

ILC Chairman's Meditation

By Bishop Hans-Jörg Voigt

*"Now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt and serve the Lord. And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. **But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.**" (Joshua 24:14-16)*

Near the town of Geismar in the German province of Hesse there was in 724 A.D. an assembly similar to



the one in Joshua's time. So we are told in the history of St. Boniface, for in the "Vita Bonifatii" we read as follows:

"In those days many Hessians received the laying on of hands, but others, whose spirit had not yet become strong, refused to receive the truths of the pure faith; some continued secretly to sacrifice at trees and water springs, and some did it right in the open. Others were engaged in predictions, fortune telling and magic; still others concerned themselves with amulets and portents and followed various kinds of sacrifice customs; others, however, who had a healthier view of things and had renounced the worship of heathen idols did nothing of the sort. In accord with their counsel and assistance Boniface, in the presence of the servants of God who accompanied him, began to cut down a giant oak tree, referred to by its old name as the Jupiter Oak, situated near Gesmere. After Boniface, confident and with strong conviction, had begun to fell the tree,

the large assembly of heathens was moved externally and internally to curse him as an enemy of their gods. When he had cut down a part of the tree the great mass of the oak tree was shaken by a divine gust and its broken crown crashed to the ground. When the previously cursing heathens saw that, they were changed, ceased their blasphemy, praised God and believed in him" (Willibald's *Life of St. Boniface*).

This is an impressive story, comparable to the biblical one of Joshua. Here and back then a man of faith assembles the people. Here and back then his personal witness calls them to faith. For 40 long years after escaping from Egypt the people of Israel had traversed the desert. And Joshua, Moses' successor, had led them to take possession of the land of Canaan and settle there. Joshua had reached an old age.

In the previous chapter we read: "A long time afterward, when the Lord had given rest to Israel from all their surrounding enemies, and Joshua was old and well advanced in years, Joshua summoned all Israel, its elders and heads, its judges and officers..." (23,1+2) This was the people's assembly at Shechem.

There old Joshua makes a fiery speech, reminding those assembled of God's history with his people, of Abraham and Isaac, of the exodus from Egypt and their journey to freedom.

And it's most interesting what Joshua does: first, he leaves the decision to turn away from God to the people themselves. "If it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve" (v. 15 a). This reflects the basic recognition that faith cannot be coerced, not back then, not today. Now, our Lutheran Church teaches that faith is exclusively and entirely the gift of the Holy Spirit, but that we as human beings are at liberty to say "No". "If it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord..."

Then follows Joshua's second step: He confesses and expresses his own faith. "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (v. 15 b).

Let's take a look at these two statements by Joshua.

"If it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord." What are the idols of our day? For Israel back then they were the gods of their surrounding nations. And even in Europe these days other gods are becoming an increasing problem, as they have been in other parts of the world for a long.

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Joshua's indirect question is being answered by ever more people in old Europe in light of a new background with "Yes". *Yes, it is evil in our eyes to serve the Lord. We don't want to serve any god.*"

For Joshua this would have been completely unthinkable. Richard Dawkins, Professor of Biology at Oxford, has written a book with the title "The God Delusion". Recently he spoke to a group of students and said to them:

"I do not recommend atheism to you. I recommend to you militant atheism." And Dawkins started a campaign of sending busses through England with the message: *"There's probably no God! – Now stop worshipping and enjoy your life."* In light of such militant atheism the church is facing a stiff breeze at the moment.

This creeping atheism, joined with an uncritical belief in progress, seems to be one of the biggest problems of the day. Perhaps you've heard it in your own family, when a relative told you: "In the age of the internet, the i-pad and high-performance technology no one believes anymore that God created the earth or that he can be of help to you in your little village when you pray to him."

I usually respond to such statements by asking whether the internet and modern technology has really changed such things as humans being born, grow up, love, become guilty, forgive each other, laugh, cry, rejoice and have to die in the end? And it is such themes in our lives that God wants to deal with and that the Holy Scriptures address; that's the reason why this all is so current and relevant.

But back to Joshua. What does he do in view of the danger of unbelief among his people? Joshua clearly confesses his faith: *"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."* Of course, he could have threatened, perhaps like: *"If you want me to use my standing and continue to be your boss, then you'll just have to believe in God."*

Rather he makes this great confession: *"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."*

Here in Germany we can occasionally hear statements by parents like this: "As long as you put your feet under my table you'll go to church on Sunday." The only sure result of such statements is that daughter or son will want to get their feet out from under the table and move away.

Perhaps a great deal more helpful would be the following kind of Joshua confession:

"I believe in Christ because I know I am in his loving care despite all my mistakes, and because I can come to him in church on Sunday despite all the things I may have committed during the week. He speaks to

me; he gives me the precious gifts of his Body and Blood for the forgiveness of my sins. For me this is the most important of all things between heaven and earth."

The story of Bishop Boniface who felled the oak tree actually continues. We read:

"Thereupon the holy Bishop constructed a house of prayer, using the wood from the felled tree..." As Bishop Boniface in 1288 built his first church from the wood of the felled oak, so we now with the money so often revered by people around us as the god of our day erect church buildings that give witness of our Christian faith. Indeed, a church building can become a Joshua confession of stone or wood, a public witness to the world around us: *"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."*
Amen.

The Rev. Hans-Joerg Voigt (Hannover)
Bishop, ILC Chairman

ILC Executive Secretary's announcement

By Rev'd Ralph Mayan

The Twenty-Fourth Conference of the International Lutheran Council will take place September 16-21, 2012 at Mt Carmel Spiritual Retreat Centre, Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada. The Executive Committee established the theme of the Conference as

"What does this mean?"

"How do the scriptures speak to Crises facing Confessional Lutherans Today?"

The key-note address will centre on how the Lutheran Confessions understand the Scriptures speaking. Other papers will centre on such topics as "Ordination of Women to the Pastoral Office," "Same-Gender Issues in the Church," "Preaching the Good News Today," and "Living in the Word of God."

A review of our ILC Budget and the increased costs of holding a conference have led the ILC Executive Committee to adopt the following motion for this conference: "that only the bishops/presidents of member churches (or their designates) and those of guest churches be invited to attend the conference." It was proposed that an invitation not be extended to the wives for this conference as it provides an unfair advantage to the presidents of our western churches who may elect to bring their wives at their own expense. The Executive Committee regrets having to make this decision, but felt it was necessary in order to be good stewards of our ILC resources and stay within our conference budget. In order to carefully monitor costs, the Executive has also proposed that transportation tickets be obtained through the LCMS central booking agency. Exceptions will need the approval of the Executive Secretary.

Formal invitations along with the Conference Agenda will be received by Member Churches in March.

NEWS FROM LATIN AMERICA

New leadership in Venezuela

Please note that there has been a change in leadership for the Lutheran Church of Venezuela, effective immediately.

Rev. J. Elias Lozano was elected president during the ILV's Plenary Assembly No. 51 (November 11, 12, and 13, 2011).

President Lozano's contact information is as follows:

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President: **Rev. J. Elias Lozano**

An overview of Latin American member church bodies

By Rev. Mario Lehenbauer on behalf of Pastor Egon

The following survey of Latin American churches has been submitted for reader's information:

Brazil.

IELB (Igreja Evangelica Luterana do Brasil) The Brazilian church has 1,470 congregations and 627 missions/preaching stations. 612 pastors working in congregations + 247 pastors working in institutions (schools, hospital, social institutions...). IELB has more than 46 that serve in other countries (United States, Africa, Argentina, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, England, Portugal, Uruguay and Paraguay, etc. The most recent statistic has our membership at 238 281.

In 2012 IELB is planting new missions in the northernmost cities Castanhall and Chapada Gaucha and states of their country, and LCMS World Mission has pledged to aid them in this task in aiding with the planting of two churches. Three New Itinerary Missions in large Urban areas: One in the South of the State of Piaui - one missionary will serve four cities covering an area more than 720 km one away from the other. The second will be in the South of Minas Gerais where one missionary will cover more than 8 different cities. And the third will be in a Large Urban area called Triangulo Mineiro in the city of Uberaba where we have a small congregation (12 members) and a city

with more than 300.000 inhabitants and more than 9 large Universities located there and with more than 50.000 college students living there.

Concordia Seminary has 106 students for 2012. In December 2011 graduated 15 students and all were sent to the field. And 28 new students are going to enter Seminary in 2012 (we had 69 candidates). In our planning for the next years we need 30 new pastors every year.

IELB also supports theological education work in Angola, Africa with a TEE program. This program is coordinated by former church president Reverend Carlos Winterle, who is working in Cape Town, South Africa and currently have 12 men studying in their centre.

At a synodical level IELB is supporting in 2012: 76 missions but had the opportunity to support 94 for coming year.

LCMS World Mission has agreed to partner with IELB in planting 2 new mission plants in the north of Brazil towards the Amazon.

ULBRA, the largest Brazilian Lutheran University, with over 100 thousand students is still in very difficult financial situation and has asked for a partnership to be formed with the Concordia system of LCMS and tentative conversations are beginning.

The LSLB national ladies aid department held in January 14 to 18 their 26th National Gathering in the city of Bento Gonçalves, in the South of Brasil, with an attendance around 15,000.

Iglesia Evangelica Luterana Argentina (IELA)

Parishes: 65

Congregations: 265

Baptized Members: 28,150

Communicant Members: 19,950

Active Pastors: 72

Iglesia Luterana Confesional de Chile (IELCHI)

Started by LH Ministries in 1950 (IELA)

Independent in 1992

Baptized Members: 135

Communicant Members:

Active Pastors: 05

And two students from Argentina

URUGUAY Congregación Evangélica Luterana San Pablo

Started in 1939 by IELA

Financial crisis in 1996 – Administrated by ULBRA, 2002 – Independent

50 members and two pastors

Iglesia Evangelica Luterana del Paraguay

Parroquias (Parishes): 11

Congregations: 49

Mission points: 2

Pastors in congregations: 12

Membership: 4039

Students at Bible Institute: 50

Fundamental School: 01 Secondary School: 01

Chaplain: 01

Challenges

To be national church –using Spanish and Guarany in worship (work mostly done among immigrants – Brazilians and German)

Need More pastors and leaders

To be present in whole country (not only where immigrants live)

Achievements

IELPA is an independent church.

Biblical and theological ability for leaders is done by Instituto Biblico.

The mission in Ciudad Del Leste is supported completely by members of IELPA

Dominican Republic

The mission in the DR started in 2007 and has a partnership with the LCMS. There is established two congregations and a Lutheran School and a mercy work with children with disabilities and also a Theological program supervised by the Argentinean Lutheran Seminary.

Two pastors are working there one from IELB and the other from LCMS and they have also a vicar from Argentina. The mission counts with more than 80 members.

NEWS FROM NORTH AMERICA

News from Lutheran Church Canada

Mathew Block, Editor of The Canadian Lutheran

Following a three year battle with cancer, Rev. Sándor Argüello, Lutheran Church–Canada’s (LCC) first missionary to Nicaragua, was called home by his Lord Saturday January 14, 2012 in Managua, Nicaragua. He was in his home city to pursue alternate medical treatment.

In accordance with Nicaraguan law, he was buried on Monday, January 16. His wife, Digna arrived late Sunday evening from Edmonton for the service held in the cemetery chapel. A bus carried Iglesia Luterana Sínodo de Nicaragua (ILSN) pastors, deaconesses, and church members from the mission centre in Chinandega to attend the service.



LCC’s mission executive Rev. Dr. Leonardo Neitzel was in Nicaragua and preached at the funeral service, which was jointly

conducted by current ILSN president Rev. Luis Turcios and president-elect Rev. Marvin Picado.

Rev. Argüello was born in Nicaragua but came to Canada with his family as refugees in 1988 during the Nicaraguan

civil war between the Sandinistas and Contras. Settling in Ottawa he became involved with LCC’s Spanish-language mission and received encouragement to pursue seminary studies. He graduated from Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary (St. Catharines, Ontario) in 1995 and served at Zion Lutheran Church in Rimbey, Alberta for two years. He accepted a call from Lutheran Church–Canada in 1997 to serve as a missionary evangelist in Nicaragua.

In an interview with *The Canadian Lutheran* before leaving to serve in his homeland he explained that “in Nicaragua and Spanish countries, everybody knows and believes there is a God, and that God is very righteous and just. When we came to the Lutheran church we realized that the same God who is so righteous and so strong is the same God who sent His own Son to die for us. So we saw the other face of God... Our work there will be to tell them that there is hope in Jesus.”

The Lord provided a catalyst for proclamation in October 1998 when Hurricane Mitch hit the Chinandega area where Rev. Argüello served. The torrential rain caused a mudslide killing more than 3000 people. The pastor, his wife, and members of his young, small congregation mobilized to provide the hope of the Gospel alongside emergency relief food and supplies. The pastor’s ongoing communication via fax and email provided ongoing information about the disaster, which generated an unprecedented outpouring of financial support from LCC. Hurricane Mitch was a turning point in the life of the mission as congregations became established around Chinandega.

Within ten years, Rev. Argüello presided over ILSN’s founding convention in January 2008. He resigned his call effective December 31, 2008 and returned to Canada where he remained on the roster of LCC’s ABC District while undergoing cancer treatments.

“In a very real way, Rev. Sandor Argüello will always be thought of as a father of the Nicaraguan church,” commented LCC President Robert Bugbee. “My recent attendance at its Third Convention left me amazed again at how the Lord started with the efforts of this man and planted a family that is growing and maturing.” The president, who wanted to visit Rev. Argüello in Managua but was unable due to the pastor’s weakened immune system, encouraged prayers for the Argüello family. “I never imagined his loved ones would have to say farewell so soon. God keep them close to the Christ whom Sandor was honoured to trust and confess.”

NEWS FROM AFRICA

The Chairman of the ILC Executive Committee wrote on the Council’s behalf to the member church in Nigeria last month

Most honored President, dear Christian,

With deep concernment we heard the news from Nigeria. The assassinations on christian congregations are terrible. I hope and pray, that you with your family and your congregations are not directly concerned with trouble and death in this situation. Our prayers are with the Christians in Nigeria and especially with the Lutheran Church. God strengthen your faith and preserve your hearts from hatred. Please let us know, what's about your situation.

Cordially in Christ

Hans-Jörg Voigt, Bishop and Chairman of ILC

NEWS FROM EUROPE

Mission and Apartheid International Symposium SELK



Oberursel 15.11.2011 [selk]

The traditional Dies Academicus held by the Lutherische Theologische Hochschule Oberursel (Lutheran Theological Seminary Oberursel) to celebrate Martin Luther's birthday, took place in 2011 on November 10th and 11th under the title 'Mission and Apartheid'. Professor Dr. Gilberto da Silva and Professor Dr. Werner Klaen were able to engage speakers from South Africa, the USA and Germany. Some of the speakers came from the affiliated churches in Southern Africa, some spoke about the situation of churches from the Hermannsburg tradition, which is in alliance with the mainstream protestant church in Germany. SELK missionaries who work in Germany or have retired there had accepted the warm invitation to attend.

Naturally the focus was on reports about the happenings in Southern Africa. The previous LCSA bishop David Tswaedi DD (Lutheran Church in Southern Africa [LCSA] and Lutheran Theological Seminary Pretoria) gave a lecture on the effect of apartheid on the LCSA, Pastor Dieter Schnackenberg (Freie Evangelisch-Lutherische Synode in Südafrika [FELSISA]) talked about the impact of apartheid on the life and dealings of the FELSISA and the new challenges posed since 1994. Pastor Radikobo Ntsimane (LCSA/University of

KwaZulu-Natal) gave insights into his research on the history of the Lutheran medical mission during apartheid, and Dr Caroline Jeannerat (University of Johannesburg) talked about the role of history and retrospection for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Africa (ELCSA) in defining their position in the new South Africa. Pastor Dieter Schuettle (Evangelisch-Lutherisches Missionswerk, Hermannsburg) reported on the journey of the Lutheran churches in South Africa connected with the Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (protestant church in Germany - EKD), and Pastor Dr Daniel Mattson (Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod) on the division between sending churches and churches resulting from the sending. Professor em Dr Volker Stolle, previously Director of the Lutheran Church Mission, took a critical look at the reception of the apartheid politics by the Missionary Board and the Church Board of the SELK in Germany while Professor Klaen presented a comprehensive flow chart for a planned joint commission representing LCSA, FELSISA and LKM/SELK to reappraise the issues of the past from an inner-church perspective. A general debate followed in which critical questions resulting from manifold experiences in Southern Africa were posed, highlighting aspects not emphasized in the lectures.

The faculty of the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Oberursel was engaged in the symposium, particularly in devotionals and moderation. The administrative team of the Seminary and the students helped to make the event a success. In the course of the Symposium a new book was presented in the supplementary series of the Oberurseler Hefte: Friedrich Wilhelm Hopf: Kritische Standpunkte für die Gegenwart ... (*trans.: Critical Aspects for the Present. A Lutheran Theologian in the Kirchenkampf in the Third Reich, his Confessional Struggle after 1945 and his Attitude to Apartheid*), edited by Markus Buettner and Werner Klaen. Hopf's texts give many impulses for a theology and a church which is embedded in the Lutheran confession, strives to find an identity as a church, is conscious of its responsibility in mission and does not avoid responsibility in the world. The volume appears in cooperation with the publisher Edition Ruprecht.



All participants realized that the conference can only be the beginning of a longer process. It is to be hoped, Klaen said, that the process of coming to terms with this painful past may result in a church service of reconciliation between the involved churches in 2017, the

50th anniversary of the LCSA and the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. Tswaedi and Peter Ntshoe for the LCSA and Schnackenberg for the FELSiSA have already been named for the joint commission; the respective members for the LKM and the SELK remain to be appointed.

SELK Info 12/2011

Update from Portugal

By Revd. Genivaldo Agner

The last months were very blessed in our church in Portugal. As church, it is always a great honour and joy to be able to celebrate, with the whole Christianity Jesus Christ's birth.

In our congregations in Portugal we had the opportunity to share with each other this grace. In "Consolação" congregation in Mercês/Lisbon we celebrated the Christmas in two very special moments. One was in December 18th, when we gathered in our congregation to sing and hear once more the good news of Jesus becoming a child in Bethlehem for us. Also a play was made, to show us the importance of celebrate the real Christmas in our days.



At Christmas Day, 25th December, for the first time, on Christmas day, we had a worship service in our congregation. It was such a joy! In these two occasions, we had the participation from our music group.

These same music group also had invitations to bring to bring God's word with Christian music "outside" the church. We participate in a meeting with non-Lutheran people in November 2011. Was a big opportunity to "share" the Lutheran Church here in our neighbourhood.



New pastor at "Emanuel" Congregation - Porto

The "Emanuel" congregation, in Porto area, has a "new" pastor. We say "new", because pastor Adalberto Hiller was called and is in Portugal for almost 24 years. After pastor Jonas Flor accepted the call back to Brazil, the congregation

extended a pastoral call do pastor Adalberto Hiller. His installation worship service will happen in March 25th, in Porto. We pray to God and hope that his work can be blessed among the people in Porto region.

SOLI DEO GLORIA!

NEWS FROM ASIA

Bachelor of Divinity at Concordia Theological Seminary in Nagercoil, India Inaugurated

Submitted by Samuel Meshack

By God's profound grace and mercy, the Bachelor of Divinity Studies (B.D.), a five year integrated programme has been inaugurated at Concordia Theological Seminary, Nagercoil by Rev. John Fale, the Interim Director of World Relief & Human Care, Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod on the 20 July 2011, during which the installation service of the new Principal, Prof. Rev. Dr. Samuel Wilson Meshack was conducted by the I E L C President Rev. Dr. J. Samuel. Rt. Rev. Dr. John Sadananda, the Master (Chancellor) of the Serampore University, West Bengal brought God's message. Rev. P. R. Selvaraj and Rev. J. R. Jesupatham were also installed as faculty members of the Seminary. The officers of the India Evangelical Lutheran Church, Synod Presidents, pastors from all three synods and people of God from the churches witnessed the events.

Prof. Meshack joins the seminary with rich experience of serving the Gurukul Lutheran Theological College and Research Institute for over 29 years and as the Principal of Gurukul for a term of five years. He has international and national reputation as a scholar, pioneering the introduction of Communication studies in theological education, guiding doctoral students both theological and secular universities, presenting papers in international and national consultations and seminars. He has authored and contributed to several books and journals.

At present there are 18 students registered for the Bachelor of Divinity Studies and 31 students in the final year of Bachelor of Theology (last batch) studies. There are eight faculty members and three more will be joining the seminary for the second semester in October, 2011. God is gracious in enabling the Seminary to march in the path of growth for the future of the Church. As we know, the future of the Church depends upon the growth of the seminary, because theological education is the backbone of the Church. Realising the importance of theological education for developing commitment young men for the Gospel of our Lord, the President and the leaders of the India Evangelical Lutheran Church has placed importance to develop a meaningful and witnessing Seminary, as their priority.

The Concordia Seminary students and the faculty have commitment themselves to work towards this goal with the grace of God under the new leadership. The seminary has started marching towards fulfilling its goals in making the Seminary a witnessing instrument of God in Christ to enable the Church in India a witnessing Church to the Glory of God.

More information and pictures about stories from Asia, can be found in Asia Ablaze at www.asiaablaze.org/newsletter.html

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE ILC

Keeping up to date

By Rev'd Ralph Mayan, ILC Executive Secretary

When was the last time you looked at the ILC Web page? It contains information about each member's church and seminary. Unfortunately some of that information is out of date. We encourage you to review your member church's information and forward any changes to your regional executive member. Thanks!

Committee researching options for the position of Executive Secretary

Progress report of the ILC Research Committee to the meeting of the ILC Executive Committee 28-30th of June

1. Background

The Research Committee was appointed by the Executive Secretary of the ILC at the direction of the ILC Executive Committee to prepare proposals regarding the Office of the ILC Executive Secretary following a study to include the costs of having a full-time Executive Secretary possibly located in Wittenberg, Germany.

The task of the Research Committee was outlined as follows:

1. Position Description. Outline the basic responsibilities of the Executive. Should the position be full-time or might it be possible for the position to be part-time.
2. Costs: Provide an estimate of costs for such a position (salary, housing, office, travel etc.).
3. Location of Position: While the Executive Committee proposes Wittenberg, if that should not be possible, then where? Could Cambridge be considered?

4. If we are not able to move forward with this position, then what might be proposed to the Executive?

A preliminary report was requested from the Research Committee before the Executive Committee meeting June 28-30, 2011.

The membership of the committee is President Gijsbertus van Hattem (committee chair), Dr. Reginald Quirk and Mr. Ulrich Schroeder.

2. Procedure

The Committee resolved by e-mail to undertake initial research before meeting. A request was made to the current incumbent and to the previous Executive Secretary (who has served as the Council's part-time staff person since its inception in Guatemala in 1993 until March 1 of this year) to list his duties so far, and to identify further activities that could be undertaken by a full time incumbent; to specify travel destinations entailed in the work, together with travel and other costs which might bear upon a suitable venue for a secretariat; and to provide any other information felt to be relevant by those who have occupied the position of Executive Secretary. From this information a job description will be formulated, and recommendations offered regarding the location of the post, salary level and other costs.

3. Information received

Dr Nafzger provided insight into the intentions of the Committee appointed by the 1991 meeting of the International Lutheran Conference in Hong Kong to prepare a concrete proposal for the formation of an **organization of confessional Lutheran churches**. It addressed the question of the staffing of this new organization with the unanimous conviction that the proposed new Council should be as lean and trim as possible as far as structure was concerned. At the same time, it was convinced that someone was needed to provide continuity and oversight for the work of the ILC, if it was to carry out the purposes for which it was being formed. Article VIII on "Staff Services," without specifying a title, lists the major areas of responsibility for this position:

"This person, under the general supervision of the Executive Committee, shall be responsible for providing effective administrative and technical support for the ILC and its Executive Committee. He shall see to it that all decisions of the ILC and its Executive Committee are implemented in a timely fashion, make arrangements for meetings, manage the budget, see to it that ILC publicity and communications are prepared and distributed, and perform such other duties as may be requested by the ILC and its Executive Committee in an advisory capacity, but without vote."

At the first meeting of the newly elected Executive Committee, meeting in Winnipeg in January 1994, it was decided that the person who holds this position should have the title of Executive Secretary and that this person should be appointed by the Executive Committee for renewable terms at its first meeting follow-

ing the Council's biennial (now triennial) conferences. Dr Nafzger was appointed to serve in this capacity on a volunteer and part-time basis. He accepted this appointment with the understanding that it would receive the approval of the LCMS' Commission on Theology and Church Relations and also of the Synod's Board of Directors. During the 17 years of his service in this position, he estimates that the work of the Council took up to 20% to 25 % of his time, as well as significant time of his Administrative Assistant.

The areas of current activity identified by the present and previous Executive Secretaries are as follows:

- the planning of the Council's international conferences, the World Seminary Conferences
- carrying out (or see that they are carried out) all assignments and resolutions of the Conference and the Executive
- managing the budget (which involves the working out of each Council members assessment and monitoring the payments of these assessments)
- responding to all correspondence relating to the ILC and coordinating communication between members of the ILC
- seeing to it "that ILC Communications are prepared and distributed", including providing for an editor of ILC NEWS and working with him in reviewing each of its issues before publication.
- exercising a role in the process of receiving and acting on applications for new members, communicating with newly elected heads of member churches in order to inform them about the work of the ILC
- preparing an annual ILC Directory of the Council's member churches and their heads.
- preparing and monitoring the ILC web site
- representing the ILC to member churches and all other organizations (e.g. LWF)
- having responsibility for all records of the ILC

The areas of potential additional (if time allowed) activity identified by the present and previous Executive Secretaries are as follows:

- travel to member churches for special events.
- involvement in the development of theological and

- ecclesiastical statements as requested by the ILC.
- developing other areas where ILC member churches might cooperate (missions, theological education, etc.)
- attending regional ILC meetings (especially now that the Council only meets together every three years instead of two)
- assisting in resolving conflicts, when invited to do so, as they arise in member churches

Dr Nafzger offered the following in summary:

I would simply state the obvious----the work of the ILC is all about our Lutheran Confession of the Gospel and therefore about enhancing communications between confessional Lutherans around the world in order to give encouragement and support to one another. The Executive Secretary of the ILC must play a critical role in making this happen, and there is no end to finding ways to do this and to do it well.

Dr Mayan offered the following in summary:

While I think having a full-time executive would be nice, I think the costs may outweigh the benefits. I do however think that having an Executive Secretary who is an official of the largest member church ... (it's not that they would not be responsible, but the perception) is not good. I wonder if it is possible to have the (part-time) position tied to some other responsibility. I think of maybe the person who will oversee the Wittenburg project or maybe someone is serves as a professor as one of our theological schools etc.

4. Issues still to be investigated by the Research Committee

The issue of costs requires further consideration, including salary, rent and equipment, travel. The Research Committee has carried out this study in part and submitted recommendations to the ILC Executive Committee for deliberation.



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