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Saksdokumenter:

Rapport nr. 18/2018 **Berit Hagen Agøy**
Rapport fra generalforsamlingen i Community of Protestant Churches in
Europa, 13.-18. september 2018 i
Basel, Sveits

Nytt fra den verdensvide kirke – Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE)

Sammendrag

Vedlagt følger rapport fra generalforsamlingen i Community of Protestant Churches in Europa, 13.-18. september 2018. Denne vil senere omarbeides til en felles KEK/CPCE-rapport til Kirkemøtet i 2019.

Forslag til vedtak

Mellomkirkelig råd tar rapport fra generalforsamlingen i Community of Protestant Churches in Europa, 13.-18. september 2018 i Basel, Sveits til orientering.



befreit verbunden engagiert
liberated connected committed
libérés liés engagés

8. Vollversammlung der Gemeinschaft Evangelischer Kirchen in Europa
Basel, 13.-18. September 2018



Rapport nr. 18/2018

Liberated – Connected – Committed

Community of Protestant Churches in Europa Rapport fra generalforsamlingen i Basel 13.-18. september 2018

Utkast v/Berit Hagen Agøy 18. nov. (Omarbeides til en felles KEK/CPCE-rapport til Kirkemøtet i 2019)

Innledning - hovedinntrykk

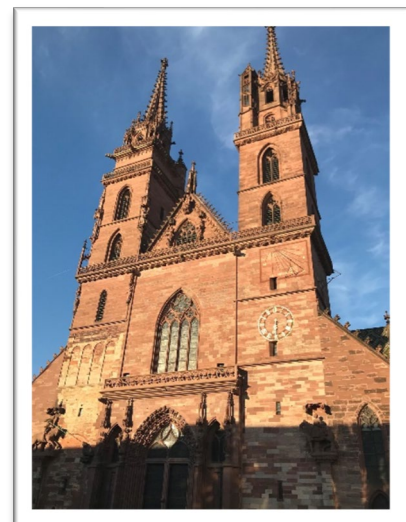
Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE) møttes 13.-18. september 2018 til generalforsamling i Basel i Sveits. Temaet var “Liberated – Connected – Committed”. Den norske kirke er en av rundt hundre protestantiske kirker som deltar i dette økumeniske fellesskapet i Europa. 96 delegater og 52 rådgivere og gjester deltok under generalforsamlingen.

Denne rapporten tar ikke mål av seg å gi noe detaljert referat fra generalforsamlingen, men vil gi noen hovedlinjer og glimt ut fra hva som er mest relevant for Den norske kirke. Vedlagt finnes CPCE-rapporten fra generalforsamlingen som bl.a. inneholder alle vedtak.

Generalforsamlingen ble holdt i den storslåtte katedralen i Basel, et mektig kirkebygg som ble påbegynt på 1000-tallet. Som de fleste middelalderkatedraler har den blitt ødelagt, gjenoppbygd og ombygd en rekke ganger. Likevel har evangeliet blitt forkynt, og mennesker har gått inn og ut her med både hverdagstanker og drømmer om evigheten, i tusen år.

Rundt 1430 kalte pave Martin 5. inn til kirkekonsil her, et møte som varte i åtte år. De som var samlet til generalforsamlingen i 2018, hadde bare fem dager på seg til å fatte mange viktige beslutninger. Kirkemøtet på 1400-tallet handlet om pavevalg og krass maktstrid mellom paven og keiseren. Debatten om kirkens samfunnsengasjement er gammel. I år diskuterte de protestantiske kirkelederne hvordan kirkene sammen kan gi et samstemt og tydelig kristent vitnesbyrd i vår tids Europa.

Det var spesielt å diskutere dagens utfordringer i Europa hvor menneskeverd og rettigheter settes i spill i møte med



migrasjon, populisme og nasjonalisme i katedralen hvor Erasmus av Rotterdam er gravlagt, og Karl Barth talte. Sjelden har vi opplevd et slikt møterom. Deltakerne satt ved langbord i midtgangen, og hundre små lykter med levende lys lyste opp rommet sammen med et dust dagslys gjennom glassmaleriene.



Vertskapet i Basel var Føderasjonen av protestantiske kirker i Sveits og Den reformerte kirke i Basel, og sammen med ledelsen og administrasjonen i CPCE, sørget de for et svært velorganisert møte med en god stemning. Logistikken fungerte utmerket. Møtet ble brutt opp av søndagens feiring av «Swiss Day of Prayer and Thanksgiving» med gudstjeneste, kirkekaffe med varme ostesmørbrød, kaker og vin og kulturelt program med karnevalsopptrinn.

Den siste kvelden inviterte sveitserne til båttur på Rhinen med god mat og drikke og trivelig avskjed med Michael Bünker, generalsekretæren gjennom mange år. Kvelden toppet seg da han slo seg helt løs på trommer og spilte med i stabens hyllest.

Det var en god balanse mellom gudstjenesteliv, forhandlinger i plenum og ulike grupper som gikk igjennom resultatet av ulike studieprosesser og planen framover. Som vanlig på slike møter, er det litt krevende å formidle samtalene i gruppene tilbake til drøftingene og beslutninger i plenum. Dette gjaldt særlig planprosessen. Plandokumentet «Being Church Together, Aims 2018-2024» var utsendt på forhånd. Generalforsamlingen skulle gi innspill til det nye rådet som skal vedta dokumentet.



Forrige CPCE-generalforsamling i Firenze i 2012 var noe kaotisk, bl.a. når det gjaldt beslutningsformaliteter. På forhånd var det denne gangen sendt ut et dokument som avklarte hvorledes ulike vedtaksformuleringer skal fortolkes. Enkelt sagt handler dette om å tydeliggjøre at CPCE ikke kan gjøre vedtak som binder den enkelte medlemskirke. I en litt større sammenheng handler det om hva slags fellesskap CPCE skal være. Noen kirker ønsker å gå i retning av et tettere og mer forpliktende fellesskap («communion»), men andre bl.a. Den norske kirke og den danske Folkekirken, ikke ønsker en utvikling som går i retning av en europeisk protestantisk synode. Dokumentet «Church Communion», som er resultat av en studieprosess som ble igangsatt etter forrige generalforsamling i 2012, var en av hovedsakene på årets generalforsamling. Sammen med studiedokumentet om religionsmangfold og dialog i Europa, «Religious Plurality», var «Church Communion» det som har engasjert Den norske kirke mest, som vi har vært involvert i, og levert høringsvar til.



Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad ble tatt opp som medlemskirke. Det ble inngått en intensjonsavtale om økumenisk dialog mellom CPCE og Det pavelige råd for å fremme

kristen enhet (Vatikanet), og generalforsamlingen vedtok en uttalelse i anledning hundre-årsmarkeringen for avslutningen av første verdenskrig og en om solidaritet med de kristne i Midtøsten. Andrea Riccardi, grunnleggeren av Sant'Egidio-felleskapet, holdt et svært interessant foredrag, «Our responsibility for the future of Europe», og oppfordret kirkene til et fortsatt sterkt engasjement for flyktninger i en situasjon hvor Europa i økende grad preges av fremmedfrykt, populisme og usunn nasjonalisme.

Den norske delegasjonen og nordisk formøte



Mellomkirkelig råds (MKR) leder Kristine Sandmæl ledet en delegasjon som også bestod av Stein Reinertsen, Tron Fagermoen og Eivind Hermstad. Kristin Graff-Kallevåg deltok som utgående rådsmedlem, og MKRs generalsekretær var med som rådgiver for delegasjonen. I tillegg deltok Stephanie Dietrich, tidligere visepresident i CPCE. Dette var en delegasjon som utfylte hverandre, jobbet godt sammen og fant tonen i sosiale sammenhenger.

Den norske kirke har et svært nært samarbeid med den danske Folkekirken. Vi hadde et meget nyttig forberedelsesmøte sammen i København i august og jobbet også tett sammen under dagene i Basel, særlig når det gjaldt saken om «Church Communion», hvor Ulla Schmidt gjorde en god innsats på vegne av de nordiske kirkene, noe som bidro til at vi fikk gjennomslag for våre anliggende.

Hovedpunkter i programmet

Gudstjenesteliv

Morgen-, ettermiddags- og kveldsbønner øverst i koret i katedralen rammet inn dagene. Et orkester sammensatt av stewards bidro med flott sang og musikk. Liturgiene var preget av uformell protestantisme og stor variasjon. Det var selvsagt også åpnings- og avslutningsgudstjenester og søndagsmesse.

Økumeniske gjester

De mange økumeniske gjestene satte sitt preg på generalforsamlingen gjennom sine hilsener som var spredt ut gjennom dagene. Generalsekretær Olav Fykse Tveit hilste fra Kirkenes verdensråd, president Christian Krüger fra Konferansen av europeiske kirker (KEK), generalsekretær Rosangela Jarjour fra Fellowship of Middle East Evangelical Churches og Matthias Türk fra Det pavelige råd for fremme av kristen enhet. Det var også hilsener fra bl.a. Det lutherske verdensforbund og Communion of Reformed Churches. Slike hilsener er med på å synliggjøre at CPCE hører hjemme i en større økumenisk sammenheng – men noen av hilsenene var litt svevende og langtøkkelige.

Rapporter fra presidentskapet og generalsekretæren

Presidentskapet og generalsekretæren la fram gode og innholdsrike rapporter om arbeidet i CPCE siden forrige generalforsamling i Firenze. CPCE har vedtatt noen endringer i sin

konstitusjon som gjør at CPCE nå er registrert som en uavhengig organisasjon i tråd med østerisk rett og dermed kan ansette stab selv. Hittil har CPCE juridisk vært knyttet til den protestantiske kirke i Østerrike. Michael Bünker går av som generalsekretær nå, og Mario Ficher er på vei inn som ny.

Rapportene understreket behovet for et protestantisk fellesskap i Europa, selv om mange av kirkene også er medlemmer av KEK. Det regionale samarbeidet oppleves som viktig, og nord/vest-regionene som Norden tilhører, ble oppfordret til enda tettere samarbeid. Dette er viktig ikke minst pga. uroen knyttet til Brexit. CPCE har – underlig nok – også fem medlemskirker i Latin-Amerika (immigranter fra Europa).

Generalsekretæren understreket viktigheten av studieprosessen om etikk som er med på å gjøre de protestantiske kirkene til viktig etiske stemmer i dagens Europa. Han trakk også fram salmekonkurransen og tilstedeværelse i Wittenberg i forbindelse med reformasjons-markeringen og utarbeidelse av liturgisk materiell til hundreårsmarkeringen av avslutningen av første verdenskrig.

Valg

Sveitseren Gottfried Locher (t.v.) ble gjenvalgt som president og Miram Rose, fra Tyskland og John Bradbury fra Storbritannia ble visepresidenter.



Det ble også valgt et nytt råd. Ulla Schmidt er rådsmedlem fra den danske Folkekirken og Tron Fagermoen hennes vara. Vi har tradisjon for dansk-norsk samarbeid og ambulerende av fast møtende medlem og vara.

Det kom kritikk i møtet om at valget til nytt råd skjedde for raskt, slik at man ikke hadde noen mulighet til å bli kjent med kandidatene før en stemte.

Studieprosesser og dokumenter

Generalforsamlingen i Firenze igangsatte en rekke studieprosesser som resulterte i flere dokumenter som ble lagt fram under generalforsamlingen:

- Church Communion
- Plurality of Religions
- Ethics of reproductive medicine
- Continuing theological education
- Theology of Diaspora
- Education for the Future

For Den norske kirke er det de tre første som har størst relevans. I høringsdokumentet til «Church Communion» uttrykker Den norske kirke skepsis til om en utvikling i CPCE går i retning av et tett og forpliktende samarbeid – noe som kan ligne en protestantisk synode eller en kirke i Europa. Folkekirkene i Norge og Danmark har en historie, oppslutning og egenart som ikke gjør det naturlig for oss å være en del av en så sterkt fellesskap. For protestantiske minoritetskirker, ikke minst i Sør- og Øst-Europa, er situasjonen annerledes. De har et større behov for et nærmere fellesskap med andre protestantiske kirker. Også fra tysk side har enkelte ønsket en utvikling i retning av et mer forpliktende fellesskap i CPCE.

Det var derfor med en viss spenning den norske og danske delegasjonen deltok aktivt i arbeidsgruppen som arbeidet med denne saken, og som skulle fremme vedtaksforslag til plenum. Timer med forberedelse og godt samarbeid mellom nordmenn og dansker førte til at vi fikk gjennomslag for våre viktigste anliggender. Uklare begreper som «One Church» ble endret i dokumentet, og vi fikk presidentens forsikring i plenum om at det ikke forelå planer om at CPCE skal utvikle seg til et synodelignende fellesskap – i hvert fall ikke de første 20-50 år. Det ble også sagt tydelig ifra om at CPCE ikke kan gjøre vedtak som influerer på det enkelte medlems egne vedtekter og selvforståelse. Dermed kunne Norge og Danmark stemme for vedtaksforslaget (se vedlegg).

Når det gjelder dokumentet om religiøs pluralitet, hadde Den norske kirke også en rekke innvendinger i sitt høringssvar, ikke minst knyttet til forståelsen av “radikal nåde”. Innvendingene ble framført i arbeidsgruppa og i plenum – også fra dansk side, men uten at en fikk noe særlig gjennomslag. Det ble presisert at dokumentet er ment som studiedokument og ikke noe dogmatisk dokument om forståelsen av forholdet mellom kristendom og andre religioner. Norge fremmet et forslag om å erstatte “approve” med “receive” i vedtaket, men det fikk bare 15 stemmer. Den norske delegasjonen delte seg, mens alle danske stemte imot å “approve” dokumentet. Med det ble godkjent med noen ganske få stemmer (under 10) imot.

Etikkdokumentet er allerede publisert, og det har blitt svært godt mottatt. Det er et grundig og omfattende dokument om etikk ved livets begynnelse. Dette er en viktig ressurs både for kirkene og mediske miljøer, og det bør gjøres mer for å gjøre det bedre kjent i Norge.

Flere av de andre dokumentene handler om saker som er mer relevante for de små protestantiske kirkene enn for Den norske kirke. Det handler om slikt som teologisk utdanning, behov for felles liturgier og forhold i migrantkirker.

Planer framover: «Being Church together»

Plandokumentet har tre hovedmål for CPCEs arbeid fram mot neste generalforsamling:

- 1) The protestant Churches deepen their Church communion
- 2) The protestant Churches promote Christian unity
- 3) The protestant Churches serve society

Det ble jobbet med planene i ulike verksteder, og innspill herfra blir oversendt det nye rådet som ferdigstiller planene. Det vises til vedlagte «Final Report» som oppsummerer innspillene fra av verkstedene.

Dialog med Den romerske-katolske kirke

Det ble lagt fram en rapport om samarbeid mellom CPCE og Det pavelige råd for kristen enhet i Vatikanet. Det har vært gode samtaler, og generalforsamlingen gledet seg over at det nå ble inngått en intensjonsavtale om å innlede en mer formalisert økumenisk dialog. Dette er et godt tegn i et Europa som også preges av polarisering mellom kirker.

Flere glimt av en ivrig delegasjon fra Den norske kirke:



Vedlegg:

FINAL REPORT 8th General Assembly of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE) – Leuenberg Church Fellowship – Sept. 13th to 18th 2018, in Basel

Mer om generalforsamlingen finnes her: <https://cpce-assembly.eu/?lang=en>

**8th General Assembly of the
Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE)
– Leuenberg Church Fellowship –
Sept. 13th to 18th 2018, in Basel**

FINAL REPORT

1. Introduction

“Liberated – connected – committed” was the theme for the 8th General Assembly of the “Community of Protestant Churches in Europe – Leuenberg Church Fellowship” (CPCE), which took place in Basel from 13 to 18 September 2018. It was co-hosted by the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches and the Evangelical Reformed Church of the City of Basel. 96 delegates represented the member churches, accompanied by another 52 advisors and guests.

Fellowship in worship has played a predominant role in realising the communion between the churches since the General Assembly held in Budapest in 2006. Thus, the joint celebration of worship also stood at the heart of proceedings in Basle, conducted in the city’s late-Romanesque cathedral and the adjoining Bishop’s Palace. The opening service of worship was arranged by representatives of the local Protestant churches, while the newly elected Council was inaugurated during the closing worship. On Sunday, the General Assembly participants celebrated Switzerland’s Day of Prayer of Thanksgiving, Repentance and Prayer together with the cathedral’s congregation. Morning and evening prayers as well as lunchtime prayers were expressions of our shared spiritual life. Fellowship was also enjoyed on the opening evening, in the company of the host churches on the Swiss Day, and during the closing evening.

The ecumenical importance of the CPCE was evident in the greetings presented by, amongst others, General Secretary Olav Fykse Tveit from the World Council of Churches and the President of the Conference of European Churches, Christian Krieger. Representatives of the Lutheran World Federation (Klára Tarr Cselovzky for Martin Junge), the World Communion of Reformed Churches (Martina Wasserloos-Strunk), the European Baptist Federation (Anthony Peck), the Anglican Churches of Britain and Ireland (Jonathan Gibbs), the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (Matthias Türk) und der European Christian Convention (Katerina Karkala-Zorba) also addressed the General Assembly. In her greeting on behalf of the Fellowship of Middle East Evangelical Churches, its General Secretary Rosangela Jarjour spoke about the lasting strong relationship, while Richard Fasunloye, the General Secretary of the Unification Council of the Cherubim and Seraphim Churches, heralded an imminent link with those churches in Europe rooted in other continents. A special highlight was the ceremonial signing of a “Declaration of Intent to Commence Joint Dialogue” by the President of the CPCE and the President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christianity, Cardinal Kurt Koch.

It was a particular pleasure for the General Assembly to welcome the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad as 108th signatory church.

The Presidium and General Secretary of the CPCE delivered two very comprehensive reports. The Presidium's Report summarised the work conducted during the preceding six years. A paper entitled "Being church together" outlined the key considerations in setting the aims for the period until the next General Assembly.

General Secretary Michael Bünker contextualised the CPCE and its activities within the social and political situation in Europe. He emphasised the Churches' duty to foster reconciliation and social cohesion, reiterating the CPCE's task of raising the common voice of Protestantism in Europe. He rounded off by presenting an overview of fundamental decisions about the direction of the CPCE, including anchoring the head office in Vienna long-term and establishing a formal legal status. It was his final report as General Secretary, and the General Assembly received it with a prolonged standing ovation.

In his talk entitled "Responsibility for the future of Europe", Andrea Riccardi, the founder of the Community of Sant'Egidio in Rome, spoke about fear as the new European malaise. Christians have the chance to be liberated from this and thus to turn their backs on the grey horizon by refocusing on their neighbour, the "sacrament of the poor".

The documents compiled and other projects conducted during the previous six years were discussed in five working groups and six focus groups. Five "workshops on the future" set the main emphases for the CPCE's forthcoming work during the six years ahead. The outgoing Council prepared the groundwork for these discussions through compiling a strategy document entitled "Being Church Together". The conclusions of these groups have been incorporated into this Final Report.

The General Assembly resolved to amend the statute of the CPCE (see Appendix 1) and elected the new Council (see Appendix 2). It discussed and passed a statement commemorating the centenary of the end of the First World War (see Appendix 3) and a statement on the situation in the Middle East (see Appendix 4).

2. Resolutions regarding the work done in 2012-2018

2.1. Church communion

1. The General Assembly amends the text at four places (five in the German text) in the paragraphs 90, 91, 99, and 112 (see Appendix 5).
2. The General Assembly thanks the participants in the 2015 consultation and the editorial group for compiling the outcome of the doctrinal conversation on church communion.
3. It welcomes the discussion of the findings of the doctrinal conversation amongst the member churches and expresses its thanks for the range of responses, the evaluation of which has been incorporated into the final version.
4. The General Assembly considers the outcome of the doctrinal conversation to be a good description of the model of church communion on which the CPCE is based. It adopts the outcome of the doctrinal conversation and asks that it be taken into account in the future when determining the CPCE's internal organisation and external relationships.

5. The General Assembly supports the deepening of communion of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe, and that this continue to be done in conformity with the legislative provisions of member churches.
6. Recognising the content of the report “Church Communion”, the General Assembly requests the Council to engage in a process to re-name, in English, the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe to the Communion of Protestant Churches in Europe.
7. The Council is instructed, with regard to the reception of the text “Church Communion”, to particularly focus on the question of what it means to speak of the CPCE as church / one church / church together.

2.2. Plurality of Religions

1. The General Assembly thanks the participants in the 2015 consultation and the editorial group for compiling the study document on religious plurality.
2. It welcomes the discussion of the study document amongst the member churches and expresses its thanks for the range of responses, the evaluation of which has been incorporated into the final version.
3. The General Assembly considers the document to be a helpful contribution towards a shared understanding of the basic principles of the inter-religious work performed by the Protestant churches in Europe. It approves the document and recommends that the member churches study it.

2.3. Continuing theological education

1. The General Assembly thanks the participants in the 2015 consultation and editorial group for compiling the study document “Continuing education for ordained office in the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe”.
2. It also expresses its thanks for the range of responses by the member churches, the evaluation of which has been incorporated into the final version.
3. The General Assembly approves the study document and recommends that the member churches consider the study document with regard to reforms in continuing education for ordained officeholders and for comparable voluntary ministries in the areas of preaching, administering the sacraments and pastoral care.

2.4. Theology of Diaspora

1. The General Assembly thanks the participants in the study process and the editorial group for compiling the study document “Theology of Diaspora”.
2. It receives the document and suggests its discussion by the member churches.
3. It mandates the Council to develop a discussion paper with theses and open questions for use in congregations.

2.5. Study document “Education for the Future”

1. The General Assembly thanks the South-East Europe Regional Group for compiling the study document “Education for the Future”.

2. It receives the document and welcomes its discussion by the member churches.
3. The CPCE promotes educational exchange between the member churches.

2.6. Consultations CPCE – PCPCU

1. The General Assembly thanks the CPCE delegation led by Church President Christian Schad for compiling the “Report on Church and Church Communion” with a delegation from the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.
2. The General Assembly receives the report. It expresses an appropriate description of the Protestant model of church communion. The General Assembly is pleased about the lines of convergence with the Roman Catholic standpoints that the report was able to identify.
3. The General Assembly regards the report as a source of encouragement for opening official dialogue. It authorizes the president of CPCE to sign the respective Declaration of Intent with the president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. It mandates the Council of the CPCE to shape an appropriate form of dialogue with the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

2.7. Migration and church communion

1. The General Assembly thanks the expert group on “Migration and Church Communion” for its work and report on this subject.
2. The General Assembly receives the report.

2.8. Ethics of reproductive medicine

1. The General Assembly thanks the participants of the hearing and consultation meeting and the Expert Group on Ethics for compiling “*Before I formed you in the womb...*” *A Guide to the Ethics of Reproductive Medicine*.
2. It takes note of the guide and recommends it to the member churches for discussion and further work.

2.9. Statute

1. The General Assembly resolves to amend the Statute of the CPCE that was approved by the 2006 General Assembly in Budapest.
2. It approves the draft of the amended Statute presented by the Council.

3. Resolutions on the fields of work from 2019 onwards

3.1. Theological Work

The General Assembly asks the Council to initiate theological work on the following themes:

1. The General Assembly asks the Council to initiate a process on how to understand the role and task of the CPCE. On the basis of the mapping of CPCE's self-understanding and its perception by member churches, this process should set out the

consequences of the agreement on the understanding of the Gospel and the mutual recognition of the churches as churches for the joint worship/spiritual, theological and diaconal life of the churches in church communion. The result could be a *charta* of church communion which would include a collection of commitments that have already been made, results that have already been achieved and their spiritual impact on member churches.

2. The General Assembly asks the Council to initiate a study process on practice and theology of the Holy Communion. The process should start with the challenges arising from church practice. The process should reflect the following questions: What does it mean to be an inviting Church in a multi-cultural context? Who is invited: the baptized, the instructed, the confirmed, the church member or everyone? The discussion will have to reflect ecumenical implications.
3. The General Assembly requests the Council to install a working group to study and to give practical advise on how the Gospel can be presented in a way that is relevant to people from young to old.
4. The General Assembly asks the Council to seek appropriate ways of reflecting the following topics which were also regarded of importance by member Churches:
 - Speaking about God from a Protestant perspective
 - Theology of ministry and service - reflecting anew on the relationship of lay and ordained ministry, non-stipendiary and full-time ministries, and shapes of congregations
 - To be a Serving Church – the diaconal dimension of being church
 - Soteriology and ecclesiology

3.2. Social ethics

1. The General Assembly asks the Council to initiate a study process on the topic “Ethical differences and church communion” which addresses the following issues: What questions belong to those calling for ethical discretion, which ethical questions are to be decided by individuals, part of their responsibility? What points of disagreement are tolerable within the definable limits of diversity, and what ethical disagreements threaten church communion? How do we concretely deal with differences that endanger church communion? And what impacts do ethical differences have for ecumenical conversations with other churches? How can the believed unity in reconciled diversity be preserved and prove itself in the tension between consensus and conflict?

The Assembly asks the Council to initiate study processes on the following topics of social ethics:

2. Democracy

In recent years, the understanding of democracy has been plunged into crisis by various developments. In view of the highly complex interrelationship of world affairs parliamentarianism appears to be overtaxed and at the mercy of expert knowledge. Various processes such as globalisation, the growth of social inequality, the experiences of refugee and migration movements, etc. have also promoted a considerable increase in populism, nationalism and xenophobia, which also calls the European integration process into question. The Protestant churches in Europe have

very different historical experiences with their relationship to society, state, nation and political Europe in the form of the EU and the Council of Europe. Even today their situations are very different. In view of the centrifugal forces in Europe it is the task of the Protestant churches in Europe with reference to their self-understanding of a "unity in reconciled diversity" to reflect again on the Protestant understanding of democracy. The South-East Europe Regional Group is invited to participate in this study process on 'Democracy as a Challenge for Churches and Societies' through case studies from this region.

3. The moral significance of nature and what is 'natural'

Nature often encounters ethical judgements. Therefore, an intensive examination of the concept of nature is inevitable. In contrast to the Catholic tradition, the more recent Protestant theology and ethics are in part critical of the tradition of natural law. In connection with the natural there are questions about illness, health and disability. An anthropology that not only considers people with disabilities, but is designed from their point of view, is still to a large extent an unredeemed desideratum. In bioethical, medical-ethical and ecological contexts, but also in connection with sexuality, marriage and family, a redefinition of the natural seems urgently desirable from an evangelical-theological perspective.

4. Sexuality and Gender

How can Protestant ethics deal with issues of marriage, family and gender? What theological statements can be made on marriage and family and on sexual ethics in general - including the questions that arise with the themes of intersexuality, transsexuality and the queer movement? And how should the CPCE deal with existing dissent on these issues? Sexuality and gender have influences on other ethical issues, e.g. migration.

5. Human Dignity related to Digitalisation and Media

Social media and the advancing digitalization pose new challenges to the formulation of human dignity. What is the human being in the digital world? In this context the question of the future of the next generations arises. The Forum of Young Theology in Europe could be a suitable platform for cooperation in this field.

6. The General Assembly welcomes the research groups about „Mixed Economy“ and „Churches in Rural Areas“ which emerged from the document „Ecclesia Semper Reformanda“. It recommends to the Council to continue to support them and to collect results and to disseminate them among regional groups.

7. The General Assembly asks the Council to continue to promote the guide *“Before I formed you in the womb...”* and to collate responses to it. This might be through: drawing together interested professional practitioners in consultation; the production of materials for local use regarding particular topics that arise in pastoral contexts; and the promotion through existing European bodies and networks, for example European networks of teachers of Religious Education.

3.3. Education

1. The General Assembly asks the Council to establish an advisory board for education.

2. The General Assembly welcomes the participation of young people in the work of CPCE and recommends the Council to strengthen their participation. The General Assembly asks the Council to initiate study processes involving young ecumenists.
3. Based on the positive experiences gained in the "Forum on Education in Europe", the General Assembly requests that the Council conduct consultations between the education officers of the CPCE's member churches.

3.4. Witness and Service

1. The General Assembly asks the Council to advise member churches and their diaconal institutions in suitable ways about possible European cooperation and if possible to facilitate such contacts. The General Assembly asks the Gustav-Adolf-Werk to continue the projects undertaken within the framework of the "Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Diasporawerke in Europa" (AGDE) in an operative way.
2. The General Assembly asks the Council to test further decentralized forms of contribution in the CPCE beyond the regional groups.
3. The General Assembly asks the Council to intensify contacts with CEC to strengthen the common witness and service in Europe.

3.5. Reformation Anniversary

In recognition of the positive experiences attached to the wide range of events commemorating the anniversary of the Reformation, the General Assembly asks the Council of the CPCE to record the results of these events in an appropriate manner, to continue to nurture the Cities of the Reformation network, and to carry on working on the theme of the perpetual reformation of the Church.

3.6. Migration

1. The General Assembly asks the Council to establish an advisory board replacing the current expert group. This will be responsible for all work on the topic "migration and church communion". It is to make suggestions to the Council of CPCE relating to relationships with migrant churches. This will include dialogue and encounters relating to theological/ecclesiological considerations as well as the area of witness and service (e.g. liturgy, worship, pastoral care and education).
2. The General Assembly asks the Council to continue and to intensify the dialogue with the Unification Council of the Cherubim and Seraphim Churches in the years to come. Exploratory talks shall be commenced with other migrant churches.
3. The General Assembly asks the Council to begin explorative talks with other migration churches, to create a framework for mutual learning, and to reflect on the meaning of "migration and church communion" for other projects.

3.7. Ecumenical Relations

1. The General Assembly asks the Council of CPCE to ensure that the dialogue with the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity will be undertaken in consultation with the Christian World Communions (Lutheran World Federation, World Communion of Reformed Churches, World Methodist Council).

2. The Assembly asks the Council to initiate further active relationships with the Anglican churches in Europe, taking into account the concrete situations in which member churches work with the Anglican churches. The question of recognizing one another as churches and partners in mission and the implications of this for the recognition of ministries might make an initial starting point.
3. The General Assembly asks the Council to intensify its engagement with the Fellowship of Middle-East Evangelical Churches.
4. The General Assembly asks the Council to engage in further conversations with the European Baptist Federation to evaluate developments and relationships since the last round of conversations.
5. The General Assembly asks the Council to take steps towards building relationships with churches of Evangelical, Charismatic and Pentecostal spirituality.
6. The General Assembly requests the Council to find ways to further contact with the Orthodox churches, perhaps in conjunction with CEC. This might be on matters of interest to the Orthodox churches such as developments within Orthodoxy currently, or theologies of diaspora.
7. The General Assembly requests the Council to assess whether there is a need to invite the member churches' ecumenical officers to a joint meeting and, if possible, to install a Protestant conference for ecumenical issues in Europe with them.
8. The General Assembly asks the Council to develop an instrument for the sharing of experiences of interreligious engagement between the member churches. This should continue to promote the study text *Plurality of Religions* and monitor its reception. It should aim to equip the Protestant engagement with such processes through continued theological reflection and the sharing of good practice.

3.8. Statute

1. The General Assembly passed the amendment to the Statute unanimously. It welcomes the fact that this can also make the CPCE legally capable and formalises the various processes and responsibilities within the CPCE.
2. At the same time, calls were made at the General Assembly for the clarification and specification of certain points. In particular, this relates to the description of the duties and responsibilities of the bodies cited in § 3: namely, a clearer distinction between the duties and responsibilities of the Presidium of the Council versus those of the Council. Equally, it was felt that the duties and responsibilities of the regional groups also need citing; in particular, pointing out the role of the written agreement between the Council and the regional group in ensuring the regional group's recognition. Furthermore, with regard to the regulation on official assistance in §2 (II), clarification was called for that this is subject to the voluntary compliance of the member church in question.
3. The Council is asked to address these points and potentially present proposed amendments to the Statute to the next General Assembly.

3.9. Priorities

The General Assembly mandates the Council to prioritise these projects, to examine their practicability and, taking into account resources, to commission their realisation.

Appendix 1: Statute of the CPCE

S t a t u t e of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe¹ – Leuenberg Church Fellowship –

§ 1

Community of Protestant Churches in Europe

- (I) ¹The Reformation churches in Europe assenting to the Agreement of Reformation Churches in Europe declare and realise church communion amongst one another. ²These churches form the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe – Leuenberg Church Fellowship (CPCE). ³The CPCE serves to bring about church communion as described in IV.2 of the Agreement of Reformation Churches in Europe, specifically through “their common undertaking of witness and service” and continuing theological work.
- (II) ¹More churches may enter this church fellowship on the basis of the Agreement of Reformation Churches in Europe by specific agreement. ²Details are set out in the guidelines establishing membership of the CPCE adopted by the Council.

§ 2

Legal status and head office

- (I) ¹The CPCE is a public corporation within the meaning of the Austrian law of 6 July 1961 on external legal relations of the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg and Helvetic Confessions (the “Protestant law”, Federal Law Gazette No. 182/1961 in the valid version). ²Its head office is in Vienna, Austria.
- (II) The CPCE may avail itself of administrative assistance from its Member Churches.

§ 3

Governing bodies

CPCE’s governing bodies are the

1. General Assembly
2. Council
3. Presidium of the Council
4. General Secretary
5. regional groups.

§ 4

The General Assembly

- (I) ¹The General Assembly is responsible for taking all decisions, particularly those of fundamental importance, unless otherwise stipulated in this statute. ²It has the following tasks, in particular:
1. taking policy decisions for CPCE activity, especially for the work of the Council;
 2. deliberating and deciding on the motions of members and on documents for decision presented by the Council;
 3. electing the members of the Council;
- ³The General Assembly shall adopt its own rules of procedure.
- (II) ¹The CPCE General Assembly shall, as a rule, convene every six years. ²It shall comprise the following members:
1. up to two delegates from each Member Church with the right to vote, speak and move motions;

¹A list of the Member Churches of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE) is accessible at:
<http://www.leuenberg.net/member-churches>

2. up to ten delegates appointed by the Council with the right to vote, speak and move motions;
 3. up to two delegates from each participating church with the right to speak and move motions, but not to vote;
 4. those members of the Council in office who are not delegates, as well as the CPCE General Secretary, who have the right to speak and move motions, but not to vote;
 5. advisors invited by the Council, who attend the General Assembly with the right to speak.
- (III) ¹The General Assembly shall have a quorum if at least half of voting members are present at the opening. ²A resolution shall be carried (passed) if more votes are cast in favour than against. ³Abstentions and invalid votes shall not be counted as votes cast. ⁴In the event of a tied vote the motion shall be deemed rejected.
- (IV) ¹The proceedings in plenary are public unless decided otherwise in an individual case.

§ 5

The Council

- (I) ¹The Council is responsible for the work between general assemblies. ²It has the following tasks, in particular:
1. promoting church communion on the basis of the Agreement of Reformation Churches in Europe and the resolutions of general assemblies;
 2. implementing the resolutions of the General Assembly;
 3. preparing the ground for new resolutions of the General Assembly;
 4. defining policy and issuing individual instructions for the work of CPCE, as long as this does not impinge on any exclusive competences of the General Assembly;
 5. accompanying the theological doctrinal conversations and working groups (advisory boards, regional groups, project groups);
 6. preparing for and holding General Assemblies;
 7. supervising the head office;
 8. adopting the CPCE budget;
 9. commissioning the audit and voting to approve the activities of head office staff, as required.
- ³The Council shall adopt its own rules of procedure.
- (II) ¹The Council shall be elected by the General Assembly. ²It shall have 13 members and a corresponding number of substitutes personally allocated to each one. ³The election of the Council must take appropriate account of the denominational and regional structure of CPCE. ⁴Retiring members shall be replaced by cooption.
- (III) ¹The Council shall generally convene once or twice a year. ²It shall meet for the first time during the General Assembly and elect from its midst a Presidium consisting of three presidents, one of them an executive member. ³The presidents shall represent the CPCE externally. They shall report to the Council.
- (IV) The term of office of the Council shall end when the Council elected by the next General Assembly has met and elected its Presidium.

§ 6

Head office, General Secretary

- (I) ¹The work of the General Assembly and the Council shall be supported by a head office. ²The head office shall work according to the instructions of the General Assembly and the Council.
- (II) ¹The head office shall be directed by the General Secretary. ²The General Secretary shall be appointed by the Council. ³He or she shall manage the day-to-day business. ⁴He or she shall be accountable to the General Assembly and the Council. ⁵The Council shall adopt rules of procedure for the head office.

§ 7

Representation in legal transactions

¹The CPCE shall be represented by the Executive President or the General Secretary. ²Transactions with a total value exceeding EUR 50,000 in the individual case may only be undertaken jointly by the above-mentioned persons.

§ 8

Applicable law

Unless otherwise determined, applicable law shall be that of the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg and Helvetic Confessions in Austria, as well as of the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Austria and the Evangelical Church of the Helvetic Confession in Austria.

§ 9

Budget

¹The CPCE budget shall be financed by contributions from all churches and from grants. ²The assessment of contributions is designed to take account of the size and financial capacity of the Member Churches. ³Attending CPCE events and participating in its governing bodies presupposes the regular payment of contributions. ⁴The budget shall be generally based on the financial year and must balance income and expenditure. ⁵The budget shall be adopted by the Council.

§ 10

Amending the statute

- (I) ¹This statute can only be amended by a resolution expressly changing or supplementing its wording. ²The resolution shall require the approval of two thirds of the voting members present at the General Assembly.
- (II) ¹At least three months before the discussion, relevant documents for decision, along with an explanation by the Presidium, must be available to the members of the General Assembly and the church executives of the Member Churches, so that they can respond. ²These documents must contain the wording of the proposed amendments and a statement of reasons.

§ 11

Withdrawal of a Member Church

- (I) Withdrawal from the CPCP takes place when a Member Church informs the Council in writing of its wish to leave.
- (II) ¹Irrespective of paragraph 1, a Member Church shall leave the CPCE if the theological preconditions for the declaration of church communion are no longer given and this has been established by resolution of the General Assembly. ²The resolution shall require the approval of two thirds of voting members present; the withdrawal shall take effect with the resolution.
- (III) The withdrawal of a Member Church from the CPCE marks the termination of office of all members of the General Assembly and the Council belonging to the relevant Member Church.

§ 12

Final provisions

- (I) ¹The General Assembly shall decide on the disbanding of the CPCE. ²The resolution shall require a majority of two thirds of voting members present at the General Assembly. ³In the event of the CPCE disbanding, its assets shall – after settling all liabilities – fall to the CPCE Member Churches in proportion to their average contributions over the last five years.

Appendix 2: Elections

The General Assembly elected a new CPCE Council on 14.9.2018. The following persons belong to it:

Members of the Council	Substitute members of the Council
1. Christian Albecker France, Lutheran	1. Agnès von Kirchbach France, United
2. Ingrid Bachler Austria, Lutheran	2. Daniel Zikeli Romania, Lutheran
3. John Bradbury United Kingdom, Reformed	3. Jan-Gerd Heetderks Netherlands, United
4. Marcin Brzoska Poland, Lutheran	4. Thomas-Andreas Pöder Estonia, Lutheran
5. Pawel Gajewski Italy, Reformed	5. Dimitris Boukis Greece, Reformed
6. Gottfried Locher Switzerland, Reformed	6. Martin Hirzel Switzerland, Reformed
7. Michael Martin Germany, Lutheran	7. Klaus Rieth Germany, Lutheran
8. Georg Plasger Germany, Reformed	8. Ulrike Trautwein Germany, United
9. Miriam Rose Germany, Lutheran/United	9. Frank Kopania Germany, United
10. Barbara Rudolph Germany, United	10. Susanne Bei der Wieden Germany, United
11. Ulla Schmidt Denmark, Lutheran	11. Tron Fagermoen Norway, Lutheran
12. Klára Tarr Cselovszky Hungary, Lutheran	12. Sándor Fazakas Hungary, Reformed
13. David Turtle Ireland, Methodist	13. Jørgen Thaarup Denmark, Methodist

The Council was constituted on 17.9.2018 and elected a three-member Presidium consisting of Gottfried Locher (Executive President), Miriam Rose and John Bradbury.

Appendix 3:

Appendix 4:

Appendix 5: Changes in the outcome of the doctrinal discussion *Church communion*:

90) If communion in worship is an expression of realized visible unity in the CPCE, then it is necessary to strengthen the awareness that the churches of the CPCE are ~~one~~ church together and to profess that faith clearly (see above § 56).

91) This awareness of ~~together~~ being ~~one~~ church together, and not merely a league or federation of churches, does not in the least mean uniformity.

99) The experience of communion in worship implies something more than existing church communion. It implies that new challenges are to be recognized and confronted. In more and more countries in Europe, new congregations are arising, which are often closely related to the Lutheran, Reformed, United and Methodist traditions, and consciously appeal to these traditions, but have scarcely any contact with CPCE churches. These are often new ethnic congregations, usually of migrants, or (neo)Pentecostal groups.

~~Diversity here rests not so much on theological decisions, but it is experienced particularly in spirituality and in the forms of piety and worship.~~

Diversity here is experienced particularly in spirituality and in the forms of piety and worship, but can also rest on theological decisions.

112) ~~Most of the churches in the CPCE regulate the task of their mission and their common life in the framework of a church order. For the CPCE it is desirable that there should be, in addition to its statutes, a *Charta of church communion*, yet to be developed. In this would be worked out what follows from what was established on the basis of the Leuenberg Agreement: agreement in the gospel and the reciprocal recognition of churches as churches for the worshipping, spiritual, theological and diaconal common life of the churches in the church communion. The *Charta* should describe the mutual spiritual commitments of the churches in the five forms of experience of church communion in the CPCE that have already been identified.~~