

The World Communion of Reformed Churches at Kappel Abbey

The World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) will meet from 8 to 17 May at Kappel Abbey in the Canton of Zurich. On the occasion of the anniversary of the Reformation, the Evangelical Reformed Church of the Canton of Zurich and the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches (FSPC) invited the WCRC to hold the annual meeting of its Executive Committee at this historic site. During the conference, church representatives will discuss the tense relationship between church and state in the parish hall in Horgen on 11 May.

For many Reformed and Anabaptist churches throughout the world, the anniversary of the Reformation is an opportunity to explore their roots more deeply. Thanks to the efforts of Huldrych Zwingli, Switzerland – and especially Zurich – play an important role as places of origin of the Reformation. In view of this, the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches and the Zurich cantonal church have invited the Executive Committee of the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) to Kappel Abbey. This also provides a unique opportunity for discussions between the WCRC, which represents over 80 million Christians from 232 churches, and the Swiss churches.

The conference on ‘Church, State and Politics’ at the parish hall in Horgen on 11 May will serve as a platform for these discussions. In the context of Zwingli's theology, the participants will discuss the relations between church and state among the different WCRC member churches. The focus will be on South Korea, Syria, Hungary, Brazil and Cameroon.

The internal negotiations of the Executive Committee will concentrate on its relationship with the Mennonite World Conference. The beginnings of the Mennonites go back to the Zurich Anabaptist movement, and their painful history is closely linked to that of the Reformed churches. Today, reconciliation and a common creed are being strived for. The Committee will also deal with global economic injustice and environmental destruction on the basis of the Accra Confession.

On Sunday, 12 May, an international service in German and English with the WCRC representatives will be held at the Great Minster of Zurich. The central theme will be: *Sing to the Lord, all the earth!* (Psalm 96:1). Najla Kassab, President of the WCRC and pastor of the Evangelical Church in Syria and Lebanon, will deliver the sermon. Following the service, the Zwingli stamp, which was just issued jointly by the Swiss and German Post, can also be purchased.

The World Communion of Reformed Churches, headquartered in Hanover, was created in June 2010 through the merger of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the Reformed Ecumenical Council. The members of the Executive Committee, which meets annually, are elected by the General Council held every seven years.

Interested media professionals can interview representatives of the WCRC, particularly President Najla Kassab, General Secretary Chris Ferguson as well as the vice presidents, on Thursday, 9 May from 15:00. Other members of the Executive Committee from various countries will be available on request from 14:00.