

Press Release

Spirited Discussions Mark Evangelical-Adventist Meeting

Representatives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) met at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, August 5-10, 2007, for theological conversations. The discussions, which were warm and cordial, featured lively exchanges of views.

The current conversations were a follow-up to the initial round of discussions held in Prague, Czech Republic, August 8-11, 2006. Most of the participants this year also took part in the Prague meeting.

Dr. Rolf Hille, chairman of the Theological Commission of the WEA, and Dr. John Graz, secretary of the Council on Interchurch/Interfaith Relations of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, organized the conversations. The theological discussions were jointly chaired by Dr. Hille and Dr. William G. Johnsson, assistant to the president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists for Interfaith Relations.

The WEA was also represented by Dr. Jürg Buchegger, Mr. Bonn Clayton, Pastor James Kautt, Dr. Herbert Klement, Mr. Sven Wagschal, and joined by Dr. Reinhard Hempelmann; and the Adventists by Dr. Niels-Erik Andreasen, Dr. Bert B. Beach, Dr. Teresa Reeve, and Dr. Angel M. Rodriguez. Four professors from the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary made presentations and participated in the discussions: Dr. Denis Fortin, Dr. Roy Gane, Dr. Miroslav Kiš, and Dr. Peter van Bemmelen.

The conversations revealed a common love for the Lord and his Word, and a large measure of theological agreement. The Adventist participants could agree wholeheartedly with the WEA Statement of Faith, which focuses on the Bible as the Word of God, the Trinity, the person of Jesus Christ and his saving work, justification by faith, prayer, conversion, sanctification, and the Second Coming of Christ.

At the same time several areas of disagreement became apparent. The Adventist teachings regarding the Sanctuary and the pre-Advent judgment, the role and authority of Ellen G. White, the Sabbath as the day of worship for Christians, and human nature and destiny led to spirited exchanges.

The participants concluded that, despite disagreement over these distinctive Adventist beliefs, the large measure of common ground allows for Adventists and the WEA to cooperate, where advisable, in areas of shared interest.

Those involved in the conversations developed a joint statement of their findings and recommendations. This will be forwarded to the respective governing bodies.

The WEA represents some 420 million Evangelical Christians in 127 countries drawn from many denominations. The Adventist Church has 15 million members in more than 200 countries.