

Floor Committee #3: Commission on Inter-Church Relations

Subject: The work of the Commission on Inter-Church Relations—Part one

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 19-22

Report No. 01

What a blessing to review the work of the Commission on Inter-Church Relations (CICR). According to our WELS bylaws, the CICR is charged 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.” We are grateful for the summary of this work, which the CICR provided in its report to the convention. We also are grateful for the service of Prof. Keith Wessel, who has now concluded his final term on the commission, having served as our contact man for our sister churches in Scandinavia.

World Missions One Teams

It is gratifying to see the close connection between the work of the CICR and the Board for World Missions “in assisting established and emerging church bodies from around the globe who are looking for fellowship with WELS and for assistance in educating pastors in their countries in confessional Lutheranism.” In this connection, representatives from the CICR work with our world mission “One Teams” in Asia, Africa, Europe, and Latin America.

Many requests for fellowship discussions, particularly from church bodies in Africa, have led the CICR to develop a “four-stage toolkit” as a process for determining whether fellowship exists or not. This toolkit, for example, was helpful in the two years-plus of discussions with the Obadiah Lutheran Synod in Uganda, with whom we have the honor of declaring fellowship at this convention. We pray for God’s continued blessing on all the discussions currently being held with various church bodies around the globe. We also pray for God’s blessing on this work in parts of the world where it is becoming increasingly difficult—or impossible—to travel, such as in some parts of Asia.

In regard to our work in Europe, we make special mention of the war in Ukraine, which has had a “significant impact” on our sister churches in Russia and Ukraine. God speed the day when our work in those places can be done in more peace and quietness.

The work of the online education program in Latin America (*Academia Cristo*) has been greatly blessed and has resulted in the formation of a number of Christian groups throughout Latin America. The work of our sister church in Colombia has led the way to form *Iglesia Cristo WELS Internacional* with these groups. As a result of this work, we will have the ability to affirm our fellowship *with Iglesia Cristo WELS Internacional* at this convention.

Pastor David Kolander, chairman

Teacher Martin Miller, secretary