Commemorating the Seelisberg Conference 1947

31.08.2017 | Anette Adelmann; ICCJ General Secretary

Seventy years ago today ICCJ's founding conference ended in Seelisberg with groundbreaking results still applicable in our times.

From July 30 to August 5, 1947 63 Jews and Christians from 12 nations met in Seelisberg for an "Emergency Conference on Antisemitism".

Beside the resolution of founding an international council of Christians and Jews to continue and promote the work started in Seelisberg, reports of 5 commissions focused on the following topics:

- Principal objectives of Jewhish-Christian cooperation in combating antisemitism
- Educational opportunity in schools and universities
- Task of the churches (from here the famous Ten Points of Seelisberg emerged)
- Work in the field of civic and social service
- Relations with governments

The full reports and recommendations can be read here.

In rememberance of this conference members of ICCJ's theological committee recently offered in Bonn at our annual conference a workshop that reflected the scope of the Seelisberg conference, its implications for our present work (as mirrored in ICCJ's Berlin Document) and tasks for the future:

"Recommitting and Refocusing: Seelisberg, Berlin, and Beyond"

by Dr. Pavol Bargár, Dr. Michael Trainor, and Dr. Deborah Weissman

The workshop engaged with the Ten Points of Seelisberg (1947) and the Twelve Points of Berlin (2009) from theological perspectives. While affirming the core tenets and recommitting itself to the goals of the two documents, the workshop set out to refocus and expand the scope of Jewish-Christian dialogue and amity, in terms of themes, perspectives, and agents. To this end, issues such as feminism/womanism, ecological concern, Global South theologies, the media, young people, elderly people, minorities, globalization, and other faiths and worldviews, are all pertinent. Nor is this list exhaustive. However, given time constraints and other limitations, the workshop in fact focused on feminism/womanism, Global South theologies, and globalisation. The aim throughout was to initiate an inclusive (re)interpretation, so as to pursue what the preamble to the

Berlin document identifies as “a continuing process of learning and refinement” among Jews and Christians, in a relevant and authentic way in the context of the 21st-century world.

Read more about the workshop here.

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