



Saksbehandler: Beate Fagerli

Saksdokumenter:

Rapport nr. 36/2012 **Beate Fagerli**

Rapport fra den 7. generalforsamling i Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE - Leuenberg kirkefellesskap), Firenze, 20.–26. september 2012

7th General Assembly CPCE Final Report
CPCE notes Northern European Region

Saker i de økumeniske organisasjonene

Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE)

Den 7. generalforsamlingen i CPCE fant sted i Firenze, Italia, fra 20.–26. september 2012. Vedlagte rapport er basert på innspill fra delegatene. I tillegg ligger CPCEs rapport ved, samt notater fra møter i den nordeuropeiske regionale gruppen.

Forslag til vedtak

Følgende saker tas til orientering:

1. Rapport fra den 7. generalforsamling i Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE - Leuenberg kirkefellesskap), Firenze, 20.–26. september 2012
2. 7th General Assembly CPCE Final Report
3. CPCE notes Northern European Region

Rapport fra den 7. generalforsamling i Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE - Leuenberg kirkefelleskap), Firenze, 20.–26. september 2012

v/Beate Fagerli

Innledning

Under tema “Free for the Future – Protestant Churches in Europe“ møttes den 7. generalforsamlingen i CPCE i Firenze, invitert av waldenserne, metodistene og Den evangeliske-lutherske kirke i Italia. 95 delegater og i alt 220 deltakere tilbrakte seks dager sammen med fullt program. Her skulle både det arbeidet CPCE har gjort i perioden siden forrige generalforsamling i Budapest i 2006 vurderes, og visjoner og retningslinjer for videre arbeid gjennomgås og vedtas.

Den norske kirke sendte tre delegater; biskop Atle Sommerfeldt, Einar Vegge og Ingvill Hagesæther Foss. Berit Hagen Agøy var rådgiver for delegasjonen. I tillegg deltok Stephanie Dietrich som avgående visepresident i CPCEs råd, og Kristin Graff-Kallevåg som kandidat til det nye rådet. Ulla Schmidt deltok som rådgiver og Beate Fagerli som representant for Porvoo-kirkene.

Generalforsamlingen åpnet med rapporter fra presidiet i CPCEs råd og generalsekretæren i CPCE. Selve organisasjonen CPCE er liten og blir holdt på et økonomisk rimelig nivå, men mange kirker har bidratt med frivillige, stab og arbeid i foregående periode. Prioriteringer er likevel nødvendige, og CPCE har lagt vekt på å samarbeide med organisasjoner som KEK for å unngå «dobbeltarbeid». Det er særlig studieprosessene som er gitt prioritet. En imponerende mengde studiedokumenter er produsert, og flere viktige læresamtaler har funnet sted i foregående periode. En av generalforsamlingens hovedoppgaver var å behandle resultatet av disse studieprosessene.

Læresamtaler og studieprosesser

Læresamtaler og studieprosesser ble behandlet i seks grupper (komiteer). «Scripture, Confession, Church» og «Ministry, Ordination, Episkopé» er ansett som læresamtaler, og ble lagt frem for generalforsamlingen for å vedtas («to be adopted»). I utgangspunktet var all innholdsbehandling av læresamtalene lagt til gruppene, mens tiden i plenum i hovedsak skulle gå med til voteringer. Den norske kirke har behandlet begge dokumentene i Teologisk nemnd og i Mellomkirkelig råd og avgitt sine høringssvar. En del av våre innspill har blitt tatt hensyn til i de endelige dokumentene.

Det var imidlertid noe uklart for generalforsamlingen hva som lå i uttrykket «adopt», og hva konsekvensene av et vedtak i forhold til *læresamtaler* ville være for medlemskirkene. Under behandlingen av «Ministry, Ordination, Episkopé», reiste den norske delegasjonen spørsmål om dette i plenum, noe som forårsaket en større diskusjon både om dokumentet «Ministry, Ordination, Episkopé» så vel som behandlingsmetoden. Noen svakheter ved dokumentet gjorde det vanskelig å skulle

vedta det i sin helhet med en vedtaksformulering som ville binde medlemskirkene til ting de ikke uten videre kan stå inne for. I tillegg til vedtaksformuleringen var argumentene mot dokumentet i hovedsak manglende behandling av diakoni og diakonatet i kirkens tjeneste, samt uenighet om synet på bruk av lekfolk i forkynnelse. Den norske kirkes delegasjon stemte derfor i første omgang blankt og ba om en protokolltilførsel med begrunnelse. Men etter forhandlinger med presidiet ble vedtaksformuleringen i siste instans endret, slik at Den norske kirke kunne stemme for vedtaket (se endelig vedtak i kommunikeet fra generalforsamlingen).

Øvrige studieprosesser som ble behandlet var «Stand up for Justice!», «Training for the ordained Ministry», «Anchor in Time» (en studie om gudstjenesteliv i det sørøstlige Europa) og «Ecclesia Semper Reformanda» (om kirkefornyelse). KISP og Mellomkirkelig råd har behandlet «Stand up for Justice!», og Mellomkirkelig råd har hatt representanter i arbeidsgrupper og på konsultasjoner også i arbeidet med «Ecclesia Semper Reformanda» og «Training for the ordained Ministry». Alle disse ble vedtatt av generalforsamlingen og anbefalt kirkene som referansedokumenter. I tillegg takket generalforsamlingen for dokumentet «A Time to Live and a Time to Die», et ressursdokument om omsorg ved livets slutt som Ulla Schmidt har vært med på å utarbeide.

Hovedtema og kommende periode

Generalforsamlingens hovedtema var «Free for the Future – Protestant Churches in Europe». Prof. Michael Beintker holdt hovedforedraget med fokus på den teologiske betydningen av fellesskap, og fellesskapets betydning for at kirker i Europa kan oppleve frihet for fremtiden. Temaet ble også behandlet i gruppene og gjennom anbefalinger for fremtidig arbeid, en av dem var å igangsette læresamtaler rundt begrepet «Church fellowship».

CPCes forhold til kirker fra andre deler av verden var også et tema som ble behandlet. Med besøk fra det evangeliske kirkefellesskapet i Midtøsten ble solidaritet med kristne satt på dagsordenen. I tillegg ble den tysk-ættede evangelisk-lutherske kirke i Ecuador tatt opp som medlem i organisasjonen. Dette opplevdes som noe pussig for den norske delegasjonen, ettersom våre samarbeidskirker i Latin-Amerika har søkt å bli sterkere knyttet til eget kontinent fremfor å søke tilknytning til europeisk arv og kirkefellesskap.

Europa i endring stod i fokus for andre anbefalinger for videre arbeid, ikke minst religionsdialog i et pluralistisk samfunn. Et annet satsingsområde fremover blir bl.a. å samle og koordinere informasjon om kirkenes planlegging av reformasjonsjubileet. CPCE legger vekt på at det er grunn til å feire reformasjonsjubileet, ikke bare markere det. Reformasjonsjubileet gir grunnlag for videre tenkning og inspirasjon rundt nødvendige endringsprosesser i kirke og samfunn.

Valg

Stephanie Dietrich fra Den norske kirke gikk av som visepresident i CPCes råd etter nesten syv år. Hun har i denne perioden bidratt med viktige teologiske innspill og tydelig ledelse, og ble takket behørig av sammen med det utgående rådet. I hennes periode har Den norske kirke hatt en aktiv rolle i mange av studieprosessene, og god

rådgivning når det gjelder å tolke CPCEs kultur og arbeidsmetoder. Den norske kirke har som luthersk kirke dermed kunne gi verdifulle bidrag inn i den protestantiske dialogen i Europa.

Kirsten Jørgensen fra Den danske folkekirke ble valgt inn som representant fra Norden i neste periode, med Kristin Graff-Kallevåg som vara. Det gir den norske kirke mulighet til fortsatt å følge utviklingen i CPCE og planleggingen av studieprosesser på nært hold.

Nordeuropeisk gruppe

I foregående periode har flere regionale grupper i CPCE oppstått, og det har vært forsøk på å få til en regional gruppe i Nord-Europa. Et nettverk av medlemskirkene i regionen har derfor valgt å konsultere hverandre i enkelte prosesser uten for sterk strukturell binding. I april 2012 ble det organisert felles forberedelsesmøte før generalforsamlingen, og under generalforsamlingen møttes gruppen for å diskutere felles anliggender. Det viste seg at et slikt samarbeid kan være nyttig, fordi det finnes både kulturelle og teologiske likheter mellom medlemskirkene i Nord-Europa (*se vedlagte notat*).

Øvrige kommentarer

Generalforsamlingen var på flere måter sterkt preget av en sentraleuropeisk kultur. For mange delegasjoner tok det tid å forstå arbeidsmetoden der mye forberedelse var gjort i forkant av generalforsamlingen, og hvor hoveddelen av diskusjonen skulle gjøres i grupper. I plenum var det nesten ingen tid til diskusjon, kun korreksjoner, før vedtak. Dermed opplevde mange at store saker ikke fikk den nødvendige behandlingen før vedtak ble fattet. Situasjonen ble ikke bedre av at arbeidet i grupper foregikk på enten engelsk eller tysk. Det betydde at to av generalforsamlingens hovedtema bare ble behandlet på tysk. Ettersom disse gruppenes arbeid ikke kunne oversettes i tide for behandling i plenum, var det krevende for ikke-tysktalende å følge plenumsbehandlingen, ettersom også plenumsbehandlingen i all hovedsak foregikk på tysk, med oversettelse til engelsk og fransk. Arbeidsmetoden ble av mange opplevd som effektiv, men udemokratisk.

Blant noen medlemskirker har et ønske om en europeisk synode vært diskutert i foregående periode. Forskjellene i kirkestruktur og forståelsen av en synode er såpass store at en slik diskusjon ikke har ført frem. Det er likevel tydelig at en del medlemskirker ønsker både en styrking og ekspansjon av CPCE som kirkefelleskap, og en vektlegging

av fellesskapets protestantiske profil. Diskusjonene rundt CPCEs rolle kan ventes å øke i den kommende periode, særlig frem mot feiringen av reformasjonsjubileet. Viktige spørsmål for avklaring blir da CPCEs rolle i forhold til den brede kirkeøkumenikken i Europa og verden, og medlemskirkenes rolle i forhold til fellesskapet. Det ser ut til at en konstruktiv retning på denne diskusjonen ble funnet gjennom å anbefale en læresamtale rundt forståelsen av hva kirkefelleskap faktisk er.

7th General Assembly of the
- Community of Protestant Churches in Europe
- Leuenberg Church Fellowship -

Florence, September 20 - 26, 2012

Final Report

- Draft 26.9. -

1. Introduction

1.1. General

"Free for the Future – Protestant Churches in Europe" was the theme addressed by the "Community of Protestant Churches in Europe – Leuenberg Church Fellowship" (CPCE) at its 7th General Assembly, hosted in Florence from 20th - 26th September 2012 by the Protestant Waldensian Church – the Union of Methodist and Waldensian Churches and the Protestant Lutheran Church in Italy.

The previous General Assembly in Budapest, 2006, had emphasised the CPCE's essence as a fellowship of worship, and practised this to the full. In harmony with the declaration made in the Report of the Presidium that "the fellowship of the churches is most intensely tangible in joint worship", the Florence gathering was also set within a framework of services of worship, each day's work being opened and closed with prayer as well as pausing for the daily prayer for peace at midday. The 220 participants, amongst them 95 delegates, were able to experience the impressively authentic Protestant way of life in this predominantly Catholic land, dating back as it does in part even to the pre-Reformation era, as they worshipped together on Sunday in the Waldensian Church and then strolled around the city in groups, and again at the hosts' evening of celebration, not to mention the many spontaneous exchanges that took place.

The ecumenical importance of the CPCE was quite evident in the words of greeting delivered by General Secretary Olav Fykse Tveit (World Council of Churches), Metropolitan Emmanuel (representing the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and President of the Conference of European Churches), Rev. Douwe Visser (World Communion of Reformed Churches), General Secretary Anthony Peck (European Baptist Federation), Msgr. Matthias Türk (Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity) and Rev. Jonathan Gibbs (Church of England). All made pointed reference to the way in which the fellowship with the CPCE has grown and intensified over the years, pressing the need for united witness and service in the face of the current crises afflicting this continent. A concerted effort to be true to the original cause of the Reformation in our own times was considered to be a significant priority for the coming years.

Rosangela Jarjour, General Secretary of the Fellowship of Middle East Evangelical Churches (FMEEC) spoke very movingly of the dramatic predicament that currently besets Christians in the Middle East and asked for the support of the CPCE's member churches in prayer. The Assembly took this opportunity to frame a declaration about the situation of Christians in the middle East. (Appendix 3).

It was a particular pleasure for the General Assembly welcome the Protestant Lutheran Church in Ecuador as a new member. The Assembly also greeted the signing of an agreement with the Conférence des Eglises Protestantes des Pays Latins d'Europe (CEPPLE) through which this community of west and south European churches form a regional group of the CPCE. They join the existing 3 regional groups, the South European Group, the Northwest Group and the Conference of the churches along the Rhine.

1.2. Work undertaken in Florence

The Presidium and General Secretary of the CPCE delivered two very comprehensive reports to the Assembly.

The Presidium highlighted the church fellowship experienced by the member churches, in which the "fellowship in teaching and learning" provided by the doctrinal discussions has played a key role from the very outset, as the very essence of the CPCE's work in its report. During the period in question the formal statements issued by the CPCE addressing contemporary ethical dilemmas have also played a key role, serving to significantly broaden public awareness of the "Protestant voice in Europe".

The General Secretary acknowledged the keen involvement of young theologians in the work of the CPCE, as reflected in the reports "Stand up for justice" and "Ecclesia semper reformanda". He also made particular reference to the activities of the regional groups as an "important form of genuine church fellowship".

The main theological address to the General Assembly was delivered by Joint President of the CPCE, Michael Beintker. He reminded those gathered of the quintessential and perennial foundations laid down by the early Christian meaning of fellowship. Freedom for the future can only be born from commitment to Christ, the presence of the Spirit of God and our love for one another. This meaning of fellowship – as we experience it too in the CPCE – can open the way towards ever converging paths of rapprochement between the churches, in our broader ecumenical relations as well.

Cristina Comencini, well-known film director and author, reflected on the rôle of women in society and in the church today. She concluded that we do not have freedom in either church or society, if women are not equal to men.

The findings of the doctrinal discussions and other reports compiled over the last six years have been debated with great vigour in the six different study groups here and the proposals for specific new undertakings examined with great care. The conclusions of the study groups have been duly incorporated into this Final Report. The response to these works has certainly prompted the identification of new perspectives for the future.

Two half-day sessions were devoted to the subject "Europe's Churches Turn to the Future". Specially appointed experts have assisted the General Assembly in its evaluation of various case studies detailing the reform projects that have already been instigated by individual member churches with a view to contextualising any conclusions within the parameters of the forthcoming Reformation Jubilee. This event is referred to in part 3.5 of this final report. The two-session forum then culminated in discussions that produced the resolution to issue a call for 'Europa Reformata: 500 Years of Reformation in Europe' (see Appendix 1).

The General Assembly also debated the issues outlined in the "Report on the Current Situation in Europe" (see Appendix 2).

2. Resolutions on the results of the work 2006-2012

2.1. Scripture, Confession, Church

1. The General Assembly thanks all persons involved in the 2008 consultation and the drafting group for compiling the document "Scripture, Confession, Church".
2. It welcomes the broad discussion of the document amongst the member churches and is grateful for the differentiated comments; their evaluation was taken into account in the final version.
3. It receives the document and makes it its own.
4. The General Assembly bids the churches to accept the results of this study document and to take the relevant issues into consideration both internally and in discussions with other churches and traditions.
5. The General Assembly recommends that the outstanding issues identified in the final chapter of this document be addressed and duly considered by a new doctrinal study group entitled "Church Fellowship".

2.2. Ministry, Ordination, Episkopé

1. The General Assembly thanks all persons involved in the 2009 consultations and the drafting group for considering and for compiling the document "Ministry, Ordination and Episkope".
2. It welcomes the broad discussion of the document amongst the member churches and is grateful for the differentiated comments; their evaluation was taken into account in the final version.
3. The General Assembly adopts the statement and the recommendations and commends the accompanying resource material to the churches.
4. The General Assembly invites the churches to consider the statement, and to bring it into their discussions both internally and with other churches and traditions.

2.3. „Stand up for Justice“

1. The General Assembly receives the document "Stand Up for Justice" and conveys its thanks to the study group for compiling the report.
2. It welcomes the broad discussion of the document amongst the member churches and conveys its appreciation for the range of views that have been considered and incorporated in the conclusion.
3. The General Assembly regards the document as a guiding contribution to the process of reflecting, commenting and acting on socio-ethical issues and recommends it to the member churches as an affirmation of LA 11: "Christians ... know that God's will, as demand and gift, embraces the whole world. They stand up for justice and peace on earth between individuals and nations."
4. The General Assembly recommends to the Council to set up a freely accessible digital archive to make available socio-ethical statements of member churches.

2.4. Training for the Ordained Ministry

1. The General Assembly conveys its thanks to those involved in the 2008 and 2010 consultations and to the drafting group for compiling the document "Training for the Ordained Ministry within the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe".

2. It welcomes the broad discussion of the document amongst the member churches and conveys its appreciation for the range of views that have been considered and incorporated in the conclusion.
3. It regards the document as a guiding contribution for a common understanding of a good theological training.
4. It recommends that the member churches take the document into consideration in relation to any reforms regarding the area of training.
5. It asks the Council to lay the foundations for the realization of the recommendations mentioned in the last chapter.

2.5 „Anchor in Time“

1. The General Assembly conveys its thanks to the South Eastern Europe regional group for compiling the study “Anchor in Time – Protestant Worship in Southern, Central and Eastern Europe between Continuity and Change”.
2. It recommends the document as an exemplary contribution to the liturgical studies within the CPCE. It underscores the view of the study that CPCE realises the principle of “reconciled diversity” also in its life of worship. It views the orders of worship that have been celebrated during the General Assembly as well as the hymn book “Colours of Grace” as successful applications of this principle.
3. The General Assembly recommends that observations concerning changes in practice of worship should also be gathered in other regions of the CPCE. The General Assembly requests that the Council respond with the appropriate means to section 7.4 of the report “Conclusions and initiatives for forthcoming attention”.
4. The General Assembly proposes the distribution of the conclusions of the report “Anchor in Time” in the form of a handout, to be produced by the South-Eastern regional group, amongst the member churches of the CPCE for their information.

2.6. Ecclesia semper reformanda

1. The General Assembly receives the study “Ecclesia semper reformanda” and conveys its thanks to the study group for compiling the report.
2. It requests that the member churches take it into consideration in relation to their continuing or future processes of reform.
3. The General Assembly invites the Council to continue the research on how renewal processes work in the churches. This work should build on the work already conducted by the study group, and aim at giving the churches a possibility to share experiences of church renewal.
4. The General Assembly recommends to the Council to establish a small working group which should explore alternative methodologies to continue research on church renewal (e.g. through partnership and exchange, putting an emphasis on sharing experiences and best practices etc.).

3. Resolutions on the fields of work from 2012 onwards

1. Church fellowship

1. The General Assembly requests the Council to initiate a doctrinal conversation on the subject of “Church fellowship”. The General assembly asks that focus be given to the

positive potential and visibility of church fellowship. It asks for a theological clarification of the binding character ("Verbindlichkeit") and to take into account the constitutional implications of church fellowship based on the LA.

2. The General Assembly asks the Council to ensure that the process takes a wide range of church experiences into account, and includes broad representation and reception of the study process.

3.2. Plurality of Religions

1. The General Assembly requests the Council to initiate a study process on the subject of the "plurality of religions", to explore the complex range of interrelated issues and the doctrinal implications. In this context, an empirical study should be initiated which explores the interreligious situation on the ground in the different contexts in which the CPCE member churches operate. Such a study should elucidate both the sociological situation and the churches' current practical and theological response. The study group Council should ensure that the specific contribution of the Leuenberg approach will be reflected in the study project.

3.3. Inter-church Dialogues

2. The General Assembly welcomes the establishing of consultations with the Roman Catholic Church on the Leuenberg model of church communion.
3. It supports the continuation of conversations with the Anglican churches on the basis of the *Memorandum of affirmation and commitment*.
4. It requests the Council to seek appropriate ways of deepening the cooperation with the European Baptist Federation on the basis of the agreement of 2010.
5. It requests the Council to seek appropriate ways of continuing consultations with the Orthodox Churches in Europe.
6. The General Assembly requests the Council to with to establish contact Pentecostal churches and charismatic communities and, where appropriate, seek appropriate forms of conversation with them.
6. The General Assembly requests the Council to seek appropriate forms of conversation and cooperation with congregations of migrant Christians. It recommends to closely cooperate in this area with the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe [CCME]
7. It requests the Council to initiate a consultation in which the member churches can reflect upon their experiences with newly emerging Christian groups.

3.4. Europa Reformata

1. The General Assembly advises the Council to instigate the "Europa reformata: 500 Years of Reformation in Europe" project on the basis of the existing project outline. It requests the Council to take into account whilst working on this project the discussions in the working groups.

3.5 Europe's churches turn to the future

The General Assembly considered issues pertaining to the subject of the renewal of the Protestant church in Europe in the forum "Europe's Churches Turn to the Future" on 24th and 25th September 2012.

It duly recognises that many of The CPCE member churches are in the process of conducting spiritual or structural renewal and have started to implement measures aimed at adapting towards the changes in their respective environment.

Even though the particular circumstances of the individual member churches can differ quite considerably, they often stand in need of Spiritual renewal and organisational reform in relation to similar challenges. Therefore the General Assembly recommends that the member churches share more actively than to date the combined experience gathered during reform processes completed so far or in terms of the plans that have already been made for impending renewal.

It requests the Council of the CPCE to engage in further work on the topic of 'Europe's Churches turn to the future' and in particular to examine the following suggestions:

1. To commission a report investigating the importance of the Reformation as an impulse of spiritual renewal in the 21st century;
2. To share in the consultation from the SEK and EKD about the question of how the situation of the reformation churches in the present can be clarified, in which to particularly involve the study group who engaged with the theme of 'ecclesia semper reformanda'.
3. To support the member churches in their exchange of good practice established in the course of particularly innovative projects and processes implementing change, for example through encouraging the networking platforms the internet might offer;
4. To engage with ecumenical partners, in particular the Roman Catholic Church, in order that the 500th anniversary of the Reformation can be experienced as a significant contribution to the ecumenical process.

3.6. Resolutions concerning other areas of activity

1. The General Assembly requests the Council to commission a report investigating the subject "Education for the Future".. The General Assembly raises the possibility that the South-Eastern European regional group might be assigned with this task.

2. In the light of the meeting of members of Protestant synods in January 2012 in Bad Boll, Germany the General Assembly invites the Council to continue to support the joint work of the synodal bodies of the member churches .

3 The General Assembly affirms the decisions of the of the General Assembly in Budapest 2006 for close cooperation in the field of political, social and economic issues in order to strengthen the Protestant voice in Europe. It conveys its thanks to the representative of the CPCE in Brussels and welcomes the joint work with the office of Church and Society of CEC.

4. The General Assembly requests the council to consider ways in which the Social Commitment of the Protestant Churches in Europe which is contained in the Study Document "Stand Up For Justice" [p. 49] may be developed further.

5. In order to be as precise as possible when applying terminology which is commonly used in the CPCE, the General Assembly recommends to the Council to initiate the compilation of a Leuenberg Dictionary in which terms and expressions in CPCE's three official languages are collected and explained and their usage in different languages examined.

6. The General Assembly requests the Council to establish a study process on the theology of diaspora. It asks the Council to reflect on how to connect this process with the topic of Gospel and Culture, looking also at cultural identities within the churches, including that of majority and minority churches.

7. The General Assembly requests the Council to examine whether conversations with the European Evangelical Alliance should be begun.

4. Elections: Council, Presidium, General Secretary

The General Assembly elected the CPCE's new Council on 24.9.2012. The following persons are now members of the Council::

Members	Proxies
1. Heetderks, Jan-Gerd Protestantische Kirche in den Niederlanden	1. Rieth, Klaus Evangelische Landeskirche Württembergs
2. Jørgensen, Kirsten Evangelisch-lutherische Volkskirche Dänemarks	2. Graff-Kallevåg, Kristin Kirche von Norwegen
3. Kopsch, Cordelia Evangelische Kirche in Hessen und Nassau	3. Killat, Barbara Evangelische Kirche in Mitteldeutschland
4. Locher, Gottfried Schweizerischer Evangelischer Kirchenbund	4. Hirzel, Martin Schweizerischer Evangelischer Kirchenbund
5. McPake, John Kirche von Schottland	5. Bradbury, John Vereinigte Reformierte Kirche
6. Pöder, Thomas-Andreas Estnische Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche	6. Brzóska, Marcin Evangelische Kirche A.B. in Polen
7. Rudolph, Barbara Evangelische Kirche im Rheinland	7. Kayser, Susanne Bremische Evangelische Kirche

8. Tarr Cselovszky, Klára Lutherische Kirche in Ungarn	8. Bölcskei, Gusztáv Reformierte Kirche in Ungarn
9. Thaarup, Jørgen Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche, Zentralkonferenz Nordeuropa	9. Pöll, Lothar Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche, Zentralkonferenz Mittel- und Südeuropa
10. Weber, Friedrich Evangelisch-Lutherische Landeskirche in Braunschweig	10. Hauschildt, Friedrich Vereinigte Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche Deutschland
11. Weinrich, Michael Union Evangelischer Kirchen	11. Martin, Michael Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche in Bayern
12. Wieland-Maret, Esther Vereinigte Protestantische Kirche in Frankreich	12. Gajewski, Pawel Evangelische Waldenserkirche in Italien
13. Zikeli, Daniel Evangelische Kirche A.B. in Rumänien	13. Boukis, Dimitrios Griechische Evangelische Kirche

The inaugural meeting of the Council took place on 25.9.2012, in which it elected the tripartite Presidium comprising Friedrich Weber (Presiding President), Gottfried Locher and Klára Tarr Cselovszky.

It also re-elected Michael Bünker as General Secretary.

Appendix 1: Reformed Europe: 500 years of reformation in Europe

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Appendix 2: Free for the future. Responsibility for Europe. ...

Appendix 3: Declaration on the situation of Christians in the Middle East.

Copenhagen 03.10.2012

RHS

j.nr.47

Dear friends in the Northern European forum of Leuenberg churches

Thank you for a great time in Florence.

I took a few notes from our last meeting on Tuesday evening. We agreed, that I should send round these notes, also for the sake of evaluation. If you agree, I will forward the evaluation part to the secretariat in Vienna. For the second part on future cooperation, I will also send it to all the Northern European MC's that did not participate in our meeting.

1) Evaluation.

a. CPCE for dummies

It would be useful, as long as the GA is only every 6 years, if a more thorough introduction to the procedures of the Assembly would be carried through. Delegates can not be expected to understand the nature of the GA when they attend for the first time, which many do.

b. Language

More resources have to be put into interpretation and translation of documents. It is unacceptable that the documents finally voted on have not been introduced in all three languages in print before decisions are made. The language barrier is greater than the organisers of the GA seems to have appreciated.

Interpreters were good. However, short messages in the plenary were often given in only one language which was confusing.

The Northern European network supports the idea of a dictionary that explains the language of the GA, i.e. what is expected when the assembly adopts a document etc.

c. Assembly working method

Many from the Northern European region found it odd that changes could be made by the Assembly to documents, which have been worked on by experts for many years and been through hearings in the Member Churches. The mandate to alter the documents at this stage is not clear. Rather the working groups should be only for discussion about the documents in order for the delegates to develop their interchurch perspective on the issues and also in order for them to decide on which level they will be able to accept the document.

d. The footnote (declaration) for the decision on "Ministry – Ordination – Episkopé" given by the delegation of the Church of Norway and the discussion about the level on which the document should be approved by the GA led to a change in the final proposal. This meant that the footnote was no longer relevant in the final report. The reasoning behind the change should be kept in mind. Therefore many of the Northern European delegates wishes to repeat the declaration here for the Council to consider in their future work:

The Church of Norway's delegates appreciate the valuable and constructive insights of the document *Ministry – Ordination – Episkopé*, and we will recommend it as a reference document in our further work in the Church of Norway.

The importance of the understanding of diaconia within the ministry of the church, the role of the diaconical institutions, the understanding of the ministry of the church, the deacon, as well as lay ministers, are all important issues under thorough consideration within the Church of Norway's preparation for a new church order.

Due to this we are not comfortable to 'adopt the statement' and 'invite our church to adopt it' at this assembly. However, we strongly support the recommendations of the document to further explore these issues. Finally, it is our view, in light of the discussion in the Assembly, that it might be wise to explicitly express what is implied by the Assembly's adoption of a document, and its consequences for the churches and its delegates.

e. The role of the General Assembly

There was some confusion between the delegates as to what the role and mandate of the GA is in relation to Member Churches on one side and the Council of CPCE on the other. What does it mean when the GA adopts documents, resolutions, declarations? It was said that it can not be binding for the MC's but who then is it binding for? It was also noticed that the GA was not presented with the finances of the CPCE.

Dear friends, please send your comments to this evaluation, and please indicate if you find it all right that I send it to the Council (through the secretariate). I imagine that I will send it from the ELCD secretariat and note that delegates from the following churches participated in the meeting: *ELC Denmark, ELC Finland, ELC Estonia, Church of Norway, Church of Sweden, United Methodist Church, The Reformed Synod in Denmark, Methodist Church in Britain*. I do have holes in my memory, so please let me know if I forgot anyone, it is not intentionally!

2) Contact between the CPCE Member Churches in Northern Europe.

There was a general interest to uphold some kind of contact on a Northern European level. Ad hoc meetings in line with the 'Copenhagen Model' – 1) Discussion about the function and nature of CPCE and 2) Study consultation – seems to be a relevant form for the churches.

It was suggested that we work regionally on:

- 1) Church fellowship
- 2) Reformation celebration 2017.

Other suggestions are always welcome.

It was agreed that the secretaries of the Nordic churches will discuss how to implement some of this, as they are meeting for other purposes in January 2013.

These are the words. Please send me your comments within this month, the 31st October at the latest.

Warm greetings from Denmark,

Rebekka Højmark Svenningsen