

**APPENDIX O**

**MEISSEN COMMISSION**

**20<sup>th</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2007**

**REPORT**

The seventh meeting of the Meissen Commission (Church of England – Protestant Church in Germany [EKD]) was held at St Columba's House, Woking, England from Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> until Monday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2007. This is my first meeting as an observer of the Celtic Anglican Churches. The other observers were Pfarrer Wolfgang Kruse (German-Speaking Synod in Great Britain) and the Rev Dr Irene Ahrens (Diocese in Europe).

*Members present:*

The Rt Rev Nicholas Baines (Co-Chairman)  
Landesbischof Jürgen Johannesdotter (Co-Chairman)  
The Rev Canon Robert Jones  
The Rev Dr Charlotte Methuen  
The Rev Colin Penfold  
Propst Dr Matthias Sens  
Pfarrer Dr Christof Theilemann  
Prof Dr Dr h.c. Michael Weinrich

*By Invitation*

Frau Birgit Holstein (replacing Frau Justizrätin Margit Fleckenstein)

*Staff:*

The Rev Canon Dr Charles Hill (Co-Secretary)  
Oberkirchenrat Matthias Kaiser (Co-Secretary)

The subjects discussed at this meeting included:

**Parish partnerships:** There are approximately 20 CoE-EKD parish partnerships but it was recognised that there was a need for more overview of the links.

**Child Protection:** The Rev Pearl Luxon, CoE/Methodist Child Protection Officer, addressed the Commission. Implications for exchange visits were explored. The German representatives were taken aback at the elaborate procedures required, including criminal record checks.

**Teaching of German History in England:** This discussion arose because there was a sense of stereotyping and prejudice developing among English pupils. However, it was not clear to what extent this is a real problem, as only certain instances of anti-German prejudice tend to be mentioned in the media.

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**Inter-faith relations:** The possibility of arranging a joint CoE-EKD delegation to engage in dialogue with Islamic partners was raised. It was noted that there are different Islamic traditions in England and Germany, the latter being mainly Turkish.

**Cologne Kirchentag 2007:** It was noted that the Kirchentag events nowadays are less prophetic than they were in the 1960s and 1970s. The main problem with having a Protestant/Roman Catholic Kirchentag (as happened several years ago in Berlin) appears to be the restrictions on worship placed by the Roman Catholic Church. There was also strong feeling among the German participants about the stance of the Roman Catholic Church in ‘Dominus Iesus’, which describes Protestant Churches as not being Churches “in the proper sense”.

**Theological Issues:** A theological conference is planned and will have a focus on ordination.

**Covenant:** The current situation in relation to this process was outlined.

**CoE/Methodist Relations:** This was highlighted as the work of the Church of England/Methodist Covenant Joint Implementation Commission was seen to be relevant to CoE/EKD relations.

**Roman Catholic Church:** The recent statement from the Vatican on Protestant Churches was discussed as was the work of the International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission. The latter’s ‘Growing Together in Unity and Mission’ document, celebrating 40 years of Anglican/Roman Catholic dialogue, was circulated.

**Porvoo:** There is considerable interest within the EKD in the Porvoo Communion. The EKD comprises three traditions: Lutheran, Reformed and United (Lutheran/Reformed).

**The EKD leader, Bishop Wolfgang Huber (Berlin) is to visit Ireland in May 2008.**

On the Sunday, the Commission attended an Ordination of Priests and Deacons at Southwark Cathedral, followed by a lunch at the Globe Theatre. In the evening, members attended Evensong at Guildford Cathedral, at which the preacher was Landesbischof Jürgen Johannesdotter. This was followed by a supper at the home of the Bishop of Guildford, by kind invitation of Bishop Christopher and Mrs Hill.

Worship during the Commission meeting was led by Canon Robert Jones and the Rev Colin Penfold.

The meeting was conducted in English and chaired by the Bishop of Croydon.

I. M. Ellis  
26.10.07