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## LUTHERAN-PENTECOSTAL STUDY GROUP

### Communiqué

September 10-17, 2005

#### Conversations between Pentecostals and Lutheran

September 10-17, 2005 a group of Pentecostal scholars and leaders and representatives of the Lutheran World Federation met at the Institute for Ecumenical Research at Strasbourg, France. The purpose of the meeting was to engage in conversations relating to the respective communities. The event focused on the topic "How Do We Encounter Christ?" and allowed the two groups to get better acquainted, to learn about each others churches. The need for such a meeting has become all the more important in the light of the fact that these ecclesial groups are both growing rapidly throughout the southern hemisphere.

To begin the conversations, two preliminary papers were offered. Prof. Kenneth G. Appold, from the Institute for Ecumenical Research, introduced Lutheranism and Dr. Cecil M. Robeck Jr., Professor of Church History and Ecumenics at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California introduced Pentecostalism. Questions were asked and valuable explanations given that prepared the teams for the major presentations.

The Pentecostal paper was prepared by Dr. Veli Matti Kärkkäinen, Professor of Systematic Theology at Fuller Theological Seminary. He placed the main emphasis on the fact that while Pentecostals want to be sensitive to the work of the Holy Spirit, they are first and foremost Christological in their focus. Christ is proclaimed as Saviour, Baptizer, Healer and the Coming King. The central purpose or concern in Pentecostal worship is to "meet the Lord." Such an encounter can only happen by faith and through God's grace.

The paper explaining the Lutheran view was presented by Prof. Kenneth G. Appold. He stated that Lutheran theology tends to describe a mediated encounter with Christ whose primary aim is reconciliation with God rendered effective through the justification of the sinner by faith. Because of Jesus' work on the cross the encounter of Christ in the Eucharist plays an important role. A major ethical consideration in Lutheran teaching is the encounter of Christ in the neighbor. Being open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit is essential in this respect.

The ensuing discussions were fruitful and led to the decision to meet for three additional years beginning in 2006. These future meetings will study the ways in which each tradition encounters Christ in proclamation, sacrament and charisms. The next meeting is expected to take place in Pasadena, CA, USA.

Present at the Strasbourg meeting on the Lutheran team were Dr. Kenneth G. Appold Lutheran co-chair (USA/Germany), Dr. Theodor Dieter (Germany), Dr. Matti Repo (Finland). The Pentecostal delegation consisted of: Dr. Jean-Daniel Plüss Pentecostal co-chair (Switzerland), Dr. Veli Matti Kärkkäinen (Finland), Dr. Cecil M. Robeck Jr. (USA) and Dr. Edmund Rybarczyk (USA). Both delegations have plans to extend their teams to include participants from Asia and the southern hemisphere.

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