

Floor Committee #3: Commission on Inter-Church Relations

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

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

Report No. 02

Other church bodies

In our country we continue to be privileged to walk in unity with the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS). We pray for God's blessing on the work of ELS President Glenn Obenberger as he continues to guide our brothers and sisters in the fellowship of faith we enjoy.

We are saddened by the cessation of formal doctrinal discussions with the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC). ("Formal doctrinal discussions take place when there is reason to believe that there may be doctrinal agreement.") We pray the Lord would allow these discussions to resume at some point.

While we have not held "formal doctrinal discussions" with the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS), we note that the CICR "strongly endorses the continuation of the informal talks with the Missouri Synod," with "full confidence in those who represent the commission in them." These informal discussions began in 2012. We are thankful that these conversations on various doctrines and topics have been deemed "beneficial for both synods, as well as for our sister synod, the ELS, which is a full partner in the talks." Our committee's report will include a resolution in regard to these discussions in connection with Memorial 2023-03, which was assigned to us for consideration.

That same memorial notes a concern about the LCMS president addressing the delegates of the 2021 convention from the podium.

We understand that the LCMS president's first-time attendance of our synod convention as a guest provided an opportunity for us to welcome him and for him to extend a greeting to us in connection with the informal discussions that are currently being carried out. We are grateful for the candor of his words of appreciation for the opportunity to carry out these informal discussions, together with the agreement that it was necessary for WELS to break with the LCMS in 1961. He also concurred that much work still remains to be done before there could be any thought of beginning formal doctrinal discussions.

At the same time, we give our encouragement that, if such a special circumstance should again arise in which a speaker outside of our fellowship might be considered to address the synod in convention, our synod president work with our Conference of Presidents to give appropriate explanation and the necessary publicity, to whatever degree that is possible, to keep the members of our synod informed as to what is taking place, since this has not been our general practice.

Finally, what joy must have been experienced by those who attended the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC), which was held in Seoul, South Korea, from June 6–8, 2023. Thirty-four church bodies are part of this conference, which is the international association of churches in fellowship with WELS. God be praised for this blessed fellowship of faith and love.

Pastor David Kolander, chairman
Teacher Martin Miller, secretary