

**CHURCH OF ENGLAND
COUNCIL FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY
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1. INTRODUCTION

Dear Bulletin Readers,

Greetings from the CCU Staff Team particularly to those receiving the bulletin for the first time.

MEISSEN SERVICE AT KIRCHENTAG

As the German Protestant Kirchentag draws near, a reminder that the Meissen Service this year is at 18.30 on Thursday 7th June at All Saints' Cologne. This will be a service of Holy Communion, with the Rt Revd Geoffrey Rowell as president and Bischof Martin Schindehütte as preacher. For full details of All Saints' and where to find the church, see the chaplaincy web site at <http://www.anglicanbonncologne.de/> And for full details of the Kirchentag itself, check the British Kirchentag Committee web site at <http://www.kirchentag.org.uk/> and the main Kirchentag site at <http://www.kirchentag.net/>.

FINDING OUT ABOUT THE EKD

The EKD has produced a new edition of its informative annual statistical report, which gives a good insight into faith and life in Germany - *Zahlen und Fakten zum kirchlichen Leben*. In this 36 page fourth edition readers will find plenty of background information on the EKD and the life of its congregations, with a growing number of people working for the Church in a voluntary capacity. The booklet is available from the Kirchenamt der EKD, Referat Statistik, Herrenhäuser Str. 12, 30419 Hannover, Tel.: 0511/27 96 359, Fax: 0511/27 96 717 or by per E-Mail:

statistik@ekd.de. It can be downloaded free of charge on the Internet (as can the previous three editions) at http://www.ekd.de/statistik/zahlen_fakten.html

ANGLICAN CENTRE IN ROME: STUDY COURSES

The Anglican Centre in Rome is organising five courses in 2007:

Saturday 9 June to Saturday 23 June **Anglican/Roman Catholic Ecumenism: Ecumenism in Practice** (in conjunction with Liverpool Hope University) Studying all the current dialogues between the two Churches. The first week is based at Liverpool Hope and the second at the Anglican Centre

Monday 25 June to Tuesday 3 July **Romess – Life and Death in the Eternal City**
This popular course uses the art, architecture, history and culture of the City of Rome to underpin our knowledge of Christianity, and to challenge and deepen personal faith. There will be visits to many sites.

Tuesday 2 – Tuesday 9 October **Is there a future for Anglican Christianity?**
This course surveys the history of the Anglican Communion and looks at the current challenges facing it. The course leader is Professor Stephen Sykes.

Friday 16 – Sunday 18 November or Friday 16 – Wednesday 21 November
Genesis Examining the story lines in Genesis as they relate to our faith and to experience today: migration, slavery, the family, bioethics etc.

Details and forms are available from www.anglicancentreinrome.org.

The Anglican/Roman Catholic Ecumenism course must be booked through Liverpool Hope University: leahyu@hope.ac.uk for further course details

Thanks to everyone who has contacted us in the last few weeks about the bulletin.

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The Bulletin is sent out on a mailing list: Please advise us if your email address changes, or if you do not wish to receive the Bulletin. CCU is not responsible for the content of external web sites mentioned in this Bulletin.

2. Faith in Europe - Has Europe Lost its Soul?

An Open Letter to the CTBI and the Churches

Faith in Europe, a body in association with CTBI, resources the church with study days and publications on a range of public affairs and ecumenical questions. With 9th May designated as Europe Day (on 9th May 1950 Robert Schuman, French Foreign Minister, began the process that created the European Union) *Faith in Europe* has issued an Open Letter to CTBI and the Churches urging a renewal of support for initiatives like A Soul for Europe, and looking forward in this year of the Third Ecumenical Assembly,

“to imagine what the world would be like without the European Union as it is now, to reflect on what the European Union could or should become, to think about the values that member states have in common, and to plan for events, special services, or simply prayers, that can make Europe Day a mark of Christ's gospel of peace, justice, service and freedom. “

The full text of the letter, and detailed information about Faith in Europe and its work can be found at <http://www.faithineurope.org.uk>

3. German Churches sign Joint Statement on the Recognition of Baptism

At a special service in the Magdeburger Dom on 29th April, the EKD, the Roman Catholic German Bishops' Conference, the Orthodox Churches in Germany, and many others (including the Council of Anglican and Episcopal Churches in Germany) signed a document on the mutual recognition of baptism. The initiative for this step came from the Ecumenical Kirchentag of 2003.

Details of the document and Bishop Huber's sermon at the ecumenical service in Magdeburg are available in the news section of the main EKD web site www.ekd.de. The key concept of the statement is 'Jesus Christ is our Salvation'.

4. Ecumenical Institute Strasbourg – Summer Seminar 2007

The 41st International Ecumenical Seminar will be held from 4th – 11th July 2007 in Strasbourg, France, on the theme: "Church-State-Relations as an Ecumenical Issue". The web site of the Institute, situated in central Strasbourg, describes the Seminar theme as follows:

“Behind the churches' different attitudes toward church and state relations lie differing theological commitments, as well as very diverse experiences in centuries-old contextual traditions, all of which inform their ethical judgement. ...

Both how churches relate to the states in which they live, and how they respond to government and politics, are part of their Christian witness to the world. The fact that Christian churches so frequently diverge and disagree on these issues weakens their

witness and renders it unpersuasive. Their differing judgement burdens the churches relations to each other, as well. That makes church-state relations an ecumenical issue. And that is why we are devoting the 2007 Summer Seminar to this topic.

We want to ask how different Christian traditions (especially the Roman Catholic, Lutheran, conservative Evangelical and Orthodox traditions) currently think about these questions and by what principles they are guided. We will also take look at the history of these traditions in order to better understand how the different views on church-state relations developed, what lessons churches have learned from history, but also what historical baggage they continue to carry with them. We would like to bring the traditions into conversation with each other, to see where commonalities and differences lie and to assess the importance of those. By our selection of speakers it should become evident how differently the issue plays out in various geographic and cultural contexts (Germany, France, Central and Eastern Europe, Scandinavia, the US). An important emphasis will be on the building of states in Africa. Finally, current events lead us to look beyond our Christian circles and consider how state and religion are regarded within Islam. “

English and German are the main languages of the Seminar. The charge for the seminar, including full pension (i.e., room and meals) in a seminary dormitory, is € 650. July 4 (arrival and reception in the evening) to July 11 (departure after breakfast), 2007, in Strasbourg, France.

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5. Church of Norway on Church – State Relations

The Church of Norway has just posted on its web site (www.kirken.no) a useful selection of background material on the topic of Church/State relations. The precise location of this English language material is <http://www.kirken.no/english/news.cfm?artid=134384>

The material summarises the main points in the relationship between the Church of Norway and the State, outlines the current situation and its historical background, and explains the constitutional basis.

The Church of Norway is in a process of considering reforms in the structure of the Church, to improve the existing organization, to make a future decision on how to regulate the relationship with the state and towards other religious communities.

The material goes on to describe a Church report on State/Church-relations from 2002, and the Government's report on this question, from 2006 (NOU 2006:2 *Staten og Den norske kirke*).

Comments from local churches are described, and the Synod recommendations on a new Church law.

More information on the State-Church Committee 2003-2006 is available from the Official website of the Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs) at:

<http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/kkd/Whats-new/nyheter/2006/On-the-relationship-between-the-Norwegian-State-and-the-Church-of-Norway.html?id=435167>

6. ...AND FINALLY

A Time for God's Creation

Environmental issues are now major concerns of public and Church debate across Europe. A new resource from the European Christian Environmental Network (ECEN) is available

20 February 2007

A new booklet from ECEN is available, with the title *A Time for God's Creation*. It will provide useful material for use in local European partnership groups.

ECEN reports -

“Throughout the year the Church is invited to recall in a special way each of God's great deeds in Jesus Christ. Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost - one reminder follows another, year by year.

But no special time is reserved for recalling that God is the Creator of heaven and earth, the source of life. No special time is set aside for giving thanks for the gift of God's creation.

We urge the Churches to designate the period from 1 September to the second Sunday in October as a Time for God's Creation.

In this booklet are

Reflections on the proposal for a Creation Time

Stories of how churches internationally and nationally have responded to the proposal
Prayers and songs to help your church take up this call. “

You can download the booklet in .pdf format (1MB) in English at

<http://www.ecen.org/cms/uploads/0702atfgc-en.pdf>

And it is also available from the same sit in French and German

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Visit the CCU website at: www.cofe.anglican.org/info/ccu*
