

Communiqué from the International Lutheran – Pentecostal Dialogue

Representatives of various classical Pentecostal churches and the Lutheran World Federation member churches recently began a five-year dialogue. The first meeting took place September 15-20, 2016 at Asia Pacific Theological Seminary in Baguio, Philippines, a seminary of the Assemblies of God. Through annual meetings, the partners will seek to better understand each other, including at the local level, to appreciate each other's theological and spiritual traditions and to find ways for common witness.

The theme of the dialogue is our "Christian Identity" in light of Luke 4:18-19. The focus of this first meeting was "Sent by the Spirit – Identity in Christ". The Rev. Dr. Wilfred J. Samuel presented "Lutheran Identity in Asia and the Changing Global Context". Dr. Jean-Daniel Plüss spoke "On Pentecostal Identity".

Each day began and ended with devotions led by the various members of the dialogue. Participants discussed the papers, raising questions to each other. While much of the discussion was done in plenary, the Pentecostal and Lutheran teams broke into groups to discuss further commonalities and differences.

On Sunday, September 18, dialogue participants joined together in Pentecostal worship at Baguio Assembly City Church and then worshipped at St. Stephen Lutheran Church. The group also visited the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Baguio. The next evening APTS hosted a reception for dialogue members, faculty, and local Lutheran and Pentecostal leaders in order to get acquainted and learn about their respective churches and ministry.

The delegations express their gratitude for the warm welcome and generosity they have received from their hosts at Asia Pacific Theological Seminary.

Members of the Pentecostal team are: Dr. Jean-Daniel Plüss, co-chair (Swiss Pentecostal Mission, Switzerland), Rev. Dr. Teresa Chai (Assemblies of God, Malaysia), Rev. Dr. Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen (Pentecostal theological consultant, Finland/USA), Rev. Dr. Cecil M Robeck, Jr. (Assemblies of God, USA), Rev. Gani Wiyono (Assemblies of God, Indonesia), Rev. Tham Wan Yee (Assemblies of God, Malaysia) and Dr. Olga Zaprometova (Church of God, Russia). Rev. Dr. Edmund Rybarczyk (Assemblies of God, USA) and Dr. Nico Horn (Apostolic Faith Mission, Namibia) were unable to attend.

Members of the Lutheran team are: Rev. Dr. Walter Altmann, co-chair, (Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil), Rev. Tamás Gáncs (Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hungary), Rev. Dr. Wilfred J. Samuel (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Malaysia), Rev. Dr. Cheryl Peterson (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America), Rev. Johannes Zeiler (Church of Sweden), Rev. Dr. Sarah Hinlicky Wilson (Consultant on behalf of the Institute for Ecumenical Research, Strasbourg, France/USA) and Rev. Dr. Kaisamari Hintikka (Assistant General Secretary for Ecumenical Relations with Lutheran World Federation, Switzerland/Finland). The Rev. Dr. Amos Buntausa (Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria) was unable to attend.

The next meeting will be held September 24-30, 2017 in Wittenberg, Germany. The theme will be "...he has anointed me to proclaim..." (Luke 4:18) and will focus on proclamation, evangelism and mission. Future meetings are planned to take place in Latin America in 2018 on the theme "...good news to the poor...", and in Africa in 2019 focusing on the theme, "freedom, recovery and release...". In 2020 the dialogue will release a common document based upon the work they have completed on Christian Identity in light of Luke 4:18-19.

Baguio City, Philippines

September 20, 2016