



European Lutheran Leaders in Christian-Jewish Dialogue Meet in U.S.A.

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Rev. Johannes Gruner of Stuttgart, Germany, chair of LEKKJ, expressed the group's appreciation of this opportunity for an immersion in the unique Christian-Jewish relationship in the U.S.A. 'We are very impressed and very pleased to see how your conversations proceed on the basis of complete equality,' said Pastor Gruner. 'We will return with many new ideas and a strong impetus for our own work.'

Scholars who addressed the group included Rabbi Dr. Alan Mittleman of Muhlenberg College, Allentown, Pennsylvania, speaking on 'Perspectives on American Jewry Today'; Rabbi Dr. Peter Ochs of the Department of Religious Studies of the University of Virginia, on 'Dabru Emet: Its Origins and Significance'; Dr. Mary Boys of Union Theological Seminary, New York, on 'Conditions for Sustaining and Deepening Jewish-Christian Dialogue in North America,' and Rabbi Dr. Shaul Magid of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York, on 'The Future of the Christian-Jewish Dialogue.'

U.S. hosts for the meeting were the Department for Ecumenical Affairs of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Institute for Jewish-Christian Understanding of Muhlenberg College. Dr. Franklin Sherman, ELCA Associate for Interfaith Relations, and Dr. Peter A. Pettit, Director of the Institute for Jewish-Christian Understanding, chaired the Planning Committee.

In addition to lectures and panel discussions, the program included small-group dialogues with Jewish clergy and laity, invitations to the Friday evening Sabbath dinner in Jewish homes, and attendance at synagogue services. The sessions in Allentown were held at Muhlenberg College and those in New York at Sutton Place Synagogue and Jewish Theological Seminary, where the delegates were joined by Jewish seminarians for conversations over lunch.

The Europeans in attendance represented Lutheran churches in Austria, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Hungary, The Netherlands, Norway, Romania, the United Kingdom, and various parts of Germany. The ELCA was represented by members of the Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Jewish Relations of the Department for Ecumenical Affairs, which scheduled its spring meeting to coincide with the European visit.

LEKKJ is supported by the Lutheran church bodies of Europe and is associated with the Lutheran World Federation. It has met annually for some 25 years to discuss historical and contemporary issues in Christian-Jewish relations.

F.S.