



Gemeinschaft Evangelischer Kirchen in Europa (GEKE)  
Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE)  
Communion d'Eglises Protestantes en Europe (CEPE)



# Communion of Protestant Churches in Europe – a Protestant model of unity

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General Secretary

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8 March 2021



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# The CPCE in numbers

95

member churches

40

million people in Europe

48

years of church fellowship since 1973



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# Content

- I History and background information
- II Church communion – and how it is becoming visible
- III Structures and current fields of work





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# Who we are

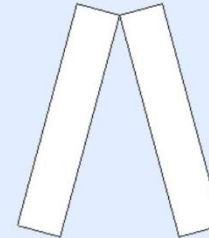
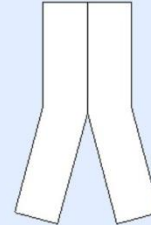


## The CPCE unites Protestant churches



Reformed

Lutheran



United



**First Reformation:  
Waldensians, Czech  
Brethren**



**Methodists**

# The history of the Leuenberg Agreement

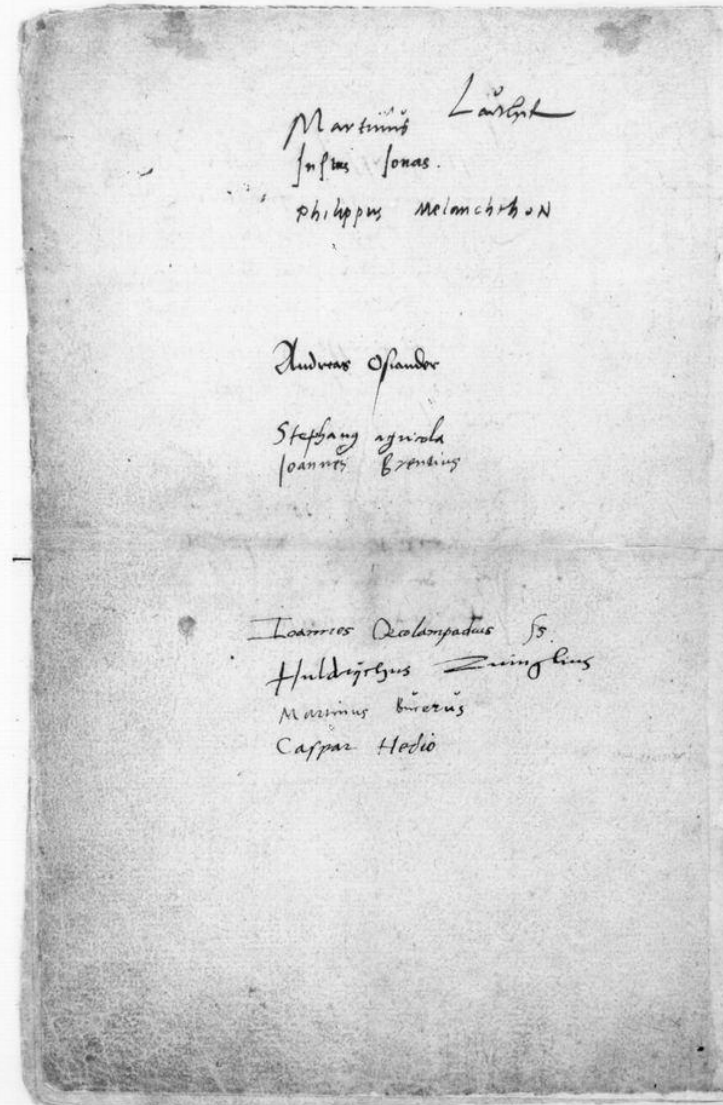






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1529



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Marburg Colloquy (1529)





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## Unions in 1817



Church of the Union, Idstein





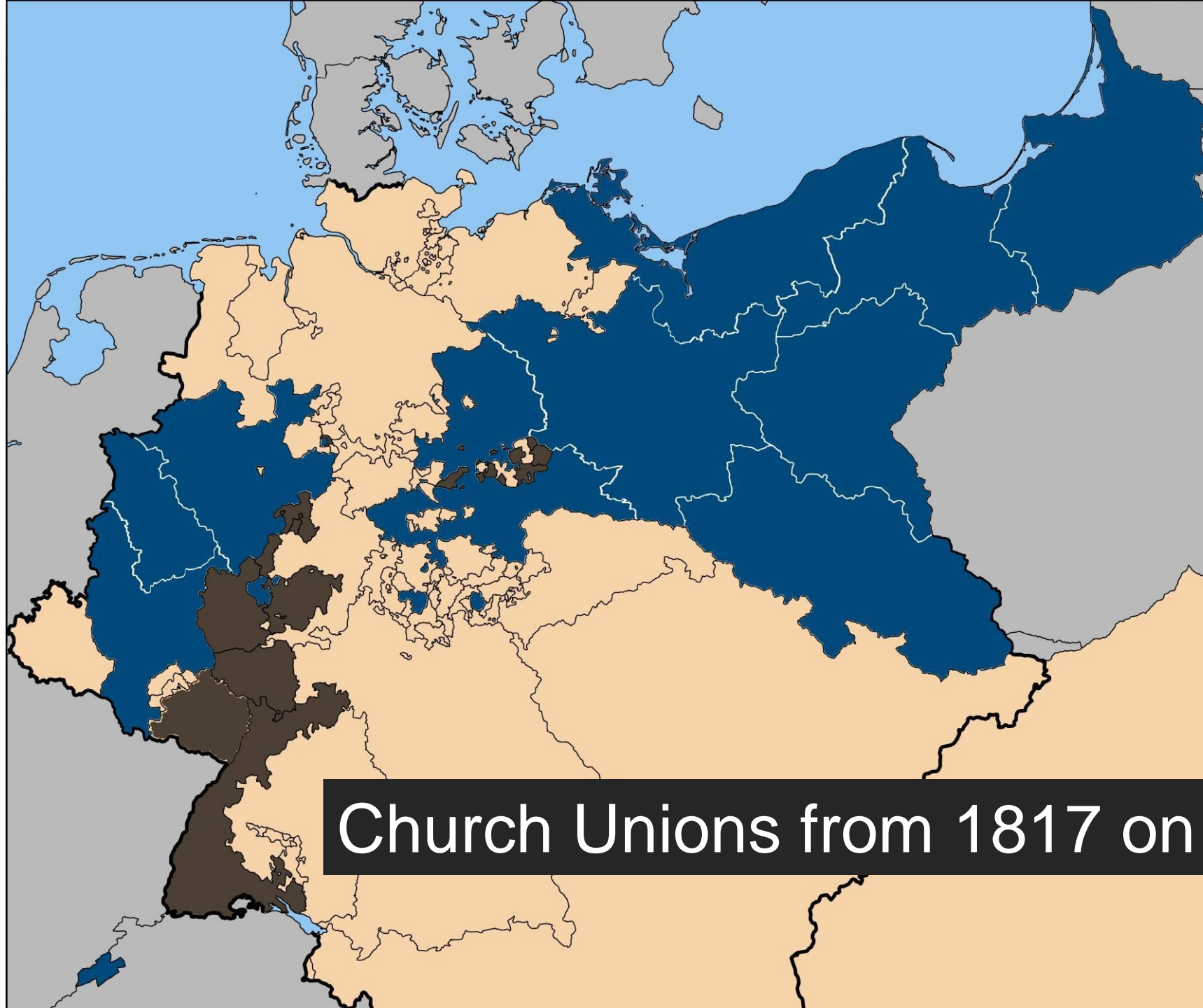


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# Union of Nassau 1817





Church Unions from 1817 on





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Confessional Synod, Barmen 1934



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## Leuenberg near Basle



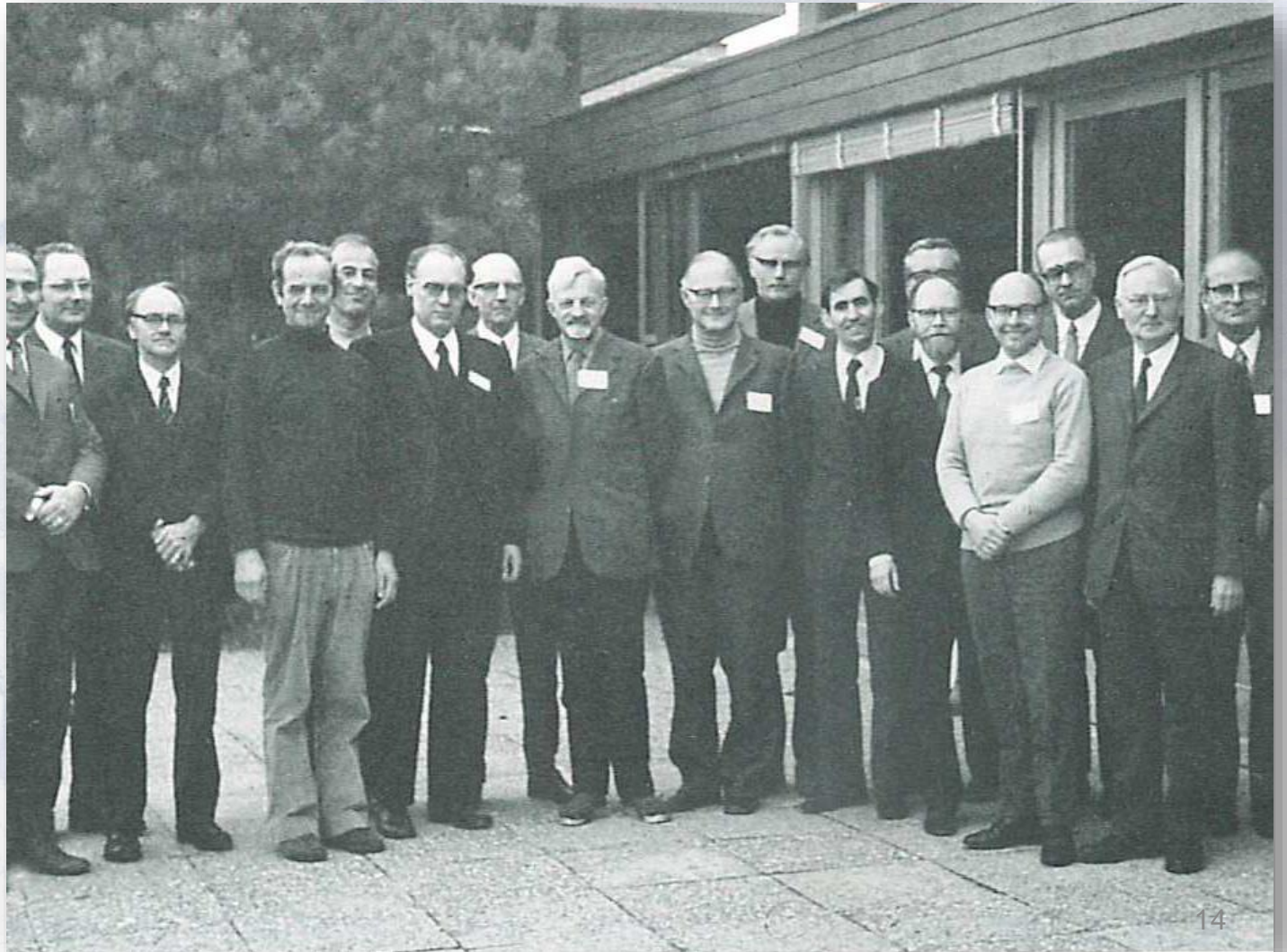




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13 March 1973







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## **Konkordie reformatorischer Kirchen in Europa**

(Leuenberger Konkordie)

## **Agreement between Reformation Churches in Europe**

(Leuenberg Agreement)

## **Concorde entre Eglises issues de la Réforme en Europe**

(Concorde de Leuenberg)



# Leuenberg Agreement 1973

# Keystones of the Leuenberg Agreement I



Table and pulpit fellowship includes the mutual recognition of ordination and the freedom to provide for intercelebration.

Church communion on the basis of this consensus means that churches with different confessional positions accord each other communion in Word and Sacrament and strive for the fullest possible co-operation in witness and service to the world.

Remaining differences (in forms of worship, types of spirituality, and church order) have no church dividing character.

Condemnations of the Reformation confessions  
(in respect of the Lord's Supper, christology, and predestination)  
don't apply to the doctrinal position of the current partners.

## Common understanding of the Gospel

(Justification, Baptism, Lord's Supper)



# Keystones of the Leuenberg Agreement II

## Declaration

Assenting the Agreement

Churches remain independent  
and are church together

Separation needs to be  
justified, not communion

## Realisation

Witness and service to the world

Continuing theological work

Organisational consequences

Ecumenical fellowship of all  
Christian churches

# Assessment of the Leuenberg Agreement



- No ecumenical dialogue result
  - But: performative act
1. Differenciated consensus
  2. Overcoming of condemnations
  3. Declaration of church communion





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## Church communion

- Pulpit and table fellowship
- Recognition of ordination
- fellowship of witness and service.





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Mario Fischer | Martin Friedrich (Hrsg. | Eds.)

# Kirchengemeinschaft

## Church Communion



*Leuenberger Texte*





Communion in worship



Communion in doctrine

# How do we experience Church Communion?



Communion of witness and service



Communion that is evolving in shape





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## Communion in doctrine



Reflecting together theologically



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# Communion in doctrine

- Doctrinal discussions
- Consultations
- Advisory board for ecumenical issues
- Study processes
- Orientation guides



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**Amt, Ordination,  
Episkopé und theologische  
Ausbildung**

Ministry, ordination,  
episkopé and theological  
education



Leuenberger Texte





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# Communion in worship



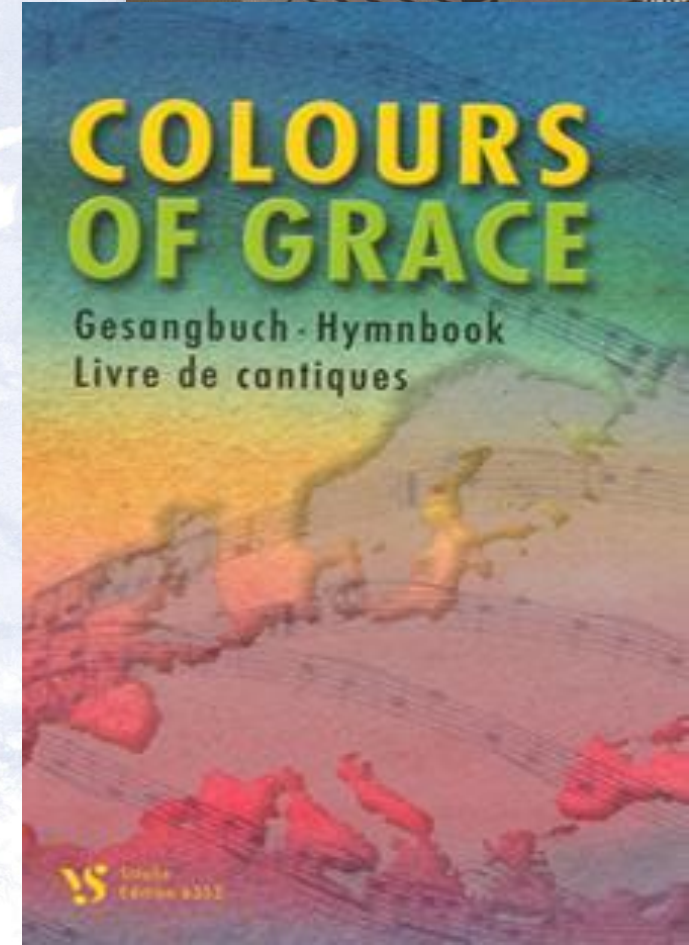
Celebrating together



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## Communion of worship

- Liturgical consultations
- Collection of liturgical resources
- European Song Contest to mark the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation



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Arnold



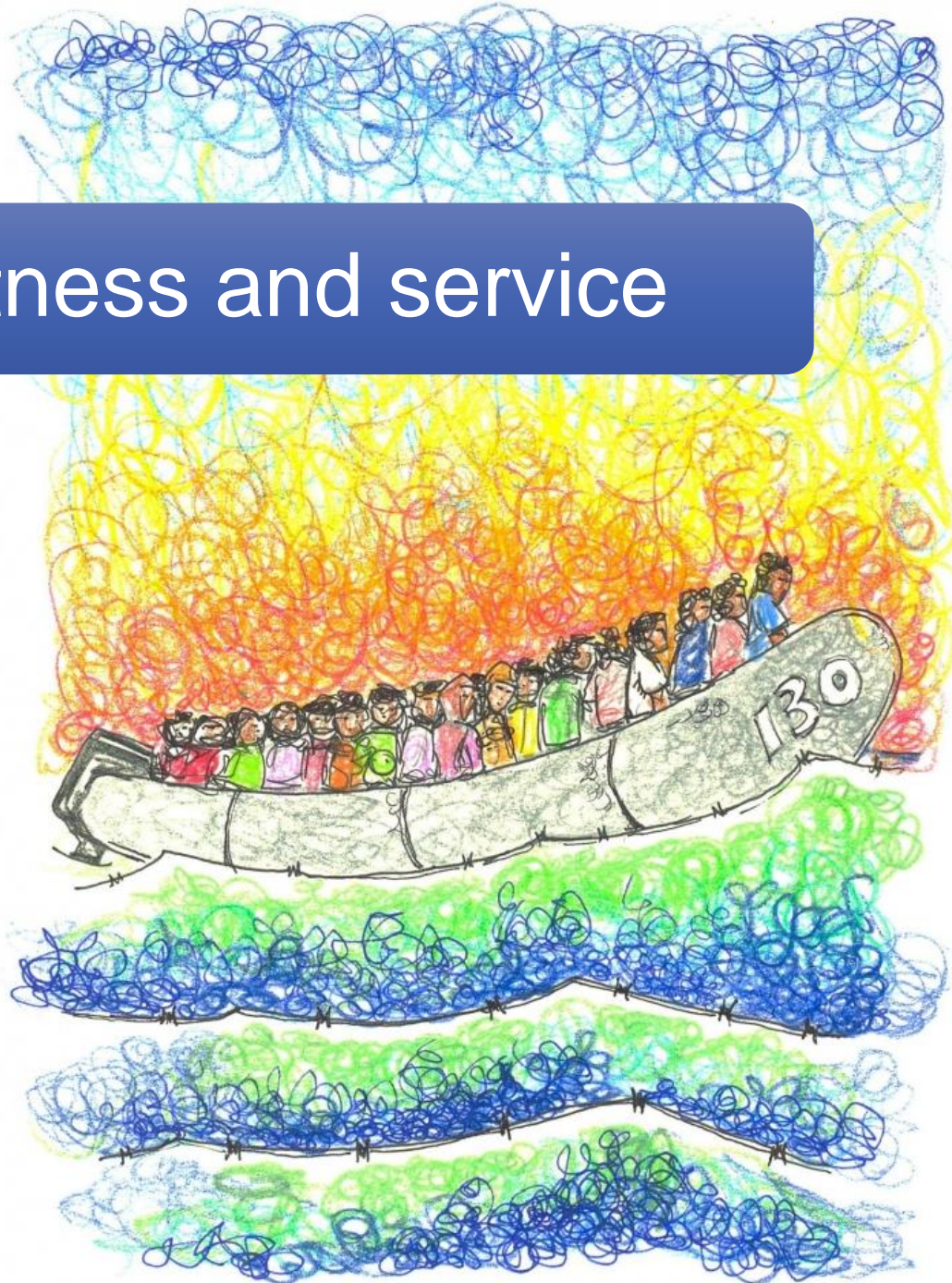


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# Communion of witness and service

Acting together







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# Communion of witness and service



Day-care centre for the elderly,  
Beregufalu/Ukraine



Euro orphans







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# Church Communion

The Protestant churches deepen their church communion.





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# Ecumenism



**The Protestant  
churches promote  
Church unity.**

Church communion as  
protestant model of unity

Ecumenical dialogues with:

- Roman Catholic Church
- Orthodox churches
- Anglican churches
- European Baptist Federation
- Migrant Churches





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# Ecumenism



## Official Dialogue with the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity





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# Protestant voice in Europe



**The Protestant  
churches serve society.**



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Michael Bünker | Frank-Dieter Fischbach |  
Dieter Heidtmann (Hrsg. | Ed.)

## Evangelisch in Europa

Sozialethische Beiträge

## Protestant in Europe

Social-ethical contributions



Leuenberger Texte





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# Positioning in public

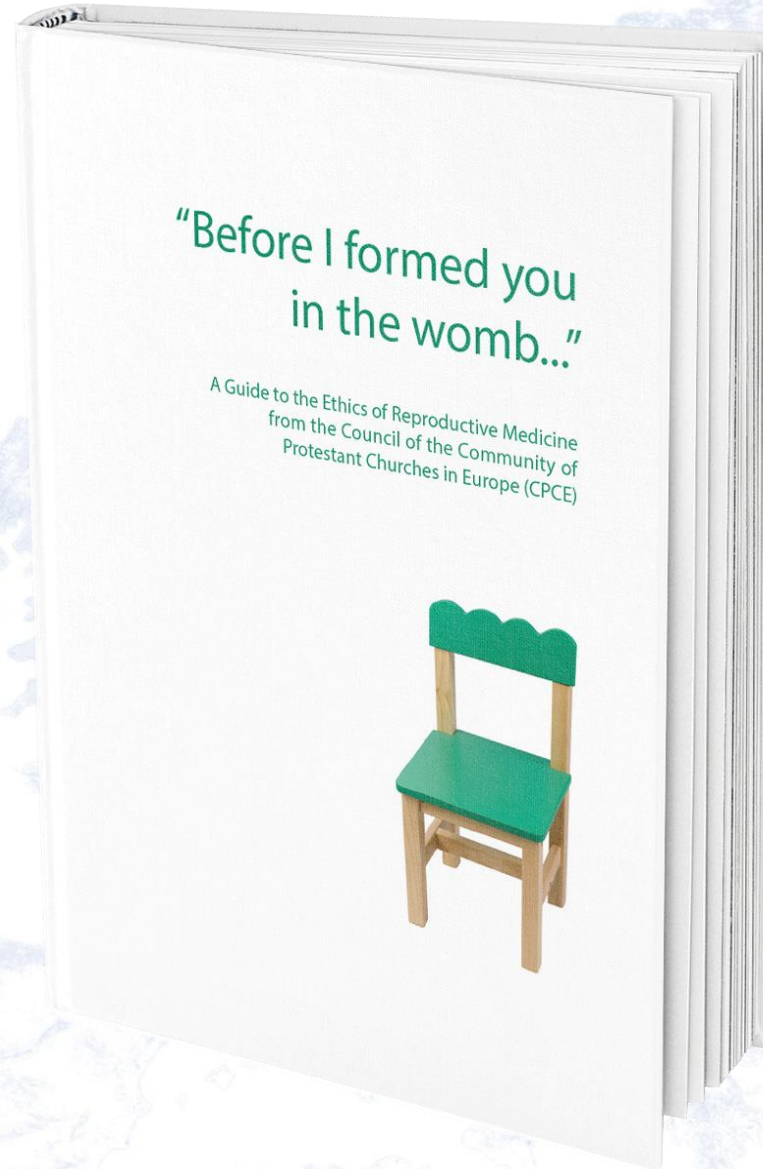


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A time to live,  
and a time to die

An aid to orientation of the CPCE Council  
on death-hastening decisions  
and caring for the dying



"Before I formed you  
in the womb..."

A Guide to the Ethics of Reproductive Medicine  
from the Council of the Community of  
Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE)



Mario Fischer | Miriam Rose (Hg./Ed.)

Theologie der Diaspora

Studiendokument der GEKE zur Standortbestimmung  
der evangelischen Kirchen im pluralen Europa

Theology of Diaspora

CPCE study document to define the situation  
of Protestant churches in a pluralist Europa



# focus



focus No. 29 (E/2021) • Communion of Protestant Churches in Europe CPCE

**“Being church together in a  
pandemic” – Reflections from  
a Protestant Perspective**





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# Communion of Protestant Churches in Europe?



109 signatory churches  
95 member churches.

5 member churches in South America

- Argentina
- Uruguay
- Paraguay
- Ecuador.

Participating churches:

- Sweden
- Finland





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## Fellowships of churches / Communion





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# Regional CPCE



## Regional groups

- North-West-Europe group
- South-East-Europe group
- Conference of the churches on the river Rhine (KKR)
- Conference of the churches in the European countries of Romance languages (CEPPLA)
- Communion of the Churches of the Reformation (CIR) in South America







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# General Assembly



## 7<sup>th</sup> General Assembly

20.–26. September 2012  
Florence, Italy



8. Vollversammlung der Gemeinschaft Evangelischer Kirchen in Europa  
Basel, 13.–18. September 2018





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# Gatherings of European synod members







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# Council, Presidium and Main office



Council



Presidium



Main office



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# 2018 General Assembly



**befreit verbunden engagiert**  
liberated connected committed  
libérés liés engagés

8. Vollversammlung der Gemeinschaft Evangelischer Kirchen in Europa  
Basel, 13.–18. September 2018





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# Meeting at a historical site







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# New study processes

- **Christian Talk of God**
- **Sexuality and Gender**
- **Practice and theology of the Lord's Supper**
- **Democracy as challenge for churches and societies**





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# Young people's involvement

**Protestant Forum  
for Young Theology in Europe**

**Being Protestant in Europe**

*Taking responsibility – giving hope –  
being visible*

**Conference in Wrocław, Poland  
4–8 April 2018**



**Young theologians aged up to 35 years  
are invited to attend the conference!**



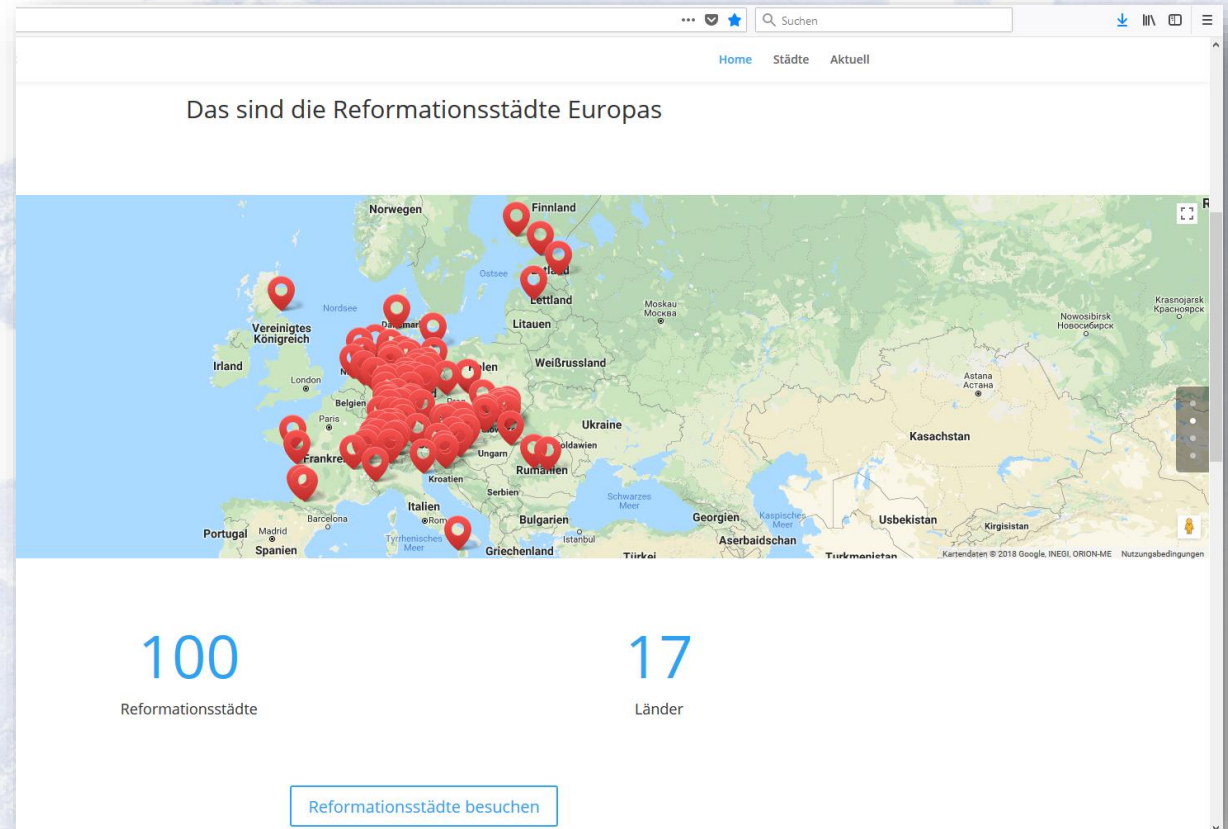


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# Reformation



Visit our website at:  
[www.reformation-cities.org](http://www.reformation-cities.org)  
and find out more about our  
“European Cities of the  
Reformation” project.







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# Reformation

CPCE at the  
“World Reformation  
Exhibition 2017”  
in Wittenberg







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