

**MEETING BETWEEN REPRESENTATIVES OF
THE INTERNATIONAL LUTHERAN COUNCIL (ILC) AND
THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION (LWF)
WITTENBERG, GERMANY, 24-25 February 2016
COMMUNIQUÉ**

LWF PARTICIPANTS:

Rev. Dr. Martin Junge, General Secretary;
Rev. Dr. Fidon Mwombeki, Director of the Department for Mission and Development;
Rev. Anne Burghardt, LWF Department for Theology and Public Witness;
Rev. Norbert Denecke, Director of the LWF German National Committee;
Rev. Dr. Romeu Martini, Evangelical Church of Lutheran Confession in Brazil.

ILC PARTICIPANTS:

Bishop Hans-Jörg Voigt D.D., ILC Chairman;
Rev. Dr. Albert Collver, ILC Executive Secretary;
Rev. Jon Ehlers, Regional Representative of Europe;
Rev. Gijsbertus van Hattem, Secretary.

Both the LWF and ILC are honoring the commitment they made for the executive committees of each organization to meet with one another as agreed in the memorandum of understanding from 3 March 2005.

Agenda

1. Completion of the Agenda | minutes – Communiqué
2. LWF highlights an info sharing — Including identifying issues for further discussions
3. ILC info sharing
4. Discussion of identified issues
 - a. LWF Items
 - b. ILC Items
5. From Conflict to Communion – ILC answer
6. Date and venue for the next meeting, theme and topics.
7. Drafting and Approval of Communiqué and unfinished Business.

2. LWF Report

Discussion of past year's events. Upcoming Reformation Celebration — Liberated by God's Grace. (<https://2017.lutheranworld.org>)

June 2016 LWF will hold a council meeting in Wittenberg. It will have a very ecumenical theme for the pilgrimage – Roman Catholics, WCC and others invited.

May 2017 LWF Assembly is where the LWF will have its global Reformation celebration. October 2017 will be for the churches, no LWF global celebration. Theme of the LWF Reformation celebration and of the Assembly – Liberated by God’s Grace: Salvation not for Sale, Human Beings not for Sale, Creation not for Sale.

The LWF shared the study documents for the 2017 Assembly, “Liberated by God’s Grace 2017 – 500 Years of the Reformation.”

The LWF presented the study report “Self-Understanding of Communion”. This is a significant document for the LWF. It also presented the process around hermeneutics and announced its conclusion with a document to be presented to the LWF Council in June 2016.

Reference was made to the humanitarian engagement of the LWF, which is currently serving 1.7 million refugees in the world, and 600.000 Internally Displaced People.

The LWF also shared “Mission in Context: Transformation, Reconciliation, Empowerment,” and “Diakonia in Context: Transformation, Reconciliation, Empowerment.” These topics have the potential for future conversation between the ILC and LWF.

3. ILC Report

Rev. David Mahsman and Ms. Kristin Lange welcomed the ILC and the LWF to the Old Latin School. Rev. Mahsman, the outgoing managing director of the Old Latin School, introduced Ms. Kristin Lange as the new managing director of the Old Latin School in Wittenberg. Rev. Mahsman discussed the dedication of the building in May 2015, as well as the goals and purposes of the Old Latin School.

The ILC shared the website “The Wittenberg Capstone Experience.” (<http://wittenbergexperience.com/prepare.html>)

Discussed ILC’s past year’s events. Provided update regarding the International Conference on Confessional Leadership 2 (ICCL2), which was hosted primarily as a LCMS and SELK event, but also included the ILC. Discussed how invitations were issued, including invitations to LWF members. The ILC papers from this conference were published in the Journal of Lutheran Mission, September 2015 (<http://blogs.lcms.org/2015/journal-of-lutheran-mission-september2015>).

Provided Report about the ILC World Conference in Argentina held in September 2015. ILC admitted three new members: Lutheran Church of Norway, Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the Lutheran Church Synod of Nicaragua. The ILC papers from the world conference were published in the Journal of Lutheran Mission, December 2015 (<http://blogs.lcms.org/2015/journal-of-lutheran-mission-december-2015>)

Announced the ILC World Seminaries' Conference scheduled for October 2016 in Wittenberg.

ILC in discussion with the three Nordic Dioceses—the Evangelical Lutheran Diocese of Finland, the Evangelical Lutheran Diocese in Norway, and the Mission Province in Sweden, for possible membership in the ILC.

4. Identified Items for Discussion

Discussed letter dated 26 November 2015 from Dr. Martin Junge to Bishop Hans-Jörg Voigt following up on the question how the ILC and LWF will interact with each other locally and internationally, and seeking clarification about specific experiences and situations that have raised questions in the LWF. Also, discussed the “ILC (Draft) Policy Statement Regarding International Relations” (<http://ilc-online.org/2016/01/21/ilc-draft-policy-statement-regarding-international-relations/>) which was prepared in part to address items raised. The LWF representatives asked questions about parts of the document. The ILC agreed that those sections could be expressed more clearly.

5. The ILC's Response to *From Conflict to Communion*

The ILC presented “Statement of the International Lutheran Council on the Document ‘From Conflict to Communion’ Lutheran—Catholic Common Commemoration of the Reformation 2017.” This document was prepared for the ILC’s informal dialog with the PCPCU and was presented at the ILC World Conference in September 2015 and published in the Journal of Lutheran Mission, December 2015. (<https://issuu.com/thelcms/docs/jlm-no5-2015/23>)

The question was asked what is the next step? Does the ILC desire to make an agreement with the LWF-PCPCU similar to how the Methodists joined the JDDJ by presenting their own statement, which offered their distinctive perspectives? The ILC was pleased by the offer of the LWF to consider this possibility. Next steps were agreed upon on how to approach this possibility.

The LWF, recognizing the fellowship understanding of the ILC member churches, asked if it would be possible for the ILC to participate or attend the “Joint Ecumenical Commemoration of the Reformation to be held in Lund.” (<https://www.lutheranworld.org/content/event-joint-ecumenical-commemoration-reformation-be-held-lund>). The event will be held on 31 October 2016. The ILC accepted the invitation.

6. Date and venue for the next meeting, theme and topics

Date: February 7-8, 2017. Meeting will begin in the afternoon of February 7th and will continue all day February 8th. Travel planned for February 9th in the morning. Each organization is responsible for the cost of its own travel to the location and their own lodging. The hosting organization will cover the expenses of the meeting room and the dinners.

Location: Geneva, Switzerland.

Theme: Hermeneutics as it relates to the unity of the Church.

Two theologians: one from the LWF and one from the ILC will help us identify hermeneutical approaches to the Scriptures. What does it mean for the life of the churches and how does it affect unity?

The ILC and LWF will spend half a day in theological study to better understand each other's perspective on the interpretation of the Scripture. Papers will be sent one month before the meeting so that the group can study them ahead of time. Two thirty minute presentations will lead the group through the topic.

Potential topics for 2018 also were discussed. The stage is being set for a discussion of pastoral accompaniment and pastoral realities as a practical result of the hermeneutics of the Scriptures in the future.

7. Drafting and Approval of Communiqué

This communiqué shall serve as the official record for the meeting.

Wittenberg, Germany

25 February 2016