches. The Lutheran Churches from Hungary and Slovakia had set up a clear sign over against the political tension between their countries: "Protestants build bridges where others want to erect walls.

*Vienna/Berne, 12 July 2010*

*Contact*

*Thomas Flügge (press spokesperson)*



## CPCE Press release

**Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE)  
- Leuenberg Church Fellowship -**

**Press release**

### **CPCE awards Title of “European Reformation City”**

**CPCE is preparing an initiative for the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation in 2017: The Title of “European City of the Reformation” will be awarded from 2012.**

In 2017 the 500th jubilee of the Reformation will be celebrated across the world. Following the example of the European Cultural Capitals, the CPCE is preparing an initiative to select European Reformation Cities. Some 20 cities spread across the continent are to present the memory of the Reformation to the European public under the title of “European City of the Reformation”.

The project begins with the coming General Assembly in Florence in 2012 and has a number of criteria as conditions for applying for the title. The cities should be of significance for the 16th century Reformation. They should contain local historical testimonies to the Reformation period. They should have a European aura and be adequately accessible for tourism. The cities will be selected by an international advisory body with representatives from the churches and politics as well as tourism and marketing branches.

The ecumenical dimension will be an important factor in the considerations. The project asks about the theological significance of the Reformation as well as its importance as an historical event with wide-ranging cultural impact. “500 years of Reformation challenge Christians to ask together about the significance of the Reformation for the ‘one, holy, catholic and apostolic church,’” says Michael Beintker, project leader and co-president of CPCE.

*Note: An article on this subject by Michael Beintker is in today's CPCE focus – free of charge at [www.leuenberg.eu](http://www.leuenberg.eu).*

*Vienna/Berne, 15<sup>th</sup> June 2010*

**Contact**

*Thomas Flügge (press spokesperson)  
Tel. +41 (0)79 640 1902, [t.fluegge@leuenberg.eu](mailto:t.fluegge@leuenberg.eu)*

\*\*\*

At present 105 Protestant churches in Europe (including five South-American churches originating from Europe ) belong to the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE). Lutheran, Reformed, United and Methodist along with pre-Reformation churches such as Hussites and Czech Brethren grant each other pulpit and table fellowship on the basis of the Leuenberg Agreement of 1973. The Secretariat is housed in the Severin-Schreiber-Gasse 3, A-1180 Vienna, [office@leuenberg.eu](mailto:office@leuenberg.eu), tel. +43.1.4791523.900, fax .110 The CPCE press officer is Dipl.theol. Thomas Flügge (Bern), tel. +41.31.3702502, [t.fluegge@leuenberg.eu](mailto:t.fluegge@leuenberg.eu).

Vedlegg 2

**Preparatory Meeting  
for the 15<sup>th</sup> Session of the Lutheran-Orthodox Joint Commission  
Bethlehem, Palestine, 25-31 May 2010**

**COMMUNIQUE**

In preparation for the 15<sup>th</sup> session of the International Joint Lutheran-Orthodox Commission, the Preparatory Committee met in Bethlehem, Palestine, 25-31 May 2010, under the auspices of His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos III of Jerusalem. This meeting continued the new phase in the Commission's theological work begun in Reykjavik, Iceland, in 2009.

At its 14<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting in Paphos, Cyprus, in 2008, the Commission decided to continue its work to "the Mystery of the Church" by focusing on "the Nature and Attributes of the Church" in 2009, and on "the Mission of the Church" in 2010. The meeting in Palestine was to explore this second subject and to prepare a draft of a Common Statement on the topic for consideration at the next plenary session.

The meeting was chaired by the Co-Presidents H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima, Ecumenical Patriarchate, and Bishop Dr Donald McCoid, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) was represented by Bishop Dr Manas Buthelezi, South Africa; Revd Dr Stephanie Dietrich, Norway; Dekan Klaus Schwarz, Germany; Revd Prof. Dr Risto Saarinen, Finland (*unable to come*); Revd Prof. Dr Sarah Hinlicky Wilson, Institute for Ecumenical Research, Strasbourg, France (Consultant); and Prof. Dr Kathryn L. Johnson, LWF, Geneva, Switzerland (Co-Secretary). From the Orthodox Churches the members were H.E. Dr Metropolitan Makarios of Kenya, (Patriarchate of Alexandria, *unable to come*); the V. Revd Protopresbyter Prof. Dr. George Dion Dragas (Patriarchate of Jerusalem); the V. Revd Archimandrite Dr Cyril Hovorun (Patriarchate of Moscow); the V. Revd Prof. Dr Viorel Ionita (Patriarchate of Romania); Prof. Dr Christos Voulgaris (Church of Greece), and the Revd Deacon Theodoros Meimaris, Ecumenical Patriarchate (Co-Secretary).

The Committee discussed its topic with the help of papers prepared by Revd Stephanie Dietrich, Dekan Klaus Schwarz, H.E. Metropolitan Makarios, V. Revd Archimandrite Cyril Hovorun and V. Revd Viorel Ionita.

Discussion of these papers identified broad areas of agreement between the two traditions on the subject of mission and also a number of differences and open questions. A Statement was drafted which will help the Joint Plenary meeting in 2011. In this draft paper the Committee discussed the various aspects of mission, from a Lutheran and an Orthodox understanding, always based upon their traditions and ecclesiastical and doctrinal teachings. Subjects examined in the Statement include "God's Mission and the Church's Mission," "Mission and the Unity of the Church," Mission as Witness (*Martyria*) and Proclamation," "Mission and Diakonia," "and "The Problems of Proselytism and Imperialism."

The members met in Bethlehem, the very place of Jesus Christ's birth in Holy Land. At the opening session, the Greek Orthodox Patriarch, His Beatitude Theophilos III of Jerusalem addressed the Committee, very warmly welcoming the participants and bestowing upon them the patriarchal blessing and wish for a very successful outcome results. He said:

It is significant that, in the course of these particular deliberations, you have made your first pilgrimage as a Joint Commission to the land in which the Church was first revealed, and just a few days after we have celebrated the Feast of Pentecost, the coming of the "Paraclete," the Spirit of Christ....As the oldest continuous institution in the Holy Land, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem takes seriously our vocation of diakonia both to all those, regardless of religious, ethnic or cultural origin, who make this region their home, as well as to all those, of whatever religious affiliation, who come here throughout the year as pilgrims. In this ministry of diakonia to humankind and for the sake of the unity of all Christians, we extend to you our appreciation and encouragement.

On behalf of the Committee, Metropolitan Gennadios and Bishop McCoid expressed to the Patriarch Theophilos their deep thanks and gratitude for his generous hospitality. They recognized that it is for all a special blessing to hold this meeting in the Holy Land and in Bethlehem in particular, a place where Christianity found its beginning in Christ's Incarnation and birth. They also expressed their anxiety and sadness about the still unresolved political situation for the Palestinians, and for the wall which still exists, separating peoples and nations. The Committee affirmed the Patriarch's observation that the hope is in the Holy Land to be two states with three hearts and inspirations, Christianity, Islam, and Judaism.

On the final day, Bishop Manib Younan of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Jordan and the Holy Land, the LWF member church in the Middle East, warmly welcomed the members of the Committee to the Holy Land. He spoke about his vision for the mission of the Church in this place. He highlighted three aspects: the importance of education as a form of resistance to the growing attractions of extremism; the role of ecumenical cooperation for Christian communities who live in the midst of Jews and Muslims; and the centrality of justice. He urged the group to support the strength of groups like the Middle East Council of Churches in their efforts for reconciliation. His remarks were received with warm appreciation by the Committee.

Through a number of visits the Committee was able to learn about the continuing faithful witness (*martyria*) of Christian communities in the Holy Land. In Bethlehem, the participants paid a visit to the Orthodox Monastery of the Basilica of Nativity of Christ and were generously received by the Abbot H.E. Archbishop Theophylaktos of Jordan. On Friday 28 May the Commission attended a Divine Liturgy in the place of the Nativity Church co-celebrated by Metropolitan Gennadios and Archbishop Theophylaktos, with the other Orthodox members. They also visited the International Center of Bethlehem, whose "Lutheran-based ecumenically-oriented" mission is to provide help and assistance in difficult circumstances through projects in the arts, education, and health and wellness. |

On the way to Jerusalem, the Commission visited the Monasteries of Saint Sava the Sanctified, of Saint Theodosius the Blessed, and of the Magi. In Jerusalem they visited sites on the Mount of Olives, the Holy Sion, and other holy sites. On Sunday the members attended the Divine Liturgy at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and visited the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

The Joint Commission will be hosted 31 May – 7 June 2011 by the Lutheran World Federation. At this meeting the Committee will celebrate its 30th anniversary since its beginning.

Bethlehem, Palestine, 29 May 2010.

Vedlegg 3



# THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION

A COMMUNION OF CHURCHES – EINE KIRCHENGEMEINSCHAFT – UNA COMUNIÓN DE IGLESIAS – UNE COMMUNION D'ÉGLISES  
LUTHERISCHER WELTBUND – FEDERACIÓN LUTERANA MUNDIAL – FÉDÉRATION LUTHÉRIENNE MONDIALE

## *A communiqué on Lutheran ecclesiology today*

### **Formed to Embody and Live out what it Means to be the Church**

Convened by the LWF Department for Theology and Studies and the Ecumenical Institute of the Evangelical Theological Faculty of Westfälische Wilhelms-University, we, eighteen theologians from around the world, met 4–7 June 2010, in Münster, Germany, sharing insights and deliberating on what it means for Lutherans to realize and live out the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

Our perspectives reflected and drew extensively on our contexts in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin and North America. The following summarizes some important aspects of what we affirm. More on these and other aspects are developed in the papers that will be revised for publication.

1. As Lutheran churches we give expression to the *oneness* of the Church, especially in how we as a communion of churches explicitly state and embody theological understandings of the faith we confess, as indicated most fundamentally in Article 7 of the Augsburg Confession: the church is the assembly of believers where the gospel is rightly preached and the sacraments celebrated in accordance with the gospel. For Lutherans, the Church's unity is not based primarily on how it is organized or how its ministry or liturgies are ordered.

This unity is realized among Lutheran churches as well as through the unity we seek with other churches. This emerges as the many individual churches communicate the Christian faith, reflect theologically and strive for common understandings and manifestations of that faith. Thus, it is a unity in reconciled diversity that finds expression through ongoing processes of reformation.

The diversity constitutive of this unity is not threatening because we believe the Church is one. Yet, that unity continually needs to be made more visible: through networks of communication, responsibility and accountability, including through praying for and with one another. The Holy Spirit calls, gathers and empowers us to face challenges to this unity, in a spirit of humility and compassion.

The criterion of justification also requires the criterion of Christian love. Love, which is at the core of being a communion, builds up and challenges us to accept those who live out the faith differently. With regard to tensions over ethical positions or over who can serve in the ordained ministry, it is not the differences themselves and the challenges they pose that threaten the core of this unity. The only reason for breaking the unity would be if one of the positions were contrary to love, for example, if it were to marginalize or oppress a given group in the church or in society.

P.O. Box 2100, Route de Ferney 150,  
CH-1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland  
Tel +41/22-791 61 11, Direct +41/22-791 xx xx  
Fax +41/22-791 xx xx, E-mail xxx@lutheranworld.org



2. The Church's *holiness*, which results from the work of the Holy Spirit, is the Church's peculiar distinctiveness in the world. In the first instance, holiness flows from God's forgiveness that comes from the Triune God. Forgiveness of sin is then at the center of the life of the church. However, holiness does not mean being separated from or superior to others; instead, it is connected with the wholeness and healing necessary because of sin and brokenness.

The gift of justification frees us for holy living in community. Churches reflect this holiness by being places and agents of reconciliation, forgiveness and healing. Thus, Lutherans strongly emphasize diakonia as a central expression of the Church's holiness.

If a church is to be *believed* as holy, it must be *believable* as holy and live out holiness in word and deed. Its identity is at the same time hidden and visible. A church clearly indicates holiness through a life of accountability before God and the neighbor.

Because of the work of the Holy Spirit—in gathering, building up and sending the people of God—the Church is intrinsically charismatic. Charismatic movements among us need not be threatening, although they may pose ongoing challenges for us in particular contexts. We maintain that it is crucial that any charismatic gifts serve the other and uphold the whole body of Christ.

3. The Church's *catholicity* not only refers to its geographical universality, but to its universal identity, given through Jesus Christ, and realized through worship in the name of the Triune God. Jesus Christ's universal presence in his Church is spatial, temporal and contextual. The catholicity of the Church is realized locally through a congregation's worship. Therefore, the Church's universality is manifest in the different ways in which churches throughout the world express this in various forms of worship.

When we worship and live out the gospel in our daily lives, we are reminded of the Church's catholicity. Through worship, the Triune God's creating, redeeming, liberating and reconciling work in all of life is communicated and celebrated, and people are brought into communion with one another. This catholicity is realized when a sense of the universal church is present, prayed for and reflected in local worship life.

4. The Church's *apostolicity* refers to the early activities of the apostles in transmitting the faith, and to the Church's missionary being as carried forth by the whole people of God. The Church is called to continue the task of the apostles, who were sent into the world to bring the gospel to all.

In order for this gospel to transform what is happening today under globalization, this needs to occur through a variety of ways and forms—through what can be seen, touched, experienced as well as heard. God's compassion is at the heart of this, rooted in the passion of Christ, and expressed through justice, mercy, judgment and grace. Churches realize this apostolicity by continuing the mission of Jesus Christ: bringing hope to a hopeless world and seeking justice, compassion, liberation and healing for all who suffer.

We encourage ongoing theological reflection on how Lutheran churches throughout the world understand and, through transformative action in church and society, live out what we profess as the very being of the Church: One, Holy Catholic and Apostolic.

**Lutheran Ecclesiology -Realizing the One, Holy and Apostolic Church. A theological consultation.**  
Münster, Germany, 4.-7.6.2010

**Unity of Protestant churches in Europe:  
The Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE),  
Leuenberg church fellowship**

Stephanie Dietrich, Oslo, Norway

**1. Introduction**

Almost all Protestant churches in Europe are member churches of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe. Its basic document is the Leuenberg Agreement of 1973 which marks the end of the over 450 years of the church division between the Lutheran and Reformed churches. On the basis of the common understanding of the Gospel, the signatory churches grant one another a pulpit and table fellowship and commit themselves to common witness and service at local, regional and European levels, and the continuing theological work. Up to now 105 Churches across Europe belong to the CPCE. These churches are, besides classical Reformation churches, pre-Reformation churches such as the Waldensian Church and the Church of the Czech Brethren, plus five South American Protestant churches emanating from the earlier immigration churches. The seven Methodist churches in Europe joined it on the basis of a "Joint Declaration of Church Fellowship".

If "communion" is described as altar and pulpit fellowship, the CPCE may well be understood as a communion, though not as one single Protestant denomination or one church. The most adequate way to describe the CPCE is in terms of "communion," "community," or "fellowship." Former doctrinal condemnations no longer apply to the present-day teaching of these churches, allowing for altar and pulpit fellowship, which includes the mutual recognition of presbyteral ordination and common celebration of the eucharist. Of particular importance is the strong und indispensable togetherness of the *declaration* of church fellowship, based on our common faith, and the visible *realization* of it in the churches' concrete lives. The LA itself underlines this by saying: "It is in the life of the churches and congregations that church fellowship becomes a reality" (35). Rather than a purely doctrinal agreement or theoretical idea, fellowship is a lived and real relation between visible parts. Fellowship is based on mutuality and visible unity, never on a declaration alone.

All the same, the LA made clear that the signatory churches remain churches within their own tradition.

**2. The Leuenberg agreement as the basis of Lutheran-reformed relations: main theological aspect**

The final text of the "Agreement between the Reformation Churches in Europe" (Leuenberg Agreement) was drafted at Leuenberg near Basle in March 1973, thus concluding a long process of dialogue mainly between Lutheran and Reformed Churches, which had begun after the Second World War. This text drawn up in European context met with

astonishingly rapid and sustained approval of the Churches. In 2003 the Leuenberg Church Fellowship changed its name to the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe.

The church division could be overcome by means of doctrinal discussions among the churches of different denominations. The Preamble of the Agreement, referring to the key statement of the Confessio Augustana (CA VII), confirms: "In the view of the Reformation it follows that agreement in the right teaching of the Gospel and in the right administration of the sacraments is the necessary and sufficient prerequisite for the true unity of the Church" (LA 2). The "common understanding of the Gospel" is founded on the Message of Justification as the "message of the free grace of God" (LA 7-12) and interpreted with reference to preaching, baptism and the Lord's Supper (LA 13-16), as set out in the second section of the Agreement. The third section removed the doctrinal disagreements relating to the Lord's Supper, christology and predestination, as these disagreements no longer reflect current teachings of the signatory churches (LA 17-28). The fourth section contains the core of the Agreement: the declaration and implementation of church fellowship with the confirmation that "in the sense intended in this Agreement, church fellowship means that, on the basis of the consensus they have reached in their understanding of the Gospel, churches with different confessional positions accord each other fellowship in word and sacrament and strive for the fullest possible cooperation in witness and service to the world" (LA 29). This church fellowship is manifested in shared pulpit and table fellowship including the mutual recognition of ordination and the practicability of inter-celebration (reciprocal presidency over the celebration of communion).

### **3. The development of the CPCE since 1973: working methods**

The Community of Protestant Churches in Europe serves to promote the unity and community of the Protestant churches through joint theological doctrinal conversations. They also represent the positions of Reformation churches on important spiritual and social challenges such as the question of a just war, the Christian understanding of freedom, the relationship of church, state, people and nation, discussions with the Russian Orthodox Church on human rights and a study process called "The right to live and the right to die" on euthanasia.. Among the various consensus papers resulting from the doctrinal discussion, the studies "The Church of Jesus Christ" and "Church and Israel", which were unanimously adopted by the General Assemblies of 1994 in Vienna and 2001 in Belfast respectively, deserve special attention. The current topics of doctrinal discussions are: "The Protestant Understanding of Ministry, Ordination and Episkopé" and "Scripture – Confession – Church". Other study groups are working on the issues of "New Social Challenges for the Protestant Churches" and „Ecclesia semper reformanda“. The CPCE is also involved in dialogues with orthodox, Anglican and Baptist churches or church fellowships.

The CPCE is involved in the work on current important questions of politics, society and the ecumene, and especially of developing the presence of the Protestant churches at a European level. Thus the 5th General Assembly of the LCF in Belfast in 2001 established the task in social ethics. The 6th General Assembly of the CPCE in Budapest in September 2006 added that the representation of a "Protestant voice in Europe" and a resolute appearance of the church over against the political institutions of Europe are particularly important and



should be promoted further, without establishing a protestant synod or block which might include anti ecumenical connotations.

The Community of Protestant Churches in Europe has an intentionally loose organisational structure for the sake of flexibility. General Assemblies take place about every six years, in which basic outlines of future work, new subjects for theological conversations are determined and the new Council elected. The Council, led by the Presidium, is responsible for the work between the General Assemblies. The Secretariat, which operates under the direction of the Executive Committee, has been located in the Head Office of the Evangelical Church of Austria since 2007.

Well aware of its limits, the CPCE has the whole ecumenical scene in view and considers itself as a step on the way towards the unity of the universal Church of Jesus Christ in a reconciled diversity. For this reason it maintains working relations with the World Council of Churches, the Conference of European Churches, the Lutheran World Federation, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches as well as with the Anglican churches and European Baptist Federation.

#### **4. Compatibility of agreements: Example Norway**

The Church of Norway (CN), a Nordic Lutheran folk church, subscribes to two bilateral theological agreements that appear to be mutually contradictory: on the one hand, the Porvoo agreement of the Anglican churches of the British Isles and Republic of Ireland with the Nordic and Baltic Lutheran churches of Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Estonia, and Lithuania; and on the other hand, the Leuenberg Agreement (LA) that led to altar and pulpit fellowship with the signatory churches called the Leuenberg Church Fellowship or, since 2003, the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe<sup>1</sup>

Ecumenical partners from different denominations often wonder how it is possible or even theologically reasonable for the CN to have bilateral agreements leading to communion with churches from the Anglican, Methodist, and Reformed traditions. Is it an attempt to “be friends with everybody” at the expense of theological honesty and clarity? How do we cope with the questions of compatibility between our ecumenical agreements? One of the core issues is the mutual recognition of ordained ministries, the understanding of episkopé and the historic episcopate. The compatibility of these ecumenical agreements cannot be generalized but must be elaborated on the background of the concrete historical and contextual identity of the CN.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Agreement between Reformation Churches in Europe (Leuenberg Agreement): 1973* (Frankfurt am Main: Lembeck, 1993).

The arguments for the signing of Porvoo<sup>2</sup> as well as the LA have been based on the seventh article of the Augsburg Confession. These agreements have brought the churches involved into inter-confessional church fellowship on the basis of a confessional definition of unity. The issue of compatibility has been raised mostly with regard to its basis in Scripture and the Confessions (namely the creeds of the early church, the Augsburg Confession, and the Small Catechism), not so much with regard to the relation between episcopal and non-episcopal churches. The CN's approval of the agreements is premised upon the conviction that they properly express what is sufficient for unity in the church, according to CA 7.

The Leuenberg Agreement leaves intact the binding force of the confessions within the participating churches. It is not to be regarded as a new confession of faith. It sets forth a consensus reached about central matters, one which makes church fellowship possible between churches of different confessional positions. In accordance with this consensus the participating churches will seek to establish a common witness and service and they pledge themselves to continue their common doctrinal discussions. (37b)

The CN participated in the first comprehensive confessional dialogue leading to the LA. The bishops' conference by and large accepted it as "sufficient for altar and pulpit fellowship" but took no action to sign it. There was a noticeable theological protest against the "Protestant unionist profile" of the agreement from some theologians, though it was not directed at the issue of the ministry of bishops or the historic episcopate. The reason for not signing was said to be a reluctance to let the State Ministry of Church Affairs sign a theological agreement. Further, there was virtually no Reformed presence in Norway. The decision to sign was made at the General Synod in November 1999 after two to three years of reconsideration in the deciding church bodies. The Church of Denmark signed the LA in 2001, but the other Lutheran folk churches in Sweden, Finland, and Iceland have not signed the agreement to date on account of theological objections.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> The Porvoo Common Statement is built on many other dialogues and agreements. It sees substantial shared belief between Lutherans and Anglicans on the nature of the church and the goal of visible unity. The report breaks new ground concerning the episcopal ministry and its relation to succession, spelling out a deeper understanding of apostolicity, the episcopal office, and historic succession as a sign of that office. It is especially this part of the report, giving a broad characterization of episkopé, which opens up the way to full communion between our churches. The Common Statement says: "In the light of all this we find that the time has come when all our churches can affirm together the value and use of the sign of the historic Episcopal succession. This means that those churches in which the sign has at some time not been used are free to recognize the value of the sign and should embrace it without denying their own apostolic continuity." For us as Lutherans, this means that we are committed to use the sign of episcopacy; we value it as a necessary part of our churches' lives. From a Norwegian point of view, we would add that we value it as a necessary part of our own church's life and self-understanding, but we would not suppose that one concrete way of ordering episkopé should be made the condition for altar and pulpit fellowship in general. This was one of the main reasons why the cn found it theologically consistent to sign both the Leuenberg Agreement and the Porvoo Common Statement. *The Porvoo Common Statement. Conversations between the British and Irish Anglican Churches and the Nordic and Baltic Lutheran Churches.* Text agreed at the fourth plenary meeting, held at Järvenpää, Finland, 9-13 October 1992. Council for Christian Unity, London 1993. Section 57.

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., the various Nordic contributions in the volume *Leuenberg, Meissen and Porvoo*, Leuenberger Texte 4, eds. Wilhelm Hüffmeier and Colin Podmore (Frankfurt: Lembeck, 1996). For the Finnish arguments against signing, see Tuomo Mannermaa, *Von Preussen nach Leuenberg. Hintergrund und Entwicklung der theologischen Methode der Leuenberger Konkordie* (Hamburg: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1981).

Against the objections of other Nordic Lutherans, the CN decided in favor of the LA as an example of “unity in reconciled diversity.” Reconciled diversity acknowledges a legitimate diversity within a dynamic, not static, community, enriching rather than threatening unity. The CPCE emphasizes equally the reconciled diversity and the unity. The challenge lies in the ability to balance unity and agreement on fundamental issues while still giving space for a diversity of churches and people. Unity cannot be a merely minimalist theoretical agreement on certain doctrinal statements but a fundamental and all-embracing unity that will become visible through an attitude of mutual accountability, openness, and a willingness to respect others on their own, not our own, premises. Therefore the model of unity is itself open to development.

The LA itself does not put much emphasis on the ordained ministry and the ministry of oversight, since the recognition of ordained ministry was not the main obstacle for inter-Protestant communion.<sup>4</sup> Since the fellowship came into existence, however, the topic has been one of constant deliberation in the CPCE. The CN’s Synod commented in its ratification of the Leuenberg Agreement in 1999 that “[i]n all our churches there are forms of pastoral oversight (‘episkopé’). Such a function is necessary in all churches. The concrete structure and understanding of such a ministry of oversight may, however, vary.” Thus the Synod does regard the signing of the Leuenberg agreement as a confirmation of the need for episcopate. It says at the same time that one particular form of episkopé is not a precondition for the existence of the church or for church unity, as seen in the perspective of CA 7. The CN recognizes that Reformed churches of the CPCE have structures of episkopé, even if they are presbyterian or synodical.

The different ecumenical agreements were signed in light of the commitment to seek church fellowship with other churches where possible as part of the reconciliation of the manifold confessional churches in Europe. These decisions were not made to be diplomatic, but to take the “call to be one in Christ” in our teaching as a specific challenge of our time.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Since 1973, the Leuenberg churches have studied on issues of ministry, such as the Neuendettelsau Theses and the Tampere Theses, both published in *Leuenberger Texte 2* (Frankfurt am Main: Lembeck, 1995), and the study “The Church of Jesus Christ,” which is understood to have a binding character within the CPCE. *The Church of Jesus Christ: The Contribution of the Reformation towards Ecumenical Dialogue on Church Unity*, *Leuenberger Texte 1* (Frankfurt am Main: Lembeck, 1995).

<sup>5</sup> This presupposes that the CN and other churches sharing the apostolic tradition in word and sacraments are apostolic churches before common consecrations of bishops (e.g., with Anglicans). Secondly, it shows that the CN accepts the historic episcopal succession as a sign of continuity and unity of the apostolic church. This was the intention and practice in our church before the signing of the Porvoo agreement. It should therefore be practiced in a more comprehensive, ecumenically significant, and theologically reflected way afterwards, notwithstanding the common agreement between the churches on the validity of our ordained ministries before the sign was introduced. As far as the theme of historic episcopate has been explicitly or implicitly addressed in the discussions, there seems to be far-reaching consensus in the CN, which became evident in the Signatory Protocol by the Church of Norway on the signing of the Leuenberg Agreement “Against the background of the ecumenical agreements into which we have entered, it has become clear to us that both the meaning and the structuring of ecumenical church fellowship will vary according to context. In all our churches there are forms of pastoral oversight (“episkopé”). Such a function is necessary in all churches. The concrete structure and understanding of such a ministry of oversight may, however, vary. In the Porvoo agreement, the Church of Norway has stated, together with the other Porvoo signatory churches, that fellowship in word and sacrament is made explicit through the ministry of oversight which is exercised by the pastoral ministry in the church and by the ministry of bishops on whom the ministry of oversight is bestowed in a particular way. Together, these are an outward sign of church unity. Both through ecumenical dialogue and through our own church history we have

The agreements with Methodist and Reformed churches do confirm that having historical episcopal succession in the classical Anglican meaning is not the condition for altar and pulpit fellowship. The basis for “church fellowship” is understood according to CA 7 as agreement in the use and understanding of the gospel and the sacraments. In other words, there is a necessary distinction between what is necessary for the being of the church and its unity, and what is important for the manifestation of the unity and life of the church. Thus, it is neither the demands from episcopal churches nor critical questions from non-episcopal churches that has defined the CN’s ecumenical profile in this regard. But the encounter with these sister churches was the occasion to attempt to be, together with them, faithful to an ecumenical understanding of what it means to be an apostolic church. The fact that the CN is a part of both agreements, far from being incoherent or self-contradictory, is a witness against the temptation toward ecumenical “block-building” that would align episcopal and non-episcopal churches against each other.

## **5. Unity in reconciled diversity**

The doctrinal basis of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe, the signing of the Leuenberg Agreement from 1973, points out 2 central elements which are the basis for our communion; firstly the common understanding of the gospel; as understood as the message of justification as the message of the free grace of God; secondly, it includes a common understanding of the preaching of the gospel and the sacraments, i.e. Eucharist and Baptism. This describes the core of our ecclesial identity. Nevertheless, there remain considerable differences between our churches in forms of worship, types of spirituality, and church order. These differences are often profound and deeply felt differences, but they are not factors which divide the Church. Our communion is given through this unity in Word and Sacrament. I would like to point out a few aspects concerning this model, which not only might be important for the living together of protestant churches, but also for the role of churches in a multicultural Europe in general:

### ***a. Balance of unity and diversity***

The model of unity in reconciled diversity on the one hand underlines the need of finding and maintaining a common basis of doctrinal agreement. The main reformation principle from Confessio Augustana, CA VII, “*satis est*”, what is sufficient for church unity, gives the theoretical framework. On the other hand this model underlines and gives freedom to uphold one’s own identity and culture. Diversity in itself is not a goal, but it is a natural part of being different churches, in different contexts. It’s a *reconciled diversity* as though it in itself does not threaten the fundamental unity achieved on core issues. This model obliges the signatory churches to strive to deepen and strengthen the fellowship they have found together. One of the important aspects to be discussed is whether this model becomes too static, in a way saying that diversity in itself is a common good. Secondly, the unity must be a unity which

---

learned to value this tradition. The role of the episcopal ministry in the Church of Norway has facilitated the achievement of church fellowship with Anglican churches. This does not for us preclude recognition of other churches which do not have an episcopal ministry, or the possibility of full church fellowship with such churches.” See CN homepage for the full text of the Signatory’s Protocol by the Church of Norway on the Signing of The Agreement between Reformation Churches in Europe.  
(<http://www.kirken.no/english/engelsk.cfm?artid=5895>)

not only serves as a declaration, but also as visible unity with a necessary impact on the living together of churches and people. The challenge lies in the ability to balance, on the one hand, the unity and agreement on fundamental issues, and on the other hand, give space for a diversity which enriches and not threatens the living together of churches and people.

***b. Interconnectedness of common values and understanding, and common acting***

This leads forward to my second point: the need of a close connection between the **declarations** of unity, based on essential values, and the **realization** of this unity through a lived fellowship. What becomes obvious to our churches is that a pure theoretical acknowledgement of certain principles does not lead forward to lived fellowship and engagement in each others' lives. Both sides have to be hold together tightly. Our churches should contribute in underlining the necessity to find common values and goals, more than emphasizing the differences. Having declared this unity on core values and beliefs, this common understanding has consequences for shared life of our churches. Maybe this can be the contribution of religious communities in Europe on the basis of their ecumenical experience: The will to find and define our common basis, and on this basis be able to live with a reconciled diversity.

***c. Space for development***

It is important to underline that the model of unity in reconciled diversity is not a static model, but gives space for **continuing development**. The unity once achieved through the common acknowledgement of certain principles and values has to develop through the continuous cooperation and need of reconciliation between partners of different cultures and contexts. Our unity is not merely a minimalist theoretical agreement on certain doctrinal statements, but it is a fundamental and all-embracing unity which becomes visible through an attitude of mutual accountability, openness and will to accept the other on their premises, and not my own premises. Therefore, it is open for development and changes and can never be a static model.

The concept of "Unity in reconciled diversity" has been critically examined as to whether basically it is nothing but a confirmation of the status quo and really achieves no changes at all. Thus, the document entitled *Toward Church Fellowship: report of the Joint Commission of the Lutheran World Federation and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches* (Geneva 1989) makes the following critical statement about the Leuenberg agreement: "Theological agreement in itself is not enough; it must be translated into concrete situations with its liturgical, spiritual, practical or organizational consequences. At the moment, the Lutheran and Reformed churches in Europe find themselves on this difficult path from the mere declaration to the realization of church fellowship."

But an implementation presupposes a declaration. On this fellowship, the Agreement speaks of it "becoming a reality" (LA 35). The ecumenical model of unity in reconciled diversity is not an organizational model; neither does it necessarily result in the formation of unions. Rather, it describes a way at the beginning of which we can mutually recognize each other as Church if in our fundamental confession we agree on the one truth of the gospel yet express it in a diversity of forms. For the church fellowship of confessionally related churches, the

model of Unity in reconciled diversity has proved its ground. The LA has had severe consequences for the living together of its signatory churches in Europe. Similar agreements between different churches shaped by reformation era have been made other places in the world, such as in the Middel East region, and our wish might be that the Leuenberg agreement and the CPCE model can be a model for churches in other regions for agreement and cooperation in “witness and service” as the LA says.

I would like to conclude by quoting the LA itself, LA 36: “The preaching of the churches gains in credibility in the world when they are at one in their witness to the Gospel. The Gospel liberates and binds together the churches to render common service. Being the service of love, it turns to man in his distress and seeks to remove the causes of that distress. The struggle for justice and peace in the world increasingly demands of the churches the acceptance of a common responsibility.”

Vedlegg 5



## CPCE Press release

**Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE)  
- Leuenberg Church Fellowship -**

**Press release**

### **CPCE visits Churches in Sweden and Finland**

**Swedish and Finnish churches are being invited to further cooperation with CPCE – a pan-European Consultation on the Ordained Ministry meets in November**

From 21st to 23rd June a delegation from CPCE, the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe visited several churches in Sweden and Finland and invited them to further cooperation. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and the Church of Sweden as well as the Mission Church in Sweden have not signed the Leuenberg Agreement, the foundational document of the CPCE, but stand as so-called "participating churches" in a close working relation to CPCE.

CPCE General Secretary Michael Bünker invited the churches to take part as guests at the coming General Assembly of CPCE in Florence in 2012. The theological discussion on church fellowship has always been enriched by the contributions of the Swedish and Finnish churches, said Bünker. He also invited them to make their own contribution from the Nordic Reformation to the CPCE project "European Cities of the Reformation".

Fundamental ecumenical models and current theological challenges were discussed, such as the significance of the office of church leadership for the unity of the church. The Co-President of CPCE, Stephanie Dietrich, underlined in the conversations the basic attitude of the Lutheran World Federation and her own church, the Church of Norway, which signed the Agreement in 1999. "A fellowship between episcopally constituted churches need not exclude fellowship with those which exercise church oversight otherwise than through the bishop's office. The foundation for church fellowship is agreement in the preaching of the Gospel and administration of the sacraments, not a particular ordering of ministries." The CPCE study currently in preparation on "Ministry and Ordination" is an invitation to the participating and member churches to work further on this theme.

Presidium member Michael Beintker stressed the necessity of further pan-European projects. A comparable theological training throughout the European churches should be striven for as a step towards greater community. In November 2012 a CPCE consultation on the theme that has been running since 2003 will discuss a text on the principles of training for ministry in CPCE.

*Vienna/Berne, 1st July 2010*

**Contact**

*Thomas Flügge (press spokesperson)*

*Tel. +41 (0)79 640 1902, [t.fluegge@leuenberg.eu](mailto:t.fluegge@leuenberg.eu)*







Gemeinschaft Evangelischer Kirchen in Europa (GEKE)  
Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE)  
Communion d'Eglises Protestantes en Europe (CEPE)

CPCE-GEKE-CEPE, Severin-Schreiber-Gasse 3, A-1180 Wien

GESCHÄFTSSTELLE  
Severin-Schreiber-Gasse 3  
1180 Wien ÖSTERREICH

Tel.: ++43-1-479 15 23- 900  
Fax: ++43-1-479 15 23-110  
E-Mail: [office@leuenberg.eu](mailto:office@leuenberg.eu)  
Web-Site: [www.leuenberg.eu](http://www.leuenberg.eu)

Member Churches CPCE

Wien, 11.06.2010

## Responses to the Doctrinal Conversations of the CPCE

Ladies and Gentlemen, dear Sisters and Brothers,

As announced in my latest letter of December 2009, you receive the first version of the doctrinal study text "Ministry, Ordination, Episkopé", released by the CPCE Council for the process of commenting. Its finalization has been delayed, and I have to apologize for this, as it gives you less time for your comments. Nevertheless, I hope that you will be able to react in the given time until June 01, 2011. If your comment comes in later, it will perhaps not be possible to take it into consideration. But please keep us informed, if your delay is likely to be delayed slightly.

You receive three documents: the actual doctrinal study text, a „Report“ comprising additional reflections to the issues addressed, and some guidelines for your comments. On the basis of your comments, the study text will be revised and submitted to the CPCE General Assembly 2012.

Thanking you in advance for your reactions, I hope that the second version to be developed next year will significant contribute to deepening our communion.

Kind regards

Bishop Michael Bünker  
General Secretary

Appended:  
Text of "Ministry – Ordination - Episkopé"  
plus accompanying guidelines  
Report



Gemeinschaft Evangelischer Kirchen in Europa (GEKE)  
Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE)  
Communion d'Eglises Protestantes en Europe (CEPE)

## Guidelines for Responses

This text from the doctrinal conversations consists of three parts. The Introduction (I) presents the present situation and preliminary hermeneutical reflections. The Statement (II) attempts to formulate a position common to the CPCE churches. The Recommendations (III) draw some conclusions from the common position and aim for a further consolidation of views in the CPCE.

Alongside the text of the doctrinal conversations a "Report" is also included. It contains some deeper considerations which guided the authors in the drafting of the doctrinal text. It should not be the subject of the response procedure.

The response procedure should concentrate especially on parts II and III. These sections are intended to be reworked on the basis of your responses, which we request by 01 June 2011. In this way the General Assembly of CPCE in 2012 can be presented with a document which is already based on a broad reception throughout the churches. The General Assembly should if possible adopt the common description of the position of the CPCE churches.

In their responses the churches can bring to expression anything which they think worthy of mention. For the sake of easier comparison, however, we would ask especially for consideration of the following questions:

The present document is on the one hand the result of doctrinal conversations in which, as provided by the Leuenberg Agreement, doctrinal differences between the churches are worked upon in order to deepen the consensus already reached. Under the aspect of **doctrine** the decisive guiding question for the responses is:

- Is what is said in the "Statement" in harmony with what is confessed and taught in your church about Ministry, Ordination and Episkopé? Does it offer a basis to present a common Protestant understanding of Ministerial Office to churches of other confessions? Which elements of what is said are particularly important for your church, and which ought to be reworked again?

The doctrinal conversation also aims, however, to strengthen and deepen the living fellowship within the CPCE. This gives special weight to the question of practical implications of the results of the conversation in the individual churches. In regard to **praxis** we ask for responses to the following questions:

- Do you find the present situation concerning Ministry/ Ministries, Ordination and Episkopé described appropriately, especially with regard to your own church? Would you like to add viewpoints to explain your own understanding and your own praxis?
- Do you see the presentations and recommendations (e.g. on the special status of the Ministry of Word and Sacrament, on the relation between Ordination and Commissioning or on the Ordination of Women) as questioning your own praxis? How do you wish to deal with such questioning? Do you see a possibility of reaching a greater unity of praxis within the CPCE?

(Approved by the Council of the CPCE on 11.06.2010)

# MINISTRY – ORDINATION – EPISKOPÉ

1

## 2 CONTENT

3	I. INTRODUCTION .....	2
4	1. The Problem .....	2
5	2. The State of the Discussion within CPCE .....	3
6	3. The Aim and the Structure of the present Document .....	4
7	4. Common Understanding and Limits of Diversity within CPCE .....	5
8	4.1. The Foundation, the Shape and the Mission of the Church .....	5
9	4.2. Limits of Diversity .....	5
10	5. The Hermeneutical Foundations for the Doctrinal Conversation .....	6
11	5.1. Unity in Reconciled Diversity .....	6
12	5.2. Criteria for the Protestant Understanding of Ministry, Ordination and Episkopé .....	6
13	II. STATEMENT .....	9
14	1. The Mission of the Church .....	9
15	2. Ministry in the Church .....	10
16	2.1. The Ministry of the Whole People of God and the Order of Ministries .....	10
17	2.2. The Ministry of Word and Sacraments (ministerium verbi) .....	10
18	2.3. Diverse Structures of Ministries in the Churches .....	12
19	2.4. Access to the Ministries .....	14
20	3. Ordination and the Ministry of Word and Sacraments .....	15
21	3.1. The Meaning of Ordination .....	15
22	3.2. Differences in Terminology and Practice of Ordination .....	16
23	4. Ministry and Exercise of Episkopé .....	17
24	4.1. Meaning and Function of Episkopé .....	17
25	4.2. Episkopé as Shared Responsibility in the Church .....	18
26	III. RECOMMENDATIONS .....	20
27	Abbreviations of basic sources .....	21

28



Gemeinschaft Evangelischer Kirchen in Europa (GEKE)  
Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE)  
Communion d'Eglises Protestantes en Europe (CEPE)

## **Ministry – Ordination – Episkopé**

Provisional result of a doctrinal discussion of the  
Community of Protestant Churches in Europe

*Released from the Council of the CPCE on June 8th 2010  
for further comments and discussion*

# I. INTRODUCTION

1. The understanding of ministry and ordination, combined with the question of episkopé, is one of the core issues in ecumenical conversations. There is an urgent need for further work on this topic, not only to deepen church fellowship within the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE), but also in connection with its dialogues with other churches and confessions, above all with those Lutheran churches which so far have not signed the Leuenberg Agreement, and with the Anglican Communion, the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox churches.

## 1. *The Problem*

2. In 1994, the Fourth General Assembly of the Leuenberg Church Fellowship (LCF, now CPCE) adopted the document "The Church of Jesus Christ" (CJC) which for the first time formulated a common basic understanding of the church and its unity among the Protestant churches. Investigating the question of ministry and ministries in the church (Chapter I:2.5), the document had to state that no consensus has yet been reached among the churches of the LCF, but that the Fellowship is "on the way towards consensus". The so-called Tampere Theses are quoted as "a helpful stimulus for further work on a shared contribution [...] in ecumenical conversation" (p. 97). CJC draws the following consequences from them: "These important theses document both the fundamental consensus and the different interpretations concerning the ministry as well as the diversity of forms in shaping the ministry. It is, however, decisive that these differences do not call church fellowship in word and sacrament into question, since these *differences* do not refer to the *foundation* but to the *shape of the church*" (p. 99).

3. Among other things, conflicts over the ordination of women and of homosexuals in various member churches show that there is need for further conversation within CPCE. The understanding of ordination varies among Protestant churches. The discussion which the Bishops' Conference of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany (VELKD) sparked off with its recent papers on ordination and commissioning<sup>1</sup> makes clear how important further work is on this topic. This is all the more true, as the "further development of the structural and legal shape" for the sake of "strengthening commitment" is on the agenda of CPCE.<sup>2</sup>

4. In addition to the need for internal clarification, the ecumenical context also challenges the Protestant churches of Europe to articulate jointly the basic convictions which unite them over the question of ministry and episkopé and to put these convictions forward confidently. In this connection they ought to pay special attention to the new models of ecclesial communion between Anglican churches and churches of CPCE, such as the Meissen, Porvoo and Reuilly Declarations.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Allgemeines Priestertum, Ordination und Beauftragung nach evangelischem Verständnis* ('The Protestant Understanding of Universal Priesthood, Ordination and Commissioning'), Texte aus der VELKD 130/2004, and „*Ordnungsgemäß berufen*“. Eine Empfehlung der Bischofskonferenz der VELKD zur Berufung zu Wortverkündigung und Sakramentsverwaltung nach evangelischem Verständnis ('Orderly called. A Recommendation of the Bishops' Conference of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany regarding the Protestant Understanding of Proclamation of the Word and Administration of the Sacraments'), Texte aus der VELKD 136/2006.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Freedom is binding*. Final Report of the 6th General Assembly of CPCE 2006, no. 4.1 (German original in: *Gemeinschaft gestalten – Evangelisches Profil in Europa. Texte der 6. Vollversammlung der Gemeinschaft Evangelischer Kirchen in Europa - Leuenberger Kirchengemeinschaft - in Budapest, 12.-18. September 2006*, ed. W. Hüffmeier, M. Friedrich, Frankfurt am Main 2007, p. 317).

1    **2.    *The State of the Discussion within CPCE***

2    5.    The *Leuvenberg Agreement* identified the question of ministry and ordination among  
3 the differences of doctrine “which while they do not have divisive force still persist within  
4 and between the participating churches” (LA 39).

5    6.    The *Neuendettelsau Theses* on the consensus about the question of “Ministry and Or-  
6 dination” (1982/1986) made the first step in further work. Building on the basic doctrines of  
7 the Lutheran and the Calvinist Reformation, they identified a wide range of agreement among  
8 the Protestant churches regarding the understanding and the structure of ministries, the under-  
9 standing and practice of ordination and also the ‘service of episkopé’ (cf. the quotes below,  
10 nos. 39, 53, 56 and fn. 26 and 61). But the statements were rather general, and the specific  
11 significance of this agreement is not always clear. The 4<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the LCF in  
12 1987 accepted the Neuendettelsau Theses as “a basic guideline for future ecumenical conver-  
13 sations”.

14    7.    The *Tampere Theses* (1986), which were also received by the General Assembly in  
15 1987 and partially incorporated into the document “The Church of Jesus Christ”,<sup>3</sup> were a fur-  
16 ther step. In the first thesis, with reference to Barmen III and CA V, it is stated that “a minist-  
17 ry pertaining to word and sacrament, the *ministerium verbi* [...] belongs to the being of the  
18 church”, but that “the whole congregation and not just the ordained ministry have the respon-  
19 sibility for the proclamation of the word and for the right use of the sacraments” (p. 114).

20    8.    The second thesis deals with the connection between the general priesthood and the  
21 ordained ministry. But, amongst other things, it does not decide if the ordained ministry is to  
22 be derived directly from the priesthood of all believers or if it has a further root in a special  
23 commission of Christ. Here there is a need for clarification, since this is also a matter of con-  
24 troversy in scholarly theological discussions.

25    9.    Regarding the “service of leadership” (episkopé), the third Tampere thesis states “that  
26 the leadership of the congregation is also exercised through other ‘ministries’ [*Dienste*] and  
27 does not only fall to the ordained ministry” (p. 115). Notwithstanding the remaining differ-  
28 ences, the LCF churches “are nevertheless agreed that such differences in church structure do  
29 not impede a ‘church fellowship’ in the sense of pulpit and table fellowship. The reciprocal  
30 acknowledgement of ministry and ordination is not impeded so long as the question of church  
31 leadership remains subordinate to the sovereignty of the word” (p. 116). Even if it is recog-  
32 nised that in ecumenical dialogue the Protestant churches can and should “learn from other,  
33 non-Reformation churches”, “no single historically-derived form of church leadership and  
34 ministerial structure should or can be laid down as a prior condition for fellowship and for  
35 mutual recognition” (p. 99).

36    10.   The 1994 study “*The Church of Jesus Christ*” summarised the fundamental agree-  
37 ment between the LCF churches in the following way:

- 38       1. “that all Christians participate through faith and baptism in the offices of Christ as prophet,  
39       priest and king and all are called to witness and to hand on the gospel and to intercede before  
40       God for one another (priesthood of all believers)”;
- 41       2. “that the ministry of the public proclamation of the gospel and of the administration of the sac-  
42       raments is fundamental and necessary for the church. Where the church exists it needs an ‘or-  
43       dered ministry’ of the public proclamation of the gospel and of the administration of the sacra-  
44       ments. There is diversity in the ways in which this ministry is perceived and shaped. This diver-  
45       sity is shaped by historical experiences and determined by the different interpretations of the

---

<sup>3</sup> Full text in: *Sacraments, Ministry, Ordination*, pp. 113-121; Theses 1-3 in CJC, pp. 97-99.

1 task of the ministry. We can accept the different forms of the ministries in our churches as spiri-  
2 tual wealth and as a gift of God. In this sense the historical episcopate and the structured minis-  
3 try in a synodical and presbyteral form of church order can both be appreciated as serving the  
4 unity of the church. The criterion for perceiving ministries and services is the fundamental  
5 commission of the church”<sup>4</sup>;

6 3. “that the ministry of public proclamation is conferred through ordination (the ‘ordained minis-  
7 try’ in the terminology of the Lima documents). It is rooted in a special commission of Christ  
8 but it is always dependent on the priesthood of all believers (Neuendettelsau-Theses 3 A).<sup>5</sup> The  
9 Word of God constitutes this ministry which serves the justification of the sinner. It has a serv-  
10 ing function for Word and faith”;

11 4. “that the expression ‘ordered ministry’ refers to the totality of all ministries and services in the  
12 church in the sense of thesis 3 of the Tampere Theses. The ministry conferred [!] through ordina-  
13 tion is part of this ministry” (pp. 99-100).

14 11. In 1998, the Executive Committee of the Leuenberg Church Fellowship published a  
15 statement about the recent declarations between Anglican churches and the EKD or the Nor-  
16 dic and Baltic Lutheran churches.<sup>6</sup> While appreciating what is aimed at and gained in these  
17 documents, it held fast to the Leuenberg model as “a model of church unity which is based on  
18 the Reformation understanding of the unity of the Church as a community of churches” (no.  
19 2.3). Thus, the stimuli for further talks about the apostolic succession are received rather re-  
20 luctantly (cf. the quote in Report, fn. 53). In contrast, the document “The Shape and Shaping  
21 of Protestant Churches in a Changing Europe”, received by the CPCE Assembly 2006, ex-  
22 presses itself in a more open way: “The common emphasis on *episkope* for the unity and lead-  
23 ership of the church is important for a closer relationship between the churches of the Porvoo  
24 Agreement and the Leuenberg Agreement, even if there are different views and shapes of  
25 *episkope*.”<sup>7</sup>

### 26 3. *The Aim and the Structure of the present Document*

27 12. The document presented here has the aim of deepening and developing further the  
28 basic consensus formulated in the earlier CPCE documents. This is especially true of the  
29 “Statement” (part II) which presents a common position of the Protestant churches on minis-  
30 try, ordination and episkopé. Since a number of differences still remain, the “Report” which  
31 accompanies the document will analyse some of the problems, taking note of the most recent  
32 developments and the processes of reform which are now taking place in the Protestant  
33 churches of Europe in reaction to far-reaching demographic changes and a new religious  
34 situation. The first part of the “Report” is an account of the historical development of the un-  
35 derstanding and shaping of ministry/ministries. A number of recommendations (part III), re-

---

<sup>4</sup> The English translation of CJC is here somewhat misleading. The original German text (p. 34) is rendered better as: The mission of the church is the criterion for practicing and shaping the ministries and services in the church.

<sup>5</sup> Again, the translation is misleading. The German text states that the ministry of word and sacraments is “angewiesen auf” the general priesthood, which rather means that it needs the general priesthood. The reference is strange as well. Tampere Theses 2 is much more relevant than Neuendettelsau Theses 3.A.

<sup>6</sup> „Leuenberg – Meissen – Porvoo. Models of Church Unity from the perspective of the Leuenberg Agreement“ (German original in: *Versöhnte Verschiedenheit – der Auftrag der evangelischen Kirchen in Europa. Texte der 5. Vollversammlung der Leuenberger Kirchengemeinschaft in Belfast, 19.-25. Juni 2001*, ed. W. Hüffmeier, Ch.-R. Müller, Frankfurt am Main 2003, pp. 258-267), for download in <http://www.leuenberg.eu/daten/File/Upload/doc-7057-1.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> No. 2.5, for download in: <http://www.leuenberg.eu/daten/File/Upload/doc-7163-2.pdf> (German original in: *Gemeinschaft gestalten* [fn. 2], pp. 43-75, here p. 60).

1 sulting from the most basic findings of the work, conclude the document. (These will be re-  
2 worked in the revision to be done on the basis of the comments eventually received from the  
3 churches of CPCE.)

#### 4 **4. Common Understanding and Limits of Diversity within CPCE**

##### 5 **4.1. The Foundation, the Shape and the Mission of the Church**

6 13. The distinction between the foundation, the shape and the mission of the church,  
7 originating in Reformation theology, is an essential presupposition of the “Leuenberg model”.  
8 The document “The Church of Jesus Christ” explains: “The *foundation* of the church is God’s  
9 action to save humankind first in the people of Israel, then in Jesus Christ. In this fundamental  
10 action God himself is the subject, and consequently the church is an object of faith. Since the  
11 church is a community of believers the *shape* of the church has taken various historical forms.  
12 The one church of faith (singular) is present in a hidden manner in churches (plural) shaped in  
13 different ways. The *mission* of the church is its task to witness before all humankind to the  
14 gospel of the coming of the Kingdom of God in word and action. In order to achieve unity of  
15 the church in the diversity of these shapes it is sufficient ‘that the Gospel be preached in con-  
16 formity with a pure understanding of it and that the sacraments be administered in accordance  
17 with the divine Word’ (Augsburg Confession VII).”<sup>8</sup>

18 14. According to Protestant understanding, the church is created and sustained by the  
19 word of God. It is *creatura Evangelii* or *creatura verbi divini*. Ministry, ordination and  
20 episkopé are indispensable; however, they do not form the foundation but belong to the shape  
21 of the church. However, they must be shaped in such a way so that they correspond to the  
22 foundation and the mission of the church. Also, ministry, ordination and episkopé do not form  
23 the foundation of the unity for the church; instead they serve it by performing their specific  
24 tasks in the framework of the proclamation of the gospel in word and sacrament. Neither the  
25 ministry of word and sacraments nor the various forms of episkopé by themselves or in them-  
26 selves guarantee the true being of the church, but they serve the proclamation of the word of  
27 God.

##### 28 **4.2. Limits of Diversity**

29 15. According to “The Church of Jesus Christ”, existing differences in the understanding  
30 of ministry and in the diverse shapes of ministry and service of episkopé “do not refer to the  
31 *foundation* but to the *shape of the church*” (see above no. 2). Along the lines of the Tampere  
32 Theses, differences in the structure of the church and its government are not necessarily an  
33 obstacle to church fellowship or to the reciprocal recognition of ministry and ordination, as  
34 long as the question of church governance remains subordinate to the sovereignty of the gos-  
35 pel.<sup>9</sup>

36 16. However, the diversity of structures and ministries of the church and their specific  
37 shaping is not without limit. Consequently, a question arises about the criteria for the limits to  
38 diversity and their theological foundation. The member churches of CPCE have to examine  
39 self-critically where any hard-line practice, e.g. the refusal to ordain women, represents an  
40 obstacle to church fellowship or has the potential to damage it. An amicable conversation  
41 needs to take place to explore how such obstacles and damage might be removed, with the  
42 aim of deepening church fellowship.

---

<sup>8</sup> CJC, p. 85 (Introduction 1.4).

<sup>9</sup> Tampere Theses 3; cf. the quotes above, no. 9.



## 1    **5.    *The Hermeneutical Foundations for the Doctrinal Conversation***

### 2    **5.1.    *Unity in Reconciled Diversity***

3    17.    A systematic Protestant exposition on ministry, ordination and episkopé cannot limit  
4    itself to restating the confessional writings of the Reformation or to the historical beginnings  
5    of a Protestant doctrine of ministry. The models found in the Scriptures and in confessional  
6    writings on the subject of church order are not binding for present-day church constitutions.  
7    There have been many diverse developments in the Protestant ordering of ministries from the  
8    time of the Reformation to the present day (cf. Report ch. 1). The dialectic between church  
9    tradition and present day requirements involves hermeneutical processes that are open and  
10   communal in the search for the most beneficial structures in every generation. Immutable  
11   ministerial structures would be detrimental to the mission of the church. However, there has  
12   been a considerable continuity in the understanding and ordering of ministries through the  
13   centuries. Functional equivalents and parallels can also be discovered in differing structures  
14   and terminologies. The primary aim of hermeneutic efforts is not to unify structures and des-  
15   ignations for ministry, but to come to a deeper ecumenical understanding of the spiritual reali-  
16   ties which are held in common, and to identify the limits of diversity (see above nos. 15-16).

17   18.    The Leuenberg Agreement bears witness to the unity given in Christ, which allows the  
18   signatory churches to live in reconciled diversity and to grow in unity and shared mission in  
19   the world. It should be demonstrated that fundamental agreement in the understanding of min-  
20   istry, ordination and episkopé is not only asserted, but is also based on a sure theological  
21   foundation. An ecumenical hermeneutics of reconciled diversity founded in God as the full-  
22   ness of life can contribute towards deepening the common understanding of ministry, ordina-  
23   tion and episkopé, as it has done already among Protestant churches. This can in turn contrib-  
24   ute to the ecumenical dialogues with other churches and the broader search for visible unity  
25   within the ecumenical movement. An important contribution from the Protestant churches in  
26   this area is the conviction that the visible unity of the church worldwide will be a differenti-  
27   ated unity. This is also true for the structures of ministry. The hermeneutic task does not,  
28   therefore, aim at comprehensive ecclesial uniformity, but at an overcoming of divisive differ-  
29   ences, thereby contributing towards greater visibility in church unity.

30   19.    A hermeneutics of reconciled diversity is not of course sufficient in itself to overcome  
31   church divisions which are evident in an ecumenical context, particularly over the question of  
32   ministries. Church divisions are not simply the result of historical developments but are also  
33   the consequence of decisions taken by the churches and their leadership. It is an open question  
34   whether or not the differences in the understanding of church and ministry (which still exist  
35   between the churches of CPCE and other churches) are insuperable. A dynamic view of con-  
36   fessional identity reckons with the activity of the Holy Spirit, and that also means accepting  
37   the historical mutability of identities.

### 38   **5.2.    *Criteria for the Protestant Understanding of Ministry, Ordination and Episkopé***

39   20.    Various denominational and confessional traditions and experiences encounter each  
40   other in the conversation among Protestant churches about ministry, ordination and episkopé.  
41   These different traditions and experiences cannot easily be integrated. Therefore it is helpful  
42   to distinguish between the hermeneutic *criteria* and the *sources* from which the different un-  
43   derstandings of ministry are drawn. Scripture, tradition, reason and experience are sources  
44   from which the different forms of ministry, ordination and episkopé (along with their theo-  
45   logical foundations) arise. Christian life has been confronted throughout history with the ten-  
46   sion between the claim of Scripture and of present-day reality. For that reason the hermeneu-

1 tic criteria are conformity with Scripture and with reality. In the Lutheran tradition the criteria  
2 also include conformity with the confession, but this is connected with conformity with Scrip-  
3 ture.<sup>10</sup>

4 21. Tradition, as one of the sources of Protestant theology includes not only the confes-  
5 sional writings of the Reformation and Protestant confessions from a later time, but also pre-  
6 Reformation traditions and liturgy. It embraces the various orders for ordination, vocation,  
7 commissioning or appointment (installation) to an office of leadership in the church, along  
8 with ecumenical texts and commitments, especially earlier documents of CPCE.

#### 9 5.2.1. *The Criterion of Conformity with Scripture*

10 22. The criterion of conformity with Scripture is not to be confused with a formalistic use  
11 of the Bible, for which a strict identification of the canonical biblical text with the Word of  
12 God is fundamental. A theological and hermeneutic distinction needs to be made between  
13 Scripture and Word of God. The biblical writings are the written deposit of the voice of God,  
14 formulated and witnessed by human beings. These Scriptures are called 'holy' because, and in  
15 so far as (in the view of Christian believers), they foundationally and sufficiently bear witness  
16 to the living Word of God, which is Jesus Christ. It is the work of God's Spirit that this wit-  
17 ness of the Holy Scripture is given new life, as the Word is publicly proclaimed and where  
18 people read, meditate and interpret Scripture for one another and celebrate the sacraments.  
19 Thus the Word of God, attested in Holy Scripture (that God has spoken in history in a living  
20 and saving way), becomes a living reality in the present.

21 23. Only in the hermeneutic circle between Scripture and situation does the significance of  
22 the so-called Reformation principle of Scripture disclose itself. It is not focused on the formal  
23 priority of the Bible over against church tradition or other sources of theological knowledge,  
24 but on the prior place of the gospel as the message of Jesus Christ, the salvation of the world.  
25 The Reformers expressed the right understanding of this in the doctrine of justification (cf.  
26 LA 7 and 8). The authority of Scripture is grounded in and also limited by the gospel, which  
27 bears witness to the saving action of God. Time and again, Scripture needs to be interpreted  
28 by the church and its confessions, through theological scholarship and through the Bible read-  
29 ing of individual Christians.

30 24. The criterion of evangelical, Protestant, theology (i.e. theology in accordance with the  
31 gospel) is how far the present church life and faith's existence is determined by Scripture ap-  
32 plied to the time and not, say, conversely that the interpretation of Scripture is determined by  
33 the general religious or political spirit of the time. That also applies in particular to the under-  
34 standing of ministry, ordination and episkopé.

#### 35 5.2.2. *The Criterion of Conformity with Reality*

36 25. In Scripture, Christians encounter experiences of people with God. In their own life  
37 they gain experiences with reality which they correlate to the experiences of people in Scrip-  
38 ture. The criterion of conformity with reality relates to human experience in various ways.  
39 The churches of CPCE have gained different experiences throughout the history which have  
40 found expression in their different traditions and confessions. Theological insights and devel-  
41 opments and the different forms of the church and its ministries are embedded in different  
42 socio-cultural and political contexts. Moreover, the shaping of church structures and minis-  
43 tries in history and the present has to be directed towards the practical possibilities given for

---

<sup>10</sup> A much more detailed consideration of the hermeneutics of Scripture and Confessions, including the relation between Scripture and tradition, is given in the doctrinal study "Scripture, Confession, Church" which was submitted to the Churches of CPCE late in 2009.

1 the witness and service of the church in a particular historical situation. Here, however, a dis-  
2 tinction must always be made between facticity and validity. The validity of a current state  
3 cannot be deduced from the mere fact that something exists or does not exist. Conformity  
4 with reality does not mean unquestioning adaptation to existing circumstances, though these  
5 can certainly be changed and have to be shaped by one's own responsibility.

6 26. The Tampere Theses already say: "The outer shape of the congregation and its ser-  
7 vices have always been characterized to a certain extent by the surrounding society. This was  
8 also the case with the early Church. The Church must always maintain the freedom to resist  
9 society for the sake of her service to the word. It is of particular importance to see to it that  
10 neither an inherited form of the church's ministry, which mirrors a bygone social structure,  
11 nor an uncritical adaptation to the surrounding society become the standard for the structure  
12 and the exercise of the functions of the church's ministry" (Thesis 6).

13 27. The shape of the church and its ministries is to be understood as a constant task of  
14 shaping for which all members of the church bear responsibility in the sense of the priesthood  
15 of all believers. But the foundation of the church and its mission (see above, no. 13) are the  
16 criteria for the actual shaping of church structures and ministries. On this basis, the shape of  
17 the church has to be determined time and again within a hermeneutical circle. This circle  
18 brings together the interpretation of Scripture with a true and honest acceptance of reality.  
19 (This may include the recognition that our confessions serve as guiding principles in the in-  
20 terpretation of Scripture).

21

## II. STATEMENT

### *1. The Mission of the Church*

28. All churches of CPCE have a common understanding of the mission of the church: “The church has been called to be an instrument of God for the actualisation of God’s universal will to salvation. It will fulfil this task if it remains in Christ, the infallible sole instrument of salvation. The certainty that this promise of God is reliable liberates and enables Christians and churches to witness to the world and for the world”.<sup>11</sup> With the Meissen and the Reuilly Common Statement, churches within and beyond CPCE can assert: “The Church, the body of Christ, must always be seen in this perspective as instrumental to God’s ultimate purpose. The Church exists for the glory of God, and to serve, in obedience to the mission of Christ, the reconciliation of humankind and of all creation.”<sup>12</sup>

29. According to the concept of God’s mission to the world (*missio Dei*), the church follows God’s movement out towards creation, in love through the Son, through the transforming power of the Spirit – contributing to the building up of the Kingdom of God. All Christians take part in the mission of the church.

30. In defining the realisation of church fellowship, the Leuenberg Agreement saw *witness and service* as essential to the mission of the church. Both witness and service point the church to the whole of humankind and have an individual as well as a social dimension. “Being the service of love, it [i.e. the common service] turns to man in his distress and seeks to remove the causes of that distress. The struggle for justice and peace in the world increasingly demands of the churches the acceptance of a common responsibility” (LA 36). “It is in keeping with the Holy Spirit’s nature for it [i.e. the church of Jesus Christ] to communicate in convincing fashion God’s love for people in their social contexts and in their concrete life-situations.”<sup>13</sup>

31. Consequently, all issues connected with ministry, ordination and episkopé in our churches must be organised in order to empower the churches for their common witness and service to the whole of humankind. This will imply that the ministry of the church will need to face up to the challenges of contemporary society, such as gender justice, the rights of minorities and the integrity of creation as well as the marginalisation of faith and church.

32. As it is the matter of a *common* bearing and performing of witness and services, the member churches of CPCE must do all in their power to deepen the community which already exists between them, but also constantly seek links and connections with other churches that are not in full fellowship with CPCE.

33. It is a basic insight of the Reformation that God’s mission is fulfilled through God’s word. The church is characterised as a creature of the word (*creatura verbi*). This implies that structures in the church should ensure that decisions are made “*sine vi, sed verbo*” (not with external force, but through the power of the word) as far as possible.

---

<sup>11</sup> CJC, p. 103 (I.3.2).

<sup>12</sup> Meissen no. 3 = Reuilly no. 18. Nearly the same formulations also in the Porvoo Common Statement no. 18.

<sup>13</sup> *Evangelising: Protestant Perspectives for the Churches in Europe*, Vienna 2007, p. 11 (no. 2.1).

## 1 2. *Ministry in the Church*

### 2 2.1. *The Ministry of the Whole People of God and the Order of Ministries*

3 34. There is broad agreement among Christian churches that the whole People of God  
4 participate in God's mission. All baptised Christians are called to a life of witness and ser-  
5 vice.<sup>14</sup> With reference to 1 Peter 2:9, ecumenical documents often describe this calling as par-  
6 ticipation in a "royal priesthood".<sup>15</sup> All members of the body of Christ have received certain  
7 complementary gifts (*charismata*) for their service.<sup>16</sup>

8 35. The ministries in the church are rooted in the ministry of Christ. The church – gath-  
9 ered under the word and called to service – receives in its midst various charisms. The minis-  
10 tries are renewed out of these charisms, and the charisms in turn are sustained by the minis-  
11 tries.<sup>17</sup> It is God's will that certain persons with special functions "equip the saints for the  
12 work of ministry" and that this building up of the church is carried on in an orderly way (cf.  
13 Eph. 4:11-12; 1. Cor. 14:12, 26, 40). Consequently an order of ministries arises under the  
14 guidance of the Gospel and the Holy Spirit.<sup>18</sup>

15 36. There are certain ministries which are indispensable for the life and order of the  
16 church as will be shown further: These are the ministry of word and sacraments, the ministry  
17 of *diakonia* and the ministry of episkopé. In addition there are in the churches patterns of  
18 other services and ministries that enrich the church's life.

### 19 2.2. *The Ministry of Word and Sacraments (ministerium verbi)*

20 37. The first of these indispensable ministries is the ministry of word and sacraments  
21 which is highlighted in all the churches of CPCE.<sup>19</sup> This is a consensus which is ecumenically  
22 significant both within and beyond CPCE. The Confessio Augustana (CA V and XXVIII)  
23 speaks of the ministry of teaching the gospel and administering the Sacraments (*ministerium*  
24 *docendi evangelii et porrigendi sacramenta*), which is instituted in order that we may obtain  
25 faith in God's justifying grace (CA IV).<sup>20</sup> The significance of this particular ministry has also  
26 been highlighted by the Confessio Helvetica Posterior (XVIII), which states that God has al-  
27 ways used ministers in the service of the church and will continue to use them. Their main  
28 duties are the teaching of the gospel of Christ and the proper administration of the sacraments.  
29 Accordingly, Tampere Thesis 1 states: "In conformity with Christ's institution there is a min-

---

<sup>14</sup> "The proclamation of the gospel and the offer of saving fellowship are entrusted to the congregation as a whole and to its members who through baptism are called to witness Christ and to serve each other and the world and who through faith have a share in Christ's priestly office of intercession" (Tampere Theses 2).

<sup>15</sup> Cf. BEM, Ministry, no.17; *Nature and Mission of the Church*, nos. 19, 84; *God's Reign and our Unity*, no. 60 (*Growth in Agreement II*, p. 131). Cf. also Second Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium*, no. 10. – The terminological and theological problems with this concept are discussed in the Report, nos. 29 seq.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. BEM, Ministry, nos. 5, 32; *Nature and Mission of the Church*, no. 83.

<sup>17</sup> See 1. Cor. 12+13; Röm 12:1-8; 1Tim 4:14; 2.Tim 1:6. Cf. Report, nos. 2-3.

<sup>18</sup> The term "order of ministries", introduced by the "The Church of Jesus Christ" (cf. Report, fn. 14), does not mean a divinely instituted and normative structure such as the "threefold ministry" according to Roman Catholic and Orthodox understanding (cf. Report, nos. 42, 50), but only a changeable order which secures that the three basic ministries are fulfilled.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Neuendettelsau Theses I.3 C.

<sup>20</sup> We leave aside the dispute within Lutheranism as to whether the "*ministerium*" (German: "Predigtamt") according to CA V is a service of preaching in the church which pertains to all Christians (thus VELKD, *Ordnungsgemäss berufen*, ch. 2, n. 11; ch. 3.4), or whether it is to be identified with the ministry of *public* preaching and the administration of the sacraments according to CA XIV (thus Lund Statement, no.18). In any case, the particular ministry of word and sacraments is highlighted in Lutheranism.

1 istry pertaining to word and sacrament, the *ministerium verbi* (Augsburg Confession V),  
2 which ‘proclaims the gospel and dispenses the sacraments’ [...] The churches from both tradi-  
3 tions<sup>21</sup> which have signed or are participating in the Leuenberg Agreement concur that the  
4 ‘ordained ministry’<sup>22</sup> belongs to the being of the church”.

5 38. The particularity of the ministry of word and sacraments is not a matter of ranking  
6 within the order of ministries or among the wider services in the church. It lies in the specific  
7 purpose to which this ministry is assigned within the church as a collective body created by  
8 the gospel (*creatura verbi*). The church is entirely dependent on God’s grace, which is con-  
9 veyed specifically by the proclamation of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments.  
10 In the Reformation view these two functions represent together the necessary, divinely insti-  
11 tuted, marks of the true church (*notae ecclesiae*).<sup>23</sup>

12 39. The community of believers is given responsibility, in a wide sense, for maintaining  
13 proclamation, baptism and Holy Communion as means of grace in the church.<sup>24</sup> However, the  
14 reference to the priesthood of the baptised does not aim to reduce the importance of the par-  
15 ticular ministry of word and sacraments in the regular life of the church. According to the  
16 Lutheran confessions, only ordained ministers should be allowed to carry out the “public”  
17 service of the means of grace (cf. CA XIV). The Reformed Reformation did not use this cate-  
18 gory of publicity, but ensured as well that the ministry of word and sacraments was formally  
19 maintained. Only under exceptional circumstances, such as in times of persecution, non-  
20 ordained believers may rightly be called to serve as preachers. In personal counselling any  
21 Christian has the authority to state God’s forgiveness to a person who shows repentance. “The  
22 particular ministry [...] consists in the public proclamation of the word and in the dispensation  
23 of the sacraments before the congregation and yet within the congregation, who exercise their  
24 functions of priesthood of all believers in prayer, personal witness and service.”<sup>25</sup>

25 40. The ministers of word and sacraments have to exercise their ministry in communion  
26 with the worldwide Christian church on the basis of a clear calling (*vocatio interna* as well as  
27 *vocatio externa*). This means that they should perform their service on the basis of a recog-  
28 nised mandate. This mandate is given through ordination according to the order of each  
29 church. It does not, however, give ordained ministers a humanly based authority over the con-  
30 gregation. Their authority for this is derived from God’s word proclaimed through the means  
31 of grace.<sup>26</sup> Rather, as it is the ordained ministers’ task to “confront and comfort the congrega-  
32 tion with the word of God”<sup>27</sup>, they have a prophetic ministry.

33 41. The term “ministry of word and sacraments” denotes that the preaching of the word  
34 and the administration of the sacraments cannot be separated from each other. This is also

---

<sup>21</sup> When the Tampere Theses were formulated, only the Lutheran and the Reformed traditions belonged to the CPCE. But the statement is also valid for the Methodist tradition.

<sup>22</sup> In using this term, the Tampere Theses follow the use suggested by the Lima document. Irrespective of the difficulty of this term, the statement is in any case valid for the ministry of word and sacraments, which is conferred by ordination in all churches of CPCE.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. CA VII; Genevan Confession 1536, no. 18; Anglican Thirty-Nine Articles, Art. 19; John Wesley, Methodist Articles of Faith, Art. 13; LA 2.

<sup>24</sup> As stated by Tampere Thesis 1, “the whole congregation and not just the ordained ministry have the responsibility for the proclamation of the word and for the right use of the sacraments. The ordained ministry in itself alone does not guarantee the true being of the church but remains subordinate to the word of God.” (cf. Neuendettelsau Theses I.3.C).

<sup>25</sup> Neuendettelsau Theses I.3.C.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Neuendettelsau Theses I.3.C: “– The word constitutes the ministry, not vice versa. – The ministry serves word and faith. – It is there to serve the justification of sinners, not the justification of the church nor the status quo. – The ministry is connected with the apostolic continuity and unity of the church, its freedom and its love.”

<sup>27</sup> Tampere Theses 2.

1 presupposed in the traditional terminology of *ministerium verbi*. Proclamation and sacraments  
2 are in the view of the Reformation the two forms of the gospel (*verbum audibile* and *verbum*  
3 *visibile*) by which the church is constituted.<sup>28</sup> The preaching of God's word necessarily leads  
4 to the building up of a community that is served by the sacraments. And such a community  
5 cannot exist without being guided and judged by God's word.

### 6 2.3. *Diverse Structures of Ministries in the Churches*

7 42. Christian churches are generally agreed that the church has been guided through its  
8 history by the Holy Spirit. In the view of Protestant churches this has not happened in such a  
9 way that any current structure of ministry can be regarded as unchangeable. And yet, the pat-  
10 terns of ministry are not an arbitrary matter. The shape and order of the church must always  
11 be measured against the biblical witness and the theological understanding of the church and  
12 its mission.<sup>29</sup>

13 43. As the churches of CPCE seek "to promote the ecumenical fellowship of all Christian  
14 churches" (LA 46), they are challenged by existing differences regarding their ministries. In  
15 order to realise church fellowship in witness and service (LA 35-36), they will strive towards  
16 the greatest possible correspondence among each other and with other traditions in their un-  
17 derstanding and patterns of ministry.

18 44. A particular ecumenical issue is how the ministry of word and sacraments is under-  
19 stood and ordered in its relation to other services. Whereas the existence of a ministry serving  
20 word and sacraments is not an issue of choice for the churches, this ministry may be struc-  
21 tured and exercised in diverse forms. There is broad agreement that no uniform church order  
22 and structure of ministry can be compellingly derived from the earliest Christian tradition.<sup>30</sup>  
23 In general, Protestant churches maintain the legitimacy of diversity in questions of church  
24 order.

25 45. In the Protestant churches the ministry of word and sacraments has been traditionally  
26 exercised by full-time parish / circuit ministers. This has had, and still retains, its value in se-  
27 curing ministers who are well trained for their task and can apply themselves fully to their  
28 task. But traditional, and historically contingent forms of parish ministry ("Pfarramt") are not  
29 the only possible forms of securing the divinely instituted ministry of word and sacraments.  
30 This ministry can be exercised in different terms of employment and scopes of functions.

31 46. Through time, increasingly during the last decades, the churches developed particular  
32 forms of ministry in order to include persons (mostly on a part-time basis) in the responsibil-  
33 ity of preaching the gospel. This has often solved urgent needs and enriched the life of the  
34 church. However it has also raised the question of how to define their service with reference  
35 to the ministry of word and sacraments.<sup>31</sup> In this document, neither the whole range of practi-  
36 cal issues (e.g. designations and special tasks of the offices, payment etc.) nor the question of

---

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Tampere Theses 4: "The service of the word embraces also the service of the sacraments. The sacraments make visible the same gospel through which, as in the preaching of the living word of God, Christ himself is present in the church and the world. In preaching the word and administering the sacraments which together constitute the ministry, the reality of the Church as Christ's body is renewed, her shared life fortified and her apostolic mission perceived." Cf. also Lund Statement, no. 22.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. CJC, ch. I.2.5.4 (p. 101).

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Neuendettelsau Theses I.2; *Nature and Mission of the Church*, no. 87. Further explanation is given in the Report nos. 2-16.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. the discussion sparked off by the VELKD (fn. 1).

1 the adequate training can be covered.<sup>32</sup> Of special importance, however, is the issue of ordina-  
2 tion / commissioning for these ministries (see Report, ch. 2.5).

3 47. No ministerial structure can be directly derived from the New Testament. Even “the  
4 threefold ministry of bishop, presbyter and deacon”, recommended by BEM “as an expression  
5 of the unity we seek and also as a means for achieving it” (no. 22) has undergone various his-  
6 torical changes.<sup>33</sup> Therefore the Protestant churches consider that there can be legitimate di-  
7 versity among the churches on this issue. The Calvinist Reformation introduced a fourfold  
8 structure of ministry (pastors, teachers, elders and deacons) which is still valid in many Re-  
9 formed churches in a modified form.<sup>34</sup> The Nordic and Baltic Lutheran churches, which (ex-  
10 cept for Latvia) have joined the Porvoo Communion, have moved towards a positive appraisal  
11 of the threefold ministry, affirming the statement of BEM (Ministry 22) that “the threefold  
12 ministry of bishop, presbyter and deacon may serve today as an expression of the unity we  
13 seek and also as a means for achieving it”. Even if the majority of these churches have not  
14 stated for themselves a threefold ministry, they consider the services of bishop, pastor and  
15 deacon as central, or indispensable, ministries in the church.

16 48. The Nordic Lutheran churches have maintained and strengthened the diaconal minis-  
17 try. Also the United Methodist Church has introduced an “order of deacons” parallel to the  
18 “order of elders” (i.e. ministers of word and sacraments). Likewise, the Methodist Church in  
19 Britain ordains both deacons and presbyters. But in all these Protestant churches that have an  
20 ordained ministry of deacons, these generally do not administer the sacraments, except in spe-  
21 cial diaconal contexts, such as communion to the sick. They may, however, play a prominent  
22 assisting role in the church’s worship life. In Central and Eastern Europe, by contrast, deacons  
23 and deaconesses are generally not ordained, and their tasks refer more to social care, youth  
24 work and work for older people. But sometimes they are commissioned to minister and even  
25 to administer the sacraments.

26 49. This issue raises other questions among the Protestant churches regarding the relation  
27 of ordination to certain ministries, and the understanding of the unity of the order of minis-  
28 tries. This diversity does not, however, break church fellowship among the churches of CPCE.  
29 It does however make it difficult to draw practical consequences from the mutual recognition  
30 of ordinations as proclaimed in Leuenberg Agreement no. 33. Obviously, an interchangeabil-  
31 ity of ministers requires that they are comparable in terms of theological understanding, train-  
32 ing and commissioning. This means that mutual recognition of ordinations according to LA  
33 33 refers only to that ministry which is conferred by ordination in all churches of CPCE,  
34 which is the ministry of word and sacraments. The churches which practise ordination of eld-  
35 ers for a ministry other than the ministry of word and sacraments should be encouraged to  
36 consider whether commissioning would be a more suitable practice in order to safeguard the  
37 meaning of ordination as related to the *ministerium verbi*, which all other churches of CPCE  
38 (and others far beyond) recognise.

39 50. In addition to the ministry of word and sacraments the church has the ministry of *dia-*  
40 *konia*, i.e. the commission to serve and to seek the best for the world. Even if both ministries  
41 belong closely together (cf. Acts 6:1seq; Rom. 12:1-21; Gal. 6:2-10) the service “at the table”  
42 is a service with its own dignity. “In being directed not only to members of the church but to

---

<sup>32</sup> The latter question is dealt with in the current project “Training for the pastoral ministry in the Churches of CPCE”.

<sup>33</sup> BEM, Ministry, no. 19 already conceded the “considerable changes” that this order underwent.

<sup>34</sup> For the fourfold order cf. the Genevan Ordonnances Ecclésiastiques 1541/61 (*Reformierte Bekenntnisschriften* vol. 1.2, Neukirchen-Vluyn 2006, p. 246). Following Calvin, *Institutio* IV.3.4 and *Confessio Gallicana* XXIX, pastors and teachers are mostly seen as equivalent, so that a threefold structure is the consequence.



1 all people in need, the diaconate of Christians corresponds to the universality of salvation.<sup>35</sup>  
2 Basically it is a commission of all Christians, but there can be good reasons to entrust indi-  
3 viduals with the responsibility of exercising and leading specific services of the church's *dia-*  
4 *konía*. In this way the diaconate is a part of the order of ministries in the church. The question  
5 of whether to ordain deacons or to commission them in a different way is a matter where di-  
6 versity is possible.<sup>36</sup> The same is true for the ministry of "elders" in the sense of the Calvinist  
7 church order. They share in the service of episkopé and their office may also be regarded as  
8 belonging to the order of ministries.

9 51. The Protestant churches emphasise that the order of ministries should not be under-  
10 stood hierarchically as divinely instituted levels of authority. Although levels of responsibility  
11 in the church are an important issue even for the Protestant churches, the different ministries  
12 should be ordered and practiced as service, in terms of mutuality, and not as exclusive rights  
13 or domination.<sup>37</sup>

#### 14 2.4. *Access to the Ministries*

15 52. An issue of great importance is the need for "a deeper understanding of the compre-  
16 hensiveness of ministry which reflects the interdependence of men and women"<sup>38</sup>. With few  
17 exceptions<sup>39</sup> – the churches of CPCE practice the ordination of women to their ordained min-  
18 istries. This decision has been highlighted by all confessional families within CPCE.<sup>40</sup>

19 53. There is a broad consensus among churches of CPCE that the ministry of women and  
20 men is a gift of God. The churches of CPCE have already emphasised their common con-  
21 viction in the Neuendettelsau Theses (1982/86) and expressed the expectation that a broader  
22 convergence might be achieved among the churches of the world at this point: "Neither race  
23 nor gender can have decisive significance for the call to the service of public proclamation  
24 and administration of sacraments (Galatians 3:27f). Churches in which women are not yet  
25 ordained and in which women ministers are not allowed must ask themselves whether this  
26 historically conditioned practice corresponds to contemporary Reformation understanding of  
27 ministry and congregation."<sup>41</sup>

28 54. Although this is a non-negotiable principle, the churches of CPCE do not reject coop-  
29 eration with other churches which so far do not ordain women. All ministries can be recog-  
30 nised as authentic even if – in the CPCE view wrongly – they are limited to men.<sup>42</sup>

31 55. Among the questions concerning access to the ministries in the church, one of the  
32 most debated issues today is the question whether living in a homosexual relationship or hav-  
33 ing a stated homosexual orientation should be regarded as an obstacle for ordination and the  
34 conduct of the ministry of word and sacraments, or other services in the church. Among the

---

<sup>35</sup> CJC, ch. I.3.3.3 (p. 106).

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Lund Statement, no. 39; FSPC, *Ordination*, ch. 5.3.3.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Report, no. 51.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. BEM, *Ministry*, no. 18.

<sup>39</sup> The Lutheran churches in Poland and Latvia and the Brethren Church in the Czech Republic.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Report, no. 55.

<sup>41</sup> Neuendettelsau Theses II.5.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. the result of the dialogue between the CPCE and the European Baptist Federation: "The Beginning of Christian Life and the Nature of the Church," IV.8: "The acknowledgement of each other's integrity self-evidently also includes the question of ordained ministers. For as long as we do not have a full recognition of ministry in a doctrinal sense, we nevertheless encourage the ensuring, the enabling and the widening of a reciprocal acceptance of ministry in practical and pastoral ways at local, national or trans-national levels" (Leuenberg Documents 9, Frankfurt am Main 2005, pp. 27-28). This declaration could be made although a large part of the Baptist federations of Europe do not practice the ordination of women.

1 churches of CPCE the differing positions adopted include open acceptance of homosexual  
2 ministers, an expectation of a celibate life for homosexuals, and a more or less explicit con-  
3 demnation of homosexuality.<sup>43</sup> All churches are convinced that their diverging positions are  
4 founded on faithfulness to the Gospel. At the same time, the churches of CPCE agree that this  
5 issue may not become divisive for their church fellowship. Since, however, they are as far  
6 away from a consensus on this issue as is the case, there is a great need for further study and  
7 further prayer for guidance by the Holy Spirit.

### 8 3. *Ordination and the Ministry of Word and Sacraments*

#### 9 3.1. *The Meaning of Ordination*

10 56. Ordination is an official action by the church, which recognises a person's call to a  
11 specific ministry and confirms it with prayer within the assembled congregation.<sup>44</sup> The full  
12 understanding of what ordination means varies among the churches, even within CPCE. There  
13 are different views as to whether commissioning is the core of ordination or only one element  
14 of it. Also, there are differences about the relation of ordination to other forms of calling and  
15 installation. There is broad agreement, however, upon some basic lines regarding ordination  
16 that were already stated in the Neuendettelsau Theses (1982/86). They include the conviction  
17 that a ministry in the church which involves proclamation of the gospel and administration of  
18 sacraments in any case has to be conferred through ordination.<sup>45</sup> For other ministries, by con-  
19 trast, ordination is not necessary, but a special form of commissioning is.

20 57. Ordination includes the laying on of hands and the prayer for the gift of the Holy  
21 Spirit upon the ordinand with a view to the ministry being entered into. This liturgical act is  
22 an important part of the ordination ritual, and reflects the dependence of any minister on  
23 God's strength and guidance, as well as the prayer of the congregation that God will actually  
24 accompany the ordinand with the Holy Spirit in the service which lies ahead. There is no dis-  
25 tinction between ordained and non-ordained persons within the whole people of God either in  
26 essence or in degree.

27 58. Ordination takes place through the congregation in God's name.<sup>46</sup> Public proclamation  
28 and the administration of the sacraments are connected and presuppose an orderly calling,  
29 which consists in a *vocatio interna* and a *vocatio externa*. Together, these are expressed and  
30 take effect in the act of ordination. The readiness of the ordinand to be ordained is an indis-  
31 pensable part of the ordination liturgy. It is maintained in different ways in our churches, very  
32 often through an affirmative response by the ordinand to a question raised by the ordaining  
33 minister.

34 59. There is consensus that the service of public preaching and the administration of the  
35 sacraments belong together<sup>47</sup>. This nexus is broadly affirmed in the theology of ordination. It  
36 therefore raises serious problems for mutual recognition if a church entrusts the ministry of  
37 public preaching and administration of the sacraments to persons without ordaining them.

38 60. Notwithstanding the "ordination" of elders and deacons in some churches of CPCE  
39 (see below no. 62 and Report, no. 68), it is reasonable to understand ordination in a basic  
40 sense (cf. LA 33) as referring to the commissioning for the ministry of word and sacraments.  
41 In claiming a specific access for this ministry, the church as *creatura verbi* shows that it is

---

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Report, ch. 2.4, esp. no. 60.

<sup>44</sup> "Congregation" refers to the worshipping community as well as to the local assembly.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Neuendettelsau Theses II.9.

<sup>46</sup> Neuendettelsau Theses II.4.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. Tampere Theses 4: "The service of the word embraces also the service of the sacraments."

1 aware of the indispensable nature of this ministry for its existence. Through this ministry, “the  
2 congregation can time and again be impacted (touched) with the word of God [...] in a critical  
3 and liberating manner” and the church reveals “the point where it is particularly dependent on  
4 God’s help and mercy”.<sup>48</sup>

### 5 3.2. *Differences in Terminology and Practice of Ordination*

6 61. In principle the churches agree that ordination is once for all and should not be re-  
7 peated. However, there are different ways of practicing the ordination to lifelong service.<sup>49</sup>  
8 Some churches which have a threefold ministry<sup>50</sup> perform an act of ordination for each form  
9 of this ministry. As an alternative, this model need not divide the churches, provided it does  
10 not imply a gradation in the theological fullness of the ministry.<sup>51</sup>

11 62. Deacons are ordained in some churches and not in others. Both have a valid place in  
12 the Christian tradition and among Protestant churches, as long as the necessity of the ministry  
13 of *diakonia* in the church is maintained. Attention must be paid to how the reciprocal recogni-  
14 tion of ministries between the churches which ordain deacons and those which do not ordain  
15 to this service can be safeguarded. This is not just a matter of the nature of the commissioning  
16 and the understanding of ministry but also of the comparability of the tasks<sup>52</sup> and the training.

17 63. The question of whether a person shall serve in ministry full-time, part time or in an  
18 honorary capacity, cannot determine if he/she should be ordained or commissioned. The deci-  
19 sive factor must be whether or not the service in question is a ministry of word and sacra-  
20 ments. If it is, the person to serve should be ordained, regardless of the time frame and geo-  
21 graphical limitations that have been set for the particular service. The spiritual meaning of the  
22 means of grace and the reality of communicating God’s saving action in Christ is the same  
23 whether the ministry is exercised full time or part time, with or without a salary. The churches  
24 must not establish practices that could be perceived as a gradation in the ministry related to  
25 those elements that constitute the church. Arrangements for limited forms of service can be  
26 both legitimate and helpful under given circumstances. But the limiting factors must be estab-  
27 lished through the terms of employment and not through adaptations in the understanding of  
28 ordination.<sup>53</sup> It is recognised that some churches have dispensations for the purpose of train-  
29 ing or probation.

30 64. It is important that those who are to serve in ordained ministry should be sufficiently  
31 trained. Ordination of persons who do not have the necessary theological training runs the risk  
32 of not safeguarding the faithfulness to the apostolic tradition, the unity of the church and the  
33 interconnectedness of word and sacrament. This does not mean, however, that ordination

---

<sup>48</sup> Cf. FSPC, *Ordination*, pp. 57/58.

<sup>49</sup> In the *Église Réformée de France* the practice of “ordination” is abandoned in favour of a “reconnaissance du ministère” with assuming a variety of ministries within the one ministry of word and sacraments. This acknowledgement of ministry takes place for each type of ministry (pastoral work, hospital chaplaincy, adult education etc.).

<sup>50</sup> In the sense of BEM, see above no. 47.

<sup>51</sup> As supposed in *Lumen Gentium*, no. 21.

<sup>52</sup> There is a range of variation in the understanding of the relationship between the diaconate and the celebration of the sacraments. The Methodist Diaconal Order in the British Methodist Church is an example.

<sup>53</sup> The VELKD has, in its 2006 document “*Ordnungsgemäß berufen*” (see fn. 1), introduced a terminological distinction between ordination (for full-time ministry) and commissioning (for honorary ministry). However, the understanding is that “*Beauftragung*” is to be considered as ordination in a proper theological sense. It is important that this is always made clear, and that reordination is not required should a person who is commissioned later be qualified for, and appointed to, full-time ministry. Churches of CPCE should be asked not to introduce a similar terminological distinction in their church orders.

1 should be limited only to theologians who have undergone a full course of study. In any case,  
2 biblical and theological training and spiritual maturity are important and need to be consid-  
3 ered seriously, e.g. in the case of limited forms of employment. If an ordained person serving,  
4 or having served, in a limited employment acquires full theological training, then he or she  
5 should be eligible for full time ministry without being reordained.

6 65. Since ordination is in principle conferred only once in a lifetime it should normally be  
7 a requirement that the ordinand be ready for a lifelong ministry, even if such a development is  
8 not arranged or envisaged at the time of ordination.<sup>54</sup>

9 66. It is a broadly agreed practice among the churches, both in CPCE and in the world-  
10 wide *oikoumene*, that ordination shall be conducted only by persons who are themselves or-  
11 dained.<sup>55</sup> They exercise their task on behalf of the whole congregation which calls the ordi-  
12 nand into the service of the whole people of God. Since ordination also includes the recogni-  
13 tion of ministers beyond the confines of the individual congregation and church, the ordina-  
14 tions are normally performed by persons entrusted with the ministry of episkopé. Ordinations  
15 commonly take place in the churches (e.g. cathedrals) where the ordaining ministers serve, or  
16 in the churches where those to be ordained shall work.<sup>56</sup> In both cases the interrelation be-  
17 tween both levels, the world-wide church and the local congregation, should be expressly  
18 stated.

#### 19 4. *Ministry and Exercise of Episkopé*

##### 20 4.1. *Meaning and Function of Episkopé*

21 67. The term “episkopé” as a key word in ecumenical discussions during the last two dec-  
22 ades, can be applied in two different lines of argumentation. The BEM document understands  
23 episkopé as a function of episcopal ministry and identifies it with “pastoral oversight” (cf.  
24 nos. 21, 23, 29). Although the following discussion led to a more differentiated discernment,  
25 the understanding of episkopé has been determined, to a large extent, by the function of spiri-  
26 tual oversight by bishops or superintendents. “Episkopé” is often identified with the “ministry  
27 of oversight”. In line with the former documents of CPCE, however, the mandate for this doc-  
28 trinal discussion understands episkopé as the task of (spiritual) leadership within the church.<sup>57</sup>

29 68. There are differences among the churches of CPCE. In some of them the function of  
30 episkopé is more closely connected to personal ministries of oversight than in others. How-  
31 ever, in all churches of CPCE leadership is, in a broad sense, carried out by governing bodies,  
32 notably by synods and synod-appointed bodies, with interaction of both ordained and non-  
33 ordained persons.<sup>58</sup> This reflects the fact that the “order of ministries” instituted to serve the  
34 ministry of all Christians is broader than the ministry of word and sacraments. Episkopé and

---

<sup>54</sup> Cf. the relevant argument in: The Faith and Order Advisory Group of the Church of England: *The Mission and Ministry of the Whole Church. Biblical, Theological and Contemporary Perspectives*, 2007, p. 67 (seq).

<sup>55</sup> Ordination by ordained persons corresponds to the Reformation tradition and ensures ecumenical compatibility (cf. FSPC, *Ordination*, p. 70).

<sup>56</sup> In the Methodist tradition ordinations take place at the Annual Conference which represents both the local and the world-wide church.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. the first sentence of the chapter on “The Service of Leadership (episkopé)” in Tampere Theses 3: “The task of leadership of the community also belongs to the service of the word.”; *Freedom is binding* (fn. 2), no. 2.2.1.1: “The understanding of ministry, ordination and spiritual leadership of the church (episkopé) is one of the core questions in ecumenical conversation.”

<sup>58</sup> When we speak of “non-ordained persons” in this document, we apply a narrower understanding of ordination referring only to the ministry of word and sacraments, thus counting the ordained elders in some Reformed churches as non-ordained.

1 leadership belong together and include oversight over doctrine, worship as well as pastoral  
2 practices and management of institutions, finances and personnel regulations.

3 69. Episkopé has been exercised from the earliest times of the church. Its institutional and  
4 ministerial forms evolved gradually in the early church, as congregations grew and became  
5 more numerous. The tasks of episkopé are “to hold the local congregations in communion, to  
6 safeguard and hand on apostolic truth, to give mutual support and to lead in witnessing to the  
7 Gospel”.<sup>59</sup> Thus it is a service both in the unity and in the apostolicity of the church.<sup>60</sup>

8 70. Episkopé is necessary for the sake of the gospel and the unity of the church, not for its  
9 own sake. The service of episkopé is a service in and for the church, not an exercise of domi-  
10 nation over it.<sup>61</sup> For the Reformation it was important to limit the power of the bishops, sepa-  
11 rating their spiritual task, which is essentially the same as that of the ministry of word and  
12 sacraments, from the exercise of worldly power (CA XXVIII).

13 71. From a Protestant perspective, episkopé is carried out primarily for each individual  
14 church. At the same time, each church belongs, also in the Protestant view, to the one church  
15 of Jesus Christ. Episkopé is therefore a service also for the unity of the whole church and can-  
16 not be considered properly without this ecumenical perspective.

17 72. Traditionally, one important task of episkopé has been exercised in the form of *visita-*  
18 *tions*. Here the focus is on congregations within an individual church. But there is also an  
19 ecumenical dimension of episkopé in this, since in examining the preaching in the congrega-  
20 tion the visitation exercises responsibility for the gospel as core to the apostolicity and the  
21 unity of the church.

#### 22 4.2. *Episkopé as Shared Responsibility in the Church*

23 73. There is broad agreement among Christian churches that episkopé has to be exercised  
24 in personal, collegial and communal ways.<sup>62</sup> However, the ways in which these three dimen-  
25 sions are interrelated vary. Most Protestant church orders keep a balance between the personal  
26 and the communal element of episkopé by combining an episcopal component with a synodi-  
27 cal element. This synodical element is maintained by representative bodies such as parish  
28 councils, presbyteries and synods on different levels, in which ordained and non-ordained  
29 persons work together. The element of personal oversight is maintained by local ministers,  
30 superintendents, bishops or church presidents. Thus the episcopal ministry (and its functional  
31 equivalents) is one element of the whole of episkopé. Within the full framework of episkopé  
32 the overseeing task of the ordained ministers is to bear continuous witness to the fact that the  
33 church, also institutionally, has the gospel as its determining criterion. As members of the  
34 body of Christ and sharing in the ministry of the whole people of God, ordained and non-  
35 ordained baptised persons are enabled to take part together in the whole sphere of episkopé.

36 74. The models of interrelating personal and synodical elements and of distributing au-  
37 thority between them vary considerably among the churches of CPCE. Some churches have

---

<sup>59</sup> *Nature and Mission of the Church*, no. 91.

<sup>60</sup> In their dialogue with Anglican churches, the Lutheran and Reformed churches of France state together in the Reuilly Common Statement: “We believe that a ministry of oversight (episkope), exercised in personal, collegial and communal ways, at all levels of the church’s life, is necessary to witness and to safeguard the unity and apostolicity of the church.” (no. 31.i; cf. Meissen A 4).

<sup>61</sup> The Neuendettelsau Theses put it this way: “The churches of the Reformation (...) understand the ‘service of episkopé’ exclusively as a service to the unity of the church, not as an office [Amt] over the church, but as a service [Dienst] in the church.” (I.1.D).

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Porvoo no. 32.k; Reuilly no. 31.i (see above fn. 60); *Nature and Mission of the Church*, no. 94.

1 the office of bishop, others the office of church president or similar offices. But in all cases,  
2 the personal ministry of episkopé represents only one element in exercising the leadership of  
3 the church. It must also be noted that bishops and presidents are normally selected in some  
4 cases by the synods, conferences or church councils, in other cases by the ministers in their  
5 dioceses, together with a representative number of church council members. Thus the elector-  
6 ate always includes a large number of non-ordained persons.<sup>63</sup> Nowhere is the bishop or  
7 president appointed only by ordained ministers or by other bishops alone; nowhere he or she  
8 exercises his/her episkopé independently of synods or conferences. Thus the models converge  
9 as they emphasise the shared responsibility of ordained and non-ordained persons in the  
10 episkopé.

11 75. This convergence is especially important regarding the questions emerging from the  
12 existing agreements with Anglican churches (such as Meissen, Porvoo and Reuilly) concern-  
13 ing the understanding of episkopé (cf. Report, ch. 2.7). The Reformation understanding of  
14 church unity, which is basic for all churches of CPCE, maintains that the witness of the gospel  
15 in word and sacraments is entrusted to the whole people of God, and is upheld in the congrega-  
16 tion by a specially called ministry. The order of ministries in the church includes the service  
17 of episkopé. This ministry is not a guarantee for the church's unity, but serves the church in  
18 its calling to adhere to the apostolic truth and remain united with Christ in faith.

19

---

<sup>63</sup> In the Lutheran Church of Slovakia even all baptised and confirmed members of the church elect the bishop.

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1

2 1. We recommend that the churches of CPCE and all Christian traditions have a new critical  
3 look at their ministries and reflect on the role of their ministries in their ongoing church  
4 divisions and separations, so as to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

5 2. We recommend that the churches of CPCE work further on a common understanding of  
6 the concept of an order of ministries to which first of all the ministry of word and sacra-  
7 ments, and then the ministries of diakonia and episkopé, indispensably belong.

8 3. We recommend that the churches of CPCE respect the correlation of the service of public  
9 preaching and the administration of the sacraments broadly affirmed in the theology of or-  
10 dination, and ordain the persons entrusted with preaching and administering the sacra-  
11 ments.

12 4. We recommend that the churches of CPCE consider their doctrine and practice of ordina-  
13 tion regarding the question of which ministry shall be ordained and which commissioned,  
14 in order to ensure the mutual recognition of ministries, and to strengthen the commitment  
15 with CPCE as a whole, and with the wider ecumenical movement in general.

16 5. We recommend further study on the diaconate, given the fact that the diaconal ministry is  
17 understood and ordered in several different ways within churches of CPCE. One particular  
18 aim should be to clarify its position in relation to ordination.

19 6. We recommend that the churches of CPCE present the understanding of episkopé in the  
20 ecumenical discussion neither as an exclusive task of bishops nor of the ministers of word  
21 and sacrament but as a shared responsibility, in which church councils, synods and confe-  
22 rences participate. We recommend that they consider the communal, collegial, and per-  
23 sonal elements of episkopé.

24 7. We recommend to those churches of CPCE which do not yet ordain women that they re-  
25 consider their practice.

26 8. We recommend further study on the question how the CPCE model of unity in reconciled  
27 diversity can be developed in the light of Christ's calling for the unity of the church, in  
28 order to deepen the communion which already exists between the member churches of  
29 CPCE and in order to find links and connections with other churches.

30

1 ABBREVIATIONS OF BASIC SOURCES

BEM	WCC, Commission on Faith and Order: Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, 1982 (the “Lima Text”), in: <i>Growth in Agreement I</i> , 465-503
CA	Confessio Augustana = Augsburg Confession
Calvin, Institutio	John Calvin, <i>Institutio Religionis Christianae</i> , 1559, in: Ioannis Calvini Opera Selecta, ed. P. Barth, W. Niesel, vol. 3-5, Munich: Kaiser, 1926–36 (English: <i>Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion</i> , ed. John T. McNeill, transl. by Ford Lewis Battles, London and Philadelphia 1960)
CJC	<i>The Church of Jesus Christ. The Contribution of the Reformation towards Ecumenical Dialogue on Church Unity</i> , ed. W. Hüffmeier, Leuenberg Documents 1, Frankfurt am Main 1995
FSPC, Ordination	<i>Ordination from the perspective of the Reformed Church</i> , FSPC Position 10, Bern 2009
Growth in Agreement I	<i>Growth in Agreement: Reports and Agreed Statements of Ecumenical Conversations on a World Level</i> , ed. H. Meyer, L. Vischer, New York/ Geneva 1984
Growth in Agreement II	<i>Growth in Agreement II. Reports and Agreed Statements of Ecumenical Conversations on a World Level, 1982-1998</i> , ed. J. Gros, H. Meyer, W. G. Rusch, Geneva 2000
LA	Leuenberg Agreement 1973
Lund Statement	<i>The Episcopal Ministry within the Apostolicity of the Church. The Lund Statement by the Lutheran World Federation – A Communion of Churches</i> , 2007 (quadrilingual publication, ed. LWF 2008)
Meissen	<i>On the Way to Visible Unity. A Common Statement</i> , 18 March, 1988 (Meissen Agreement), ed. Council for Christian Unity of the General Synod of the Church of England (CCU Occasional Paper 2), London, 1992
Nature and Mission of the Church	WCC, Commission on Faith and Order: <i>The Nature and Mission of the Church</i> , Faith and Order Paper 198, Geneva 2005
Neuendettelsau Theses	Ministry – Ministries – Services – Ordination. Theses on the Consensus on the Question “Ministry and Ordination” between the Churches Participating in the Leuenberg Agreement (Neuendettelsau Theses 1982/1986), in: <i>Sacraments, Ministry, Ordination</i> , Leuenberg Documents 2, Frankfurt am Main 1995, pp. 95-101
Porvoo	<i>Porvoo Common Statement</i> . Text agreed by the fourth plenary meeting held at Järvenpää, Finland, 9-13 October 1992, ed. Council for Christian Unity of the General Synod of the Church of England, London 1993
Reuilly	Conversations between the British and Irish Anglican Churches and the French Lutheran and Reformed Churches: The Reuilly Common Statement, in: “ <i>Called to Witness and Service</i> ”. The Reuilly Common Statement with Essays on Church, Eucharist and Ministry, London: Church House Publishing, 1999
Tampere Theses	Theses on the Current Discussion about Ministry (Tampere Theses 1986), in: <i>Sacraments, Ministry, Ordination</i> , Leuenberg Documents 2, Frankfurt am Main 1995, pp. 113-122

2