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Saksdokumenter

Rapport nr. 4/2007 **Stephanie Dietrich**
Rapport fra møte i den internasjonale luthersk-ortodokse
dialogkommisjonen i Bratislava, Slovakia, 2.-9.11.2006 (vedlagt)
Program for LVFs rådsmøte 2007 (vedlagt)
Brev fra LVF av 12.01.2007 om LVFs rådsmøte 2007 (vedlagt)

Oppfølging av saker i de økumeniske organisasjoner

Det lutherske verdensforbund (LVF)

Sammendrag

Vedlagt følger rapport fra møte i den internasjonale luthersk-ortodokse dialogkommisjonen i Bratislava, Slovakia, 2.-9.11.2006.

Rådsmøte i Det lutherske verdensforbund (LVF)

LVFs råd (Council) er øverste styringsorgan for organisasjonen mellom generalforsamlingene. Det møtes med 12-18 måneders mellomrom. Sist gang var i Betlehem i august-september 2005. Neste møte vil finne sted 20-27 mars d.å. i Lund.

Vedlagt følger en orientering (datert 12 januar d.å.) til LVFs medlemskirker fra generalsekretær Ishmael Noko om det som skal skje under det forestående rådsmøtet, samt tidsplanen for dette møtet.

Det er verd å merke seg at rådsmøtet denne gangen har en spesiell karakter.

- I tillegg til å ha sin ordinære funksjon som styringsorgan vil samlingen markere organisasjonens 60-års jubileum. LVF ble stiftet nettopp i Lund i 1947. I denne forbindelsen har Svenska kyrkan tilsatt en egen stabsperson til å forberede arrangementet, og biskop Christina Odenberg har utsatt sin avskjed til etter at rådsmøtet er avviklet.

- Møtet vil dessuten ha en bredere deltakelse enn de vanlige (medlemmene, rådgiverne og representanter for nasjonalkomiteene). I tillegg til økumeniske gjester vil de syv regionene i LVF være ekstra godt representert. Regionale kirkeledermøter som holdes jevnlig, er denne gang lagt til dette arrangementet. En hel dag (23. mars) er avsatt til regionale møter.

Blant de sakene som skal behandles av rådet er følgende tre av spesiell betydning:

- Strategisk plan for LVF frem til 2010. Dette er et omfattende dokument som foreslår retningslinjer for arbeidet i lys av beslutningene på generalforsamlingen i Winnipeg i 2003.
- Rapport fra den internasjonale arbeidsgruppen som har studert "Family, Marriage and Human Sexuality." Leder av denne arbeidsgruppen har vært prest Kristin Thomasdottir, Island. Hun er også medlem av LVFs eksekutivkomité. Professor Jan Olav Henriksen har vært medlem av gruppen. Når det gjelder spørsmålet om homoseksualitet tar rapporten ikke stilling til det, men drøfter hvordan LVFs medlemskirker best behandler dette spørsmålet som globalt kirkefelleskap.
- Forslag til uttalelse om "The Ministry of Episcopé within the Apostolicity of the Church." Dette er en ny utgave av uttalelsen fra Malta-konsultasjonen om dette temaet fra 2002, revidert i lys av uttalelser fra medlemskirkene.

Det er grunn til å omfatte dette rådsmøtet i LVF med spesiell oppmerksomhet.

Forslag til vedtak

Mellomkirkelig råd tok rapporten fra møte i den internasjonale luthersk-ortodokse dialogkommisjonen i Bratislava, Slovakia, 2.-9.11.2006 og informasjonen om rådsmøtet 2007 til orientering.



DEN NORSKE KIRKE

Kirkerådet, Mellomkirkelig råd, Samisk kirkeråd

Rapport nr. 04/07

Dato: 26.01.2007

Vår ref: 06/207-16 SDI

Deres ref:

Rapport fra møte i den internasjonale luthersk-ortodokse dialogkommisjonen i Bratislava, Slovakia, 02.11.2006 - 09.11.2006 v/ Stephanie Dietrich, medlem av dialogkommisjonen

Bakgrunn

Undertegnede er medlem i den internasjonale luthersk-ortodokse dialogkommisjonen, valgt inn av LVFs råd i 2000. I denne samtaleperioden drøfter kommisjonen "kirkens mysterier"- dvs. sakramentene. Ved forrige møtet i Romania drøftet vi dåpen og salvelsen, ved dette møtet nattverdsforståelsen, "eucharistien". Møtet fant sted i Bratislava i Slovakia, og LVF var vertskap for møtet.

Tema

Samtalen med våre ortodokse brødre om nattverden var både interessant og givende. Langt på vei er vi nokså enige om forståelsen av nattverden. En av grunnene til det kan være at vi under dette dialogmøtet ikke snakket om spørsmålet om hvem som forretter nattverden (embetsspørsmålet). Fra ortodoks side ble det spesielt påpekt og kritisert at

1. mye av den lutherske nattverdsforståelsen er utformet i opposisjon til den romersk-katolske nattverdsforståelsen. De ortodokse etterlyste derfor et større fokus på hva som er "det positive innholdet" i en luthersk nattverdsforståelse.
2. det ikke alltid er en tydelig epiklese i den lutherske nattverdsteologien, og at dermed Den Hellige Ånds sentrale rolle i nattverdshendelsen kan være for lite synlig.
3. lutheranere ikke alltid behandler elementene med den respekten deres nattverdsforståelse egentlig skulle tilsi man hadde.

Mye av den ortodokse samtalen dreide seg om diskusjonen av én setning: "Orthodox and Lutherans agree, whether they use the language of "metabole" or of "real presence", that the bread and wine do not lose their essence (*physis*) when becoming sacramentally Christ's body and blood." Det store (og svært tidkrevende...) spørsmål for dem var *hva* man kunne si om elementene under/etter nattverden - med hvilke ord - og om man i det hele tatt kunne si noe om det - siden det i seg selv allerede er umulig når det gjelder det store mysteriet, eucharistien. Denne interortodokse samtalen tok mye plass på møtet i Bratislava. Da jeg spurte en av de ortodokse brødrene om det ikke ville være bedre at de hadde et møte bare seg imellom for å avklare hva de mente, fikk jeg som svar at "nei, de trengte oss for å kunne snakke sammen".

Utfordringer og oppfølging

Det neste møtet i dialogkommisjonen følger opp samtalen i Bratislava ved å sette fokus på spiritualitetsaspektet ved nattverden og nattverdsforståelsens konkrete implikasjoner

for "livet i verden" og økologien: "*Preparation and Celebration of the Eucharist; Eucharist and Ecology (including Human Society)*".

Fra ortodoks side vil det nok enda en gang bli påpekt at vi lutheranere er inkonsekvente når vi på den ene siden fremholder nattverdens sentrale betydning for teologien og holder fast ved Kristi realpresens, og på den andre siden (i ortodokses øyne) ikke alltid behandler elementene på en "verdlig måte".

Fra luthersk side kan man spørre de ortodokse hvordan det henger sammen at nattverden på den ene siden har den sentrale betydning for deres teologi og kirkelig liv, samtidig som krevende forberedelsesritualer (skrifte, faste, etc.) og stridigheter de ortodokse familier imellom fører til at man feirer nattverd svært sjelden, og også ofte har problemer med å feire den sammen. (I Bratislava ble det "etter mye frem og tilbake" arrangert en ortodoks messe der det bare var noen få ortodokse som deltok.)

I vår norske kontekst bør resultatene fra samtalen tas inn i **arbeidet med liturgirevisjonen** når det gjelder

- a.) epiklesens betydning og utforming i nattverdsliturgien
- b.) behandling av nattverdselementene "extra usum"- hva gjør vi med brød og vin som er til overs?
Til andre aktører i Den norske kirke, slik som MKR, Teologisk nemnd, fakultetene:
- c.) Hvilken betydning har nattverdsforståelsen for helheten i vår teologi? Bør vi for eksempel tenke miljøengasjementet tettere opp mot nattverdssteologien?
- d.) Hvordan/hva undervises det om nattverden, forvaltningen av elementene etc. på fakultetene? Hvordan står det i forhold til resultatene fra de økumeniske dialogene?
- e.) På hvilken måte kan vi bevisstgjøre oss enda mer realpresensens betydning for luthersk teologi og nattverdsforståelse (løsrevet fra en anti-katolsk forståelse), i tilknytning til en oldkirkelig nattverdsforståelse?
- f.) Hvordan kan vi intensivere kontakten med våre ortodokse søstermenigheter i Norge også når det gjelder samarbeidet om teologiske spørsmål? (Dette bør drøftes i samråd med NNKR og i forhold til arbeidet omkring migrantmenigheter).

Vedlagt - til videre studium og inspirasjon - statement fra Bratislava!

Stephanie Dietrich

Vedlegg: http://www.lutheranworld.org/LWF_Documents/Bratislava_Statement.pdf

COMMON STATEMENT

The Mystery of the Church: D. The Holy Eucharist in the Life of the Church

The Lutheran-Orthodox Joint Commission met in Bratislava, Slovak Republic, from November 2-9, 2006, to consider the topic "The Mystery of the Church: The Holy Eucharist in the Life of the Church". Papers were presented on various topics: "The Spirituality of the Eucharist and its practical implications in Evangelical Lutheran church life" (E. Hagberg), "The Lutheran Understanding of the Eucharist" (K.Ch. Felmy and J. Wasmuth), "The Holy Sacrament (Mysterion) of the Eucharist: An Orthodox Perspective" (V. Ionita); "Comments to the Lutheran papers" (A. Laham); "The Place of the Eucharist in the Divine Economy of Salvation" (Ch. Voulgaris); and "Metabole or Transsubstantiatio" (A. Osipov). Based on this work, the Joint Commission was able to recognize broad areas of agreement in the respective traditions' understanding of the Eucharist in the Life of the Church.

1. Building on work done in previous Commission meetings, Orthodox and Lutherans recognize the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist as the "fulfillment of the Christians' participation in the life of Christ and his church through eating his body and drinking his blood in the Holy Eucharist" (Duràu Statement §11). They also affirm that the Eucharist and the believers' participation in it remain a mystery that transcends human understanding. The Holy Eucharist is the Sacrament of the New Covenant instituted by Christ himself (Mt 26, 27f; par.). As such it is an indispensable part of the life of the Church, which is the body of Christ. Through Baptism the believer is born again and sealed with the Holy Spirit (for Orthodox, the seal is given through Chrismation). In the Eucharist, the believers receive the body and blood of the Lord as a healing and spiritual nourishment of their souls and bodies and experience their membership in the Body of Christ. In this way, believers receive forgiveness of their sins and the gift of eternal life. The Eucharist presupposes the confession of the one faith of the church and strengthens the believers' union with Christ and their union and communion with each other both locally and universally (Mk 14,22-26; 1Cor 10,16f).

2. Lutherans and Orthodox believe that Christ offered himself as a sacrifice "once and for all" - *ephapax* (Heb. 7,27; 9,12; 10,10; cf. 10,14). While Lutherans use the language of sacrifice less frequently than Orthodox, both can agree that the Eucharist is a sacrifice in the sense that 1) it is Christ, not the celebrant priest, who offers and is offered as the sacrifice, 2) Christ's sacrifice of atonement is made once and for all with respect to God, and 3) it is sacramentally enacted so that its benefits are distributed to the believers each and every time the Eucharist is celebrated. Both Orthodox and Lutherans also regard the Eucharist as a sacrifice of thanksgiving and praise (Heb. 13,15).

a. Luther's criticism of "sacrifice" terminology aims at correcting a misunderstanding of the Eucharist as a "meritorious" act accomplished by human beings to benefit their own salvation.

b. By insisting that it is Christ, and not the priest, who offers the Eucharistic sacrifice, Orthodox join Lutherans in their criticism of such abuse and misunderstanding.

c. Orthodox understand the Eucharist as a bloodless sacrifice. It is “bloodless” because it is a sacramental enactment of Christ’s unique sacrifice on the cross. It is a “sacrifice” because the bread and the wine offered by the church are truly united by the action of the Holy Spirit with the humanity of Christ. The church brings the bread and wine, which are united with the body and blood of Christ by way of anamnesis and are changed by way of union with the exalted and deified humanity of Christ through the action of the Holy Spirit (epiclesis).

d. Orthodox and Lutherans agree that the Eucharist is also a gift of communion granted to us by Christ. In this communion we are fully united with him and with the members of his body. The “how” of the mystery remains inexplicable, but the “what” is clearly confessed in faith and thanksgiving. As John of Damascus says, “... if you enquire how this happens, it is enough for you to learn that it was through the Holy Spirit, just as the Lord took on Himself flesh that subsisted in Him and was born of the holy Mother of God through the Spirit” (Exposition of the Orthodox Faith, 4, 13).

3. Lutheran and Orthodox traditions each stress proper preparation for participation in the Eucharist. For both this involves preparatory prayers and Confession and forgiveness of sins, which for Orthodox is the sacrament of penance. For Orthodox, preparation also includes fasting; for Lutherans fasting is not required but often practiced. Both agree that the Eucharist must be administered properly/canonically and only by ordained ministers.

4. Lutherans and Orthodox take the Lord’s words “this *is* my body; this *is* my blood” (Mt 26,27f, par.) literally. They believe that in the Eucharist the bread and wine become Christ’s body and blood to be consumed by the communicants. How this happens is regarded by both as a profound and real mystery. In order to approach that mystery, Orthodox and Lutherans have drawn on their respective theological traditions and developed different insights on what takes place.

a. Lutherans speak about Christ’s “real presence” in the Eucharist and describe Christ’s body and blood as being “in, with and under” the bread and wine (Formula of Concord, SD 7). By this they mean that the bread and the wine really become the body and blood of Christ, through the Words of Institution and the action of the Holy Spirit. Drawing on patristic sources, Lutherans understand Christ’s presence in the elements christologically: “Just as in Christ two distinct, unaltered natures are inseparably united, so in the Holy Supper two essences, the natural bread and the true natural body of Christ, are present together here on earth in the action of the sacrament, as it was instituted” (SD 7). Lutherans, however, maintain a distinction between a personal, hypostatic union and a “sacramental union”, favoring the latter in order to describe Christ’s presence in the Eucharist. Lutheran theology is able to speak of a transformation (*mutatio*) of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ (Apology X, 2; XXIV). This is not understood as eliminating the physical character of the bread and wine in the Eucharist. Lutherans emphasize that it is God’s Word which makes the sacrament (Large Catechism, 5: The Sacrament of the Altar).

b. Orthodox profess a real change (*metabole*) of the bread and the wine into the body and blood of Christ by the Words of Institution and the act of the Holy Spirit in the eucharistic *anaphora*. This does not mean a “transsubstantiation” of the substance

of the bread and the wine into the substance of the deified humanity of Christ, but a union with it: "The bread of communion isn't an ordinary bread, but united with divinity" (John of Damascus). This union amounts to a communication of the deifying properties of the humanity of Christ and of the deifying grace of his divinity to the eucharistic gifts: The bread and the wine are no longer understood with respect to their natural properties but with respect to Christ's deified human body in which they have been assumed through the action of the Holy Spirit. As in Christology the two natures are united hypostatically, so in the Eucharist Christ's exalted human body and the "antitypes" (St. Basil, Anaphora) of bread and wine are united sacramentally through the act of the Holy Spirit.

c. Orthodox and Lutherans agree, whether they use the language of "metabole" or of "real presence", that the bread and wine do not lose their essence (*physis*) when becoming sacramentally Christ's body and blood. The medieval doctrine of transubstantiation is rejected by both Orthodox and Lutherans.

5. Orthodox and Lutherans believe that the changes that take place in the Eucharist are accomplished by the Holy Spirit. In the liturgical celebration of the Eucharist, the Orthodox explicitly include the entire economy of salvation, which culminates in the Words of Institution, Anamnesis, Epiclesis and Holy Communion. For Lutherans, the totality of the work of Christ is also presupposed and is liturgically enacted in the eucharistic worship service as a whole, although less elaborately. Both Lutherans and Orthodox believe that the Eucharist cannot be isolated from the entire mystery of salvation.

6. For both Lutherans and Orthodox, proper use of the eucharistic elements is dictated by Christ's own words in Holy Scripture: "Take and eat, this is my body; take and drink, this is my blood..." (Mt 26,27f, par.). Those who believe Christ's words receive his body and blood for their salvation. Lutherans do not recognize salvific qualities in the elements when these are used for non-eucharistic purposes. That position need not exclude a belief that the change of the elements into body and blood of Christ is definitive, however. Orthodox insist on the permanence and irreversibility of that change.

a. The Lutheran position stems from a historical critique of non-eucharistic uses of the eucharistic elements common in late-medieval Western traditions. Lutherans see a danger of superstition, fetishism or an abuse in private masses in such practices. Lutheran theology, furthermore, views the elements as means of salvation (*media salutis*) which means that its primary interest lies in the two entities that are brought together by those media—God and the believer—and not in the media themselves. Hence, the Lutheran tradition has not emphasized reflection on what happens to the elements outside their use in the Eucharist (*extra usum*).

b. Orthodox understand the elements' change christologically. Since Christ's presence with the elements brings the divine into contact with the earthly, the earthly elements are affected—"deified"—much as Christ's human nature is affected by union with the divine. As a consequence, Orthodox believe that the elements are sacramentally changed in themselves when they are united with Christ's body and blood, and that that change is as irreversible as the incarnation itself. However, they insist that the consecrated bread and wine are used only for eucharistic purposes.

c. Lutherans can agree with the Orthodox position without giving up their concentration on the proper use of the elements in the Eucharist. A Lutheran appreciation of the Orthodox' christological emphasis, along with reflection on

Lutherans' own tradition of reverence for the Eucharist would demand corresponding care when handling the elements *extra usum*, for example with respect to consecrated bread and wine after the Eucharistic celebration.

7. Lutherans and Orthodox together affirm the eschatological dimension of the Eucharist, which brings both the past and the future into the present. Since the eschatological mystery is the incarnate, crucified, resurrected and exalted Christ, who is coming again with glory, the Eucharist, which brings us to him and him to us, is truly eschatological. The Eucharist presents the eschaton to the believers and to the world. It brings salvation to the believer and judgement to the unbeliever and unworthy participant (1 Cor. 11,27ff).

By giving us his holy body and blood to eat and to drink, Christ is bodily as close to us now as he was to his first disciples and to all his followers throughout the ages. But the sacrament is also an anticipation of the future redemption and a foretaste of the marriage supper of the Lamb in heaven (Rev. 19,9). This meal, the supper of the Kingdom, encompasses both the future eschatology of the Parousia and the inaugurated eschatology of the Eucharist. In it God the Father not only forgives us our sins, but nourishes us with the body and blood of His Son so that we are strengthened through the Holy Spirit for our earthly pilgrimage, until at last we fully possess the life of the world to come, which we already possess in a hidden manner by faith. In the words of the ancient prayer, "Maranatha, Our Lord, come!" (1 Cor. 16,22c), the Church prays for the future coming of the Lord at the end of time as well as for his coming now through the Spirit in this holy meal. In the Eucharist, the Kingdom becomes a present reality since by coming to Communion with Christ's body and blood, the believers experience abiding union with the exalted Lord.

8. Because the Eucharist brings the eschatological Kingdom of Christ into space and time, it constitutes a saving blessing for the whole inhabited world (*oikumene*, Heb. 2,5). This is understood both in terms of the natural environment and human society. The Eucharist transforms participants into bearers of God's mystical blessing in Christ to the world through appropriate action. Their involvement in the care of the natural environment (*oikos*) of creation is a consequence of eucharistic participation. In the elements we receive the gifts of creation, offering them again to the Giver, receiving them back and sharing them with each other, thereby underscoring sacramentally both our dependence on the Creator and our responsibility toward creation. The same applies to appropriate Christian social action. Because it unites believers with each other at the Lord's table, the Eucharist is the Sacrament of human reconciliation par excellence. Believers are sent forth into the world to serve God's Kingdom. This is denoted liturgically by the Lutheran dismissal: "Go in peace and serve the Lord!" In the Orthodox liturgy, there are several places, which signify such a "liturgy after the liturgy." The last prayer of thanksgiving for receiving Holy Communion begins with "direct our ways in the right path, establish us firmly in Your fear, guard our lives, and make our endeavours safe...". Similarly, in the dismissal prayer the believers ask the Lord to guide us in the work of sanctification, to grant peace to the world, to the clergy and to the whole people. This insight is far-reaching and should be explored more fully in a future context.

9. Lutherans and Orthodox agree that the relation of the Eucharist to the ordained ministry/priesthood (*hierosyne*) requires full discussion at a later stage. Lutherans and Orthodox both hope and pray for a day when they may celebrate the Eucharist together and work together as the one Body of Christ for the life and the salvation of the world.

10. For its next meeting, the Commission agreed to extend its reflection on *The Holy Eucharist in the Life of the Church* and to work on the following topics: *Preparation and Celebration of the Eucharist; Eucharist and Ecology (including Human Society)*.

LWF COUNCIL, CHURCH LEADERSHIP CONSULTATION & 60TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

- TIME SCHEDULE - (Tentative)

Time	Monday 19 March	Tuesday 20 March	Wednesday 21 March	Thursday 22 March	Friday 23 March
8.00			Morning Prayer in the Committees - Program Committee - (Arrival of church leaders)	Morning Prayer	Morning Prayer
8.30		- Executive Committee Meeting - (separate agenda)		SESSION FOUR - General Secretary's Report and Discussion	- Regional Meeting -
10.30		Break	Break	Break	Break
11.00		- Executive Committee -	- Program Committee -	SESSION FIVE - Treasurer's Report - and Discussion	- Regional Meetings -
12.30		Lunch	Lunch	Lunch Constitution Committee	Lunch Membership Committee
14.00		OPENING SESSION Opening Prayer - Roll Call - Program Committee Meetings - Appointment of Committees	SESSION TWO Consultation Opening Service - President's Address - (Lund Cathedral)	SESSION SIX - Plenary - Marriage, Family & Sexuality	- Regional Meetings -
15.45		Break	Break	Break	Break
16.15			SESSION THREE - Greetings - Adoption of Agenda and Minutes - Discussion on President's Address	SESSION SEVEN - Plenary - Renewal Process The Ministry of Episcopé	- Regional Meetings -
17.00	Arrival of Executive Committee Members	- Program Committee - Evening prayer in the Committees	Evening Prayer Dinner	Evening Prayer Dinner	Dinner Reception by Diocese of Lund
17.30					
18.00		Dinner			
18.30			Women's Meeting	SESSION EIGHT - Plenary (Orientation to Regional Meetings)	Regional Meetings
20.30					

LWF COUNCIL, CHURCH LEADERSHIP CONSULTATION & 60TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

- TIME SCHEDULE - (Tentative)

Time	Saturday 24 March	Sunday 25 March	Monday 26 March	Tuesday 27 March
8.00	Morning Prayer		Morning Prayer	Morning Prayer
8.30	SESSION NINE - Plenary - Inputs from Regional Meetings	11:00 Sunday Eucharistic Service Lund Cathedral	SESSION THIRTEEN - Plenary - Strategic Plan 12. Theology & Studies 13. Mission & Development	SESSION SEVENTEEN - Plenary - - 23. Reports National Committees 24. Dates Next Meetings 25. Other Business & Closing Prayers
10.30	Break		Break	Break
11.00	SESSION TEN - Plenary - Assembly Planning	- 60th Anniversary Celebration -	SESSION FOURTEEN - Plenary - 14. World Service 15. Finance & Administration 15. Finance Summary of Needs	Departure
12.30	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
14.00	SESSION ELEVEN - Plenary on Europe - - Special Speaker - Responses from different regions	- 60th Anniversary Celebration - Lund University Campus	SESSION FIFTEEN - Plenary - 16. Communication Services 17. International Affairs & Human Rights 18. Ecumenical Affairs	
15.45	Break		Break	
16.15	SESSION TWELVE - Plenary on Europe continues	Departure of church leaders (Free afternoon for the Council members)	SESSION SIXTEEN - Plenary - 19. Membership 20. Constitution 21. Executive Committee/Board of Trustees 22. Executive Session	LEGEND: Executive Committee Council Church Leadership Consultation
18.00			Evening Prayer	Women's Meeting
18.30		Dinner	Dinner	60th Anniversary Celebrations
20.30	60th Anniversary Reception Dinner Host church presentation			



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

Office of the General Secretary

Geneva, 12 January 2007

Dear friends,

At the break of a new calendar year I hasten to give you in a nutshell an update with regard to the preparations for the Council meeting and Consultation in Lund, March 2007.

We are grateful to the Church of Sweden for injecting so much energy, good will and financial resource in the preparation.

1. The Theme

All our discussions and deliberations will be around the Theme '**Living in Communion in the World Today**'. The time in Lund will offer many creative and strategic reflections for the strengthening of the life and witness within the communion. Please note that this is the theme for the Council and the Church Leadership Consultation and not for the LWF Assembly in 2010.

2. Executive Committee meeting March 20, 2007

The Executive Committee members will arrive on Monday 19 March and will hold a half-day meeting to act on matters related to the agenda as a Personnel Committee, Board of Trustees and review any last minute-matters related to the agenda of the Council and the Consultation.

3. Program Committee Meetings

The formal opening prayer will be at 14.00, Tuesday March 20, followed by Program Committee meetings that same afternoon till lunch time, Wednesday March 21. The Program Committee sessions will be shorter than it is usually. Staff preparation is such that it takes this factor into consideration.

4. Consultation

The Consultation between the Council and the worldwide Lutheran Leadership will commence on Wednesday March 21 at 13.30 at the Cathedral. Many Ecumenical Guests including the Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Baptists, Orthodox and others have agreed to participate in these meetings.

In the Regional meetings within the context of the Council and church leadership consultation, all participants, Council and non-council alike will have the opportunity to meet on their own as per LWF geographical distribution. Normally such meetings are conducted under the leadership of the Vice Presidents. In the case of North America, the President will assume the Vice-President role and be the chair. The LWF Treasurer carries the vice-presidential status for the central Western Europe Region. This means that:

Africa

Asia

Latin America – Caribbean

Bishop Zephania Kameeta

Bishop Munib A. Younan

Bishop Victoria Cortez Rodriguez

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Nordic
Europe (Central Eastern Europe)
Europe (Central Western Europe)
North America

Bishop Eero Huovinen
Bishop Christoph Klein
Mr Peter Stoll
Bishop Mark Hanson

Saturday, March 24

Two issues need mention here.

- 1) There will be a very high level discussion on the "House of Europe". Europe is not only a geographical space but also an ever-growing important ecumenical and political space that needs our joint attention. We are awaiting a response from a European Personality who we have asked to address. You will be receiving additional information in the coming days.
- 2) We will begin the 60th Anniversary celebrations with the Church of Sweden hosting the festive reception in which the Church of Sweden will also present itself.

Sunday, March 25

On Sunday, 25 March, the Anniversary Eucharist Service will take place in the Lund Cathedral at 11.00. After the Service, the University of Lund will welcome the delegates at 14.00 at the University auditorium where the Lutheran World Federation was formed in 1947. A brief program has been planned to mark the occasion and you will receive additional information on this matter. Those who are departing then, please take this into consideration. If possible, plan to depart not earlier than 16.30 from Lund to Copenhagen if you are flying that evening (providing about four hours before departure time).

5. **The Council reconvenes** on Monday morning, 26 March and will be in session until 27 March
6. **Pre-Council/Consultation visitation (Hosted by the Diocese of Lund, Church of Sweden)**

The Diocese of Lund has also prepared to receive delegates for a Pre-Council visitation program. There are several themes around which this visitation has been planned. They are:

- Parish with a living active social commitment, including diakonia
- The Church and worship in the City
- Dynamic confirmation classes: "*Kyrie and Gloria*"
- Parish with active and exemplary international involvement
- Parish providing successful spiritual care

Coordinators have already been appointed by the Diocese to organize the logistics and they are expecting your participation. As always, few opportunities are available and will be secured for people who register earlier. Therefore, if you plan to participate in this visitation program, you have to plan to arrive early. The visitation programs will be organized between 17 to 19 (for Council members/advisors) and 20 to 21 (for Church leaders) March 2007. We are grateful to the Church of Sweden for all the preparations.

7. Other related meetings and events

There are several events that are planned before or parallel to the Council/Consultation event. These events constitute a festive occasion to commemorate the 60th Anniversary. Let me just name them for you :

- Theological pre-council seminar "Fundamentals for a Lutheran communion in the face of fundamentalism" organized by the Department of Theology and Studies (18 – 20 March)
- The final meeting of the 3 year joint DMD/OCS training program: "Towards a communicating communion: a youth vision".(18 to 27 March)
- Pre-council Youth Workshop, organized by Youth in Church and Society/DMD (16 –19 March)
- Meetings of the Women Bishops & Church leaders and Regional Coordinators, organized by Women in Church and Society/DMD (20 – 25 March)
- Meeting of the Board of the LWF Endowment Fund
- Board of the Canadian Lutheran World Relief
- Bishop's Conference of the Church of Sweden

The centrality of missiology and diakonia in the LWF implies that the LWF, the mission organizations and the related agencies share a common understanding and tasks. In the context of the 60th Anniversary of the LWF, an exhibition has been planned not only to reaffirm these joint commitments to mission and diakonia but also for self-presentations by mission organizations and related agencies. In this context, the LWF secretariat is also preparing an exhibition to mark the significant milestones in its colorful and eventful history. There will also be a special issue of the Lutheran World Information (LWI) on the challenges in the present and the future.

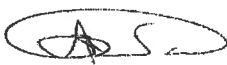
To add to the mosaic of festivities, several Public Receptions have also been scheduled. The City of Lund will host the Opening Reception on Wednesday, 21 March and the Diocese of Lund on Friday, 23 March. The Church of Sweden will host the Anniversary Reception Dinner on Saturday, 24 March, including a plenary on the Host Church Presentation.

These meetings and events are to be seen as an integral part of the Commemoration of the 60th Anniversary. Your participation therefore is a strong indication of the 60 years of the search to find ways of expressing the Unity we seek.

The Spirit of the time will be one of celebration, thanksgiving and looking beyond and forward. The Youth participants will have this urgent task to articulate the future as they see it. I am also glad to share with you the joy of having several Church Leaders confirm their participation and contribution towards their travel and hospitality. I am grateful to all of them.

I pray for God's Grace and Blessings as you prepare prayerfully for your journey to Lund.

Yours Sincerely,



Dr Ishmael Noko
General Secretary

Cc: LWF President
Cc: LWF Cabinet

Enclosed: Programme schedule

