

Floor Committee 03: Commission on Inter-Church Relations

Subject: The Work of the Commission on Inter-Church Relations (CICR)

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, p. 20-22

Report No. 01

The Commission on Inter-Church Relations (CICR) is to “serve under the Conference of Presidents by representing the synod in doctrinal discussions with other church bodies who are, or are not, in fellowship with the synod” and to “keep itself informed on the doctrinal trends in other church bodies.”

In an effort to better coordinate efforts between the CICR, the Board for World Missions (BWM) and the Pastoral Studies Institute of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (PSI), all of which receive inquiries and requests for declarations of fellowship or assistance in educating pastors in their countries, Rev. Paul Prange was appointed to the position of administrator of CICR. May God bless Pastor Prange as he takes up the task before him.

The work of the CICR is evidenced by the work being done in cooperation with numerous church bodies throughout the world. We rejoice that the WELS is a member of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC), which consists of 32 confessional Lutheran church bodies throughout the world that are in fellowship with one another. We encourage the CICR to continue their work to recognize or establish unity of doctrine and practice with faithful church bodies throughout the world.

In North America, the WELS continues to enjoy a strong fellowship with our sister synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. The CICR continues to monitor developments with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod; (LCMS) through informal meetings between leaders of the WELS, ELS and LCMS. While these meetings have been beneficial, the representatives of all three church bodies agree that fellowship between the ELS and WELS, on the one hand, and the LCMS, on the other, is not imminent. We commend the informal meetings and encourage such meetings to continue.

The CICR continues talks with the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC). Representatives of the WELS, ELS and CLC worked together on a document entitled, “Joint Statement Regarding Termination of Fellowship.” The CLC has resolved to make a final decision on the statement at its 2020 convention. We commend the CICR in its work to establish fellowship with the CLC and encourage them to continue that effort.

Our synod thanks Professor John Brenner who completed his term on July 1st as chairman of the CICR. His work has been a blessing to the WELS and to our brothers and sisters in faith scattered throughout the world. We wish God's blessings to Prof. James Danell who was elected as the next chairman of the CICR.

Fruit of the CICR efforts can also be seen in the two resolutions we have to present to the convention regarding the Christian Lutheran Evangelical Church (CLEC) in Taiwan and the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ-Kenya (LCMC-Kenya).

We have two resolutions for welcoming the two church bodies.

Pastor Michael A. Schroeder, chairman

Teacher Steven R. Towne, secretary

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