

**APPENDIX J**

**The Leuenberg Fellowship**

**Liebfrauenberg Consultation October 2004**

The Liebfrauenberg is a small house high in the hills of Alsace close to the French-German Border. Built originally by the French Protestant Church as a place for church families to have a holiday in relaxed and beautiful surroundings, it is now a church Conference Centre.

From October 22<sup>nd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> it hosted a Consultation between the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe and representatives of the Church of England, the Church of Ireland, the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Church in Wales. CPCE comprises one hundred and three church fellowships to date, mainly in Germany and central Europe. Delegates included members of the Church of Scotland, the United Reformed Church and the British Methodist Church. The Church of Ireland delegates were The Reverend Canon Ian Ellis, rector of Newcastle and the Bishop of Clogher, who preached at the opening service. The Porvoo Communion was represented by the Bishop of Uppsala, co-chairperson of the Porvoo Contact Group, in attendance. All concerned share an historical origin in the sixteenth century Reformations. The plural is used because in this Consultation, as in many other contexts, it is abundantly clear that ‘The Reformation’ is a very varied thing in its geography, its time-frame, its theologies and its understanding of the church.

CPCE has a noble history. It is the contemporary expression of The Leuenberg Fellowship which emerged from the solidarity of the Evangelicals and Lutherans in the era of National Socialism in Germany who found themselves institutionally unable to celebrate Holy Communion together in a time of intense spiritual need. One of the most interesting issues to arise, almost as a by-product of the Consultation, was acute awareness of the deep trauma felt today by German people in the aftermath of World War 2. Conversation with various individuals revealed that the trauma is only now coming through with an intensity which can rightly be called spiritual. This we must remember prayerfully as members of today’s Europe approaching another season of Remembrance.

The discussion concentrated on the interpretation of two historical documents with contemporary challenges: *The Church of Jesus Christ* of 1994 as accepted by the General Assembly of CPCE and *The Doctrine Report of the Church of England* of 1938 along with more recent developments in Anglican ecclesiology. Working hard over two days the participants reached common understanding on a number of issues including: the church as the creation of the triune God through the divine saving action in Jesus Christ, the doctrine of justification by faith, the significance of word and sacrament as the marks of the visible church served by the ordained ministry, the mutual relationship of that distinctive ministry to the common priesthood of the baptized and the eschatological hope of the Kingdom of God.

#### Standing Committee – Report 2005

In response to the overwhelming recognition of need for further study both of church order and of the historic episcopate as expressing the ecclesial significance of pastoral care and personal oversight, the Ecumenical Institute at Strasbourg intends to invite a smaller number of delegates to examine such central questions relating to the nature of the church.

Many will rejoice that, after a lapse of nine years, conversations have re-opened between Anglicans and CPCE. For the near future it seems that common exploration of issues will set the agenda more than common expression of rapprochement in ministry. The interesting question is: In the midst of such robust diversity can we witness together to 'the obligation to engage in evangelism and the work of justice and peace as our shared task and mission in contemporary Europe?' (Liebfrauenberg Communique 2004)

† Michael Clogher:  
25 October 2004