

STATEMENT OF GOOD INTENTIONS

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Russia and in Other States (further called the ELCROS), represented by archbishop Dr. Edmund Ratz; the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ingria in Russia (further called the ELCIR), represented by bishop Arri Kugappi; the Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church (further called the SELC; registered as the Siberian Union of Evangelical Lutheran Missions), represented by bishop-elect Vsevolod Lytkin; and the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church (further called the EELC), represented by archbishop Andres Pöder, tie the following statement of good intentions:

1. Object of the statement

1.1. Object of the statement is the regulation of the relations between from one side both the Lutheran churches existing on the territory of the Russian Federation, the ELCROS and the ELCIR, and from the other side the SELC. The latter – the SELC – came into existence assisted by the EELC, first of all as a congregation and a deanery of the EELC from 1993–2004, and then as an independent church, which elected at its Synod its own bishop, accepted by the General Synod of the EELC in 2004.

1.2. This given statement is to:

- describe the position of the SELC in relation to the ELCROS and the ELCIR;
- describe the position of the EELC in relation to the SELC;
- give the rules for the common negotiations.

2. Relations between the SELC, the ELCROS and the ELCIR

2.1. The SELC, the ELCROS and the ELCIR understand themselves as independent evangelical Lutheran churches, which:

- confess the belonging to the One, Holy, Christian and Apostolic Church, which is established by our Lord Jesus Christ and by His authority through the work of His apostles, for all nations until the fulfilment of the Kingdom of God;
- adhere to the confessional position that the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament and New Testament are the only source and infallible norm for all the teaching and activity of the church;

- have in common the Confessional Books of the Lutheran Church (Liber Concordiae) and have altar and pulpit fellowship with each other;

- reciprocally accept the confessional validity of the involved churches.

2.2. The partakers in this statement oblige themselves to honour and respect each other, to help each other and to avoid everything that can hurt any of the churches taking part in this statement.

2.3. All participating churches oblige themselves to give up everything that can jeopardize the image of the Lutheran churches in Russia. Especially in this regard, is the obligation not to take extreme positions in national or international media in reference to the Russian state and government as well as other religious communities.

2.4. All participating churches oblige themselves to prevent the congregations in church buildings which belong to those churches as well as the pastors of those congregations from transferring from one church body to another without the acceptance of the churches involved.

2.5. Preaching the sermon by a guest-preacher from a congregation of another church body than ones' own, can be regulated on the congregational level. Normally this requires a decision of the assembly of the congregation, which has to be brought to the attention of the leadership of the church body as information.

2.6. The SELC sees its area of responsibility being Siberia, the Urals and the Far East. It tries to avoid the creation of new congregations in other areas of Russia and CIS-states, especially in the areas where there are in existence congregations or deaneries of the ELCROS or the ELCIR. In the same way, the ELCROS and the ELCIR try to avoid without previous consultation the creation of new congregations in the areas where the SELC is operating.

2.7. All Lutheran schools in Russia can take the applicants from members of other Lutheran churches only if the applicants can present the written agreement of responsible bishop. The same rules apply for the candidates for pastoral ministry who have received their education in secular institutions or outside of the church bodies.

3. Relations between the EELC and the SELC

3.1. The pastors and deacons of the SELC have been ordained during the years of 1993–2006 by the archbishops of the EELC. The congregations in Siberia gathered and organized by pastor Vsevolod Lytkin and his co-workers have constituted themselves first of all as a deanery of the EELC and in 2004 constituted themselves as an independent church and have elected a bishop who was accepted by the General Synod of the EELC in the same year.

3.2. According to the point 3.1., there exists a partnership between the EELC and the SELC. Also, during the interim period this partnership is valid. The EELC also wishes to develop its partnership with the SELC in the same way that the partnership of the EELC with the ELCROS and the ELCIR exists.

3.3. If deemed necessary, this partnership gives the EELC the opportunity to participate in joint negotiations between the SELC, the ELCROS and the ELCIR.

4. Joint negotiations

4.1. Joint negotiations or consultations are necessary for the purpose of resolving practical questions which arise in the co-operative work and life of the ELCROS, the ELCIR and the SELC.

4.2. These consultations accept a common order and have recorded minutes (protocol).

4.3. The organizational costs will be carried by the host. The travel costs are carried by each participant.

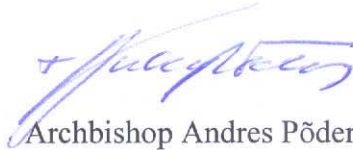
Tallinn, March 14th, 2007

For the Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church:

For the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church:



Bishop-elect Vsevolod Lytkin



Archbishop Andres Pöder

Taken as a point of information:

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Archbishop Dr. Edmund Ratz,
Evangelical Lutheran Church in
Russia and in Other States



Bishop Arri Kugappi,
Evangelical Lutheran Church of
Ingria in Russia