

**Twenty-third North American LCJE Meeting
Pittsburgh 24-26 April, 2006**

**International LCJE Report 2006
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Every year, at these North American LCJE meetings, I see “old” faces. It is true that some of us get older for every passing year! But “old” faces that radiate joy over salvation in the Jew Jesus – and the need for Jewish people’s salvation in the Jew Jesus – do call forth joy in an old International LCJE Coordinator like me! But I am also pleased to see “new” faces, perhaps first-time participants in an LCJE meeting. I hope that you “new” faces will become “old” faces in the North American LCJE chapter’s history. Welcome!

LCJE – Networking Jewish Evangelism

In most networks there is a lot of bandying about with abbreviations. So also in LCJE: EDI, NCMI, DIM, CC, AMZI, JFJ, and so on. I am not going to take time explain what these abbreviations stand for. I admit that they may seem rather clannish and alienating for new participants. It is probably the same with the abbreviation LCJE itself: Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism.

Who today knows that “Lausanne” refers to a significant Christian conference on mission in the Swiss town of Lausanne in 1974? And that the Lausanne Covenant was created there and then?

Without going into all the details: In LCJE we continue to acknowledge our kinship with LCWE (another abbreviation: Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization). And we insist that to be a member of LCJE one has to be in substantial agreement with the Lausanne Covenant.

At the LCJE ICC meeting in Jerusalem in January 2006 (here we go again: LCJE International Coordinating Committee meeting!) it was decided, based on a suggestion from Derek Leman, that the three words “Networking Jewish Evangelism” be added to our LCJE logo. It is not a change of name but a clarifying statement. The addition will be used for example in the LCJE Bulletin – and it is already there in the February issue.

Networking Jewish Evangelism. Where has that taken place in the last year or so? For example at meetings in San Francisco, the European meeting in Hungary, meetings in Germany and Japan and at the CEO conference in France, where a little more than 20 CEO’s were gathered. Some of the contributions from the CEO conference have been printed in the LCJE Bulletin and can also be read on LCJE’s website.

But here and now I am going to focus on three things: the booklet “Jewish Evangelism: A Call to the Church”, a few reflections on statements, and finally some information about the next international LCJE conference.

Jewish Evangelism: A Call to the Church (LOP #60)

The booklet came into existence in Pattaya, Thailand, in connection with LCWE’s conference *Forum 2004*. As it is said in the introduction: “This report is the combined effort of the seven-member team that referred to itself as the Jewish Evangelism Working Session (Jews); all long-time members of the Lausanne Consultation on Jewish

Evangelism ...” And with the important addition: “As a group they speak for themselves in this report. LCJE’s *Rules and Procedures* give them no mandate to speak on behalf of the entire LCJE network.” The copyright rests with LCWE, LCJE became part of the project by paying the printing expenses.

The booklet has not fallen down from heaven. It is everybody’s right to criticize it – and to do so without feeling as a bad LCJE member. The primary target group is, as indicated in the title, the church. The booklet argues for the necessity and legitimacy of Jewish Evangelism. The church is called to reconsider this matter. We do not hide that on a number of points there are divergent opinions among Jesus-believing Jews and/or Jewish missions. And of course we sometimes present value judgments.

A few examples: When some declare that “all missionaries should leave the land of Israel and leave evangelism to local believers”, we say what we think of that, namely that such a view is “extreme, impractical and falls short of the biblical model of the church’s united worldwide mission of God to the world.” And when some maintain that “Messianic Jews should in general observe the *Torah* according to Orthodox or conservative tradition, with only a few exceptions,” we write, among other things: “The great danger of this last approach is a compromise of the uniqueness of Christ and the freedom the gospel brings.”

So, what has become of the booklet since then?

Last year in Los Angeles the booklet had not yet been printed. We were uncertain about how many copies we should print. I made an effort to make people pledge to take a certain number of copies – and I did the same a few days later in Hungary at the European LCJE meeting. In this way we got an advance order of 3,000 copies and had the booklet printed in 4,000 copies. We have 600-700 copies left, and although I am tempted to try to sell it to you once again, I’ll spare you the experience. We need the trifling amount of \$ 800 for the project to balance.

The booklet has been used in various ways; they have, for example, been distributed to pastors, lecturers, libraries, and so on.

But there is more.

From France Jean-Paul Rempp reports that they are working on a French translation. Avi Snyder writes about a translation into Russian: “We have someone to do the translation, and I’m sure it will be a good job. Thoughts for the costs of printing will have to be explored, though.” From Japan Charles Klingensmith writes: “By the way, the Japanese translation of the LOP on Jewish Evangelism from Pattaya is almost complete, and will be published this year we hope.”

Not bad news, is it? But what about a German translation? It *has* been published – here in 2006 and in an outfit that is much more posh than the English one.

Matthias Dahl, one of the translators, has received the following reaction to the document from a key figure in a society that used to endorse Jewish evangelism but no longer does:

“I read it at once with great interest. You won’t be surprised when I say that I don’t agree with the intention of the book. But the logical reasoning and the mode of exposition (also with the informative dates) have nevertheless made an impression on me.” Matthias Dahl accompanies this with the following comment: “It has apparently become a good book. I want to thank the work group for their efforts.”

LCJE and Statements

I and Bodil F. Skjøtt had to leave last year's LCJE conference in San Francisco before its conclusion – at a time when, during the business meeting, there was a lively debate about a resolution on Messianic Congregations in the name of LCJE North America. An agreement was not reached at that time, and how matters stand at present I do not know, but I would like to make a few comments in that connection.

Let me first make it absolutely clear: As International Coordinator I have no mandate to interfere in what LCJE NA decide to do in this matter. Through its history LCJE has seen a number of statements, from the international conferences as well as the various LCJE chapters.

A few days after this conference a statement was issued from The Eighth European Conference in Révfülöp, Hungary. In this the participants rejoice that “Jewish believers are finding spiritual homes in both churches and Messianic fellowships where they may freely express their Jewish identity.” And they rejoice that the gospel can now be proclaimed in Eastern Europe. It is viewed with concern that “some Christians are declaring that God has rejected the Jewish people,” and there is a repudiation of anti-Semitism. Christians are called upon “to remember that if Jesus is not the Messiah of Israel he cannot be the Christ of the nations”. And in the conclusion of the one-page statement the following is said: “**Above all**, we call on Christians to acknowledge that Jewish evangelism is an indispensable element in the evangelistic programme of the church and that the greatest expression of anti-Semitism is to withhold the gospel from the Jewish people.”

There is nothing new in that, it is not in any way sensational. Yet, in my opinion it is a good LCJE statement because it says what we in LCJE have to say over and over again: Jewish people need Jesus. All people need Jesus.

It goes without saying that I cannot have any problems with resolutions which present a call to Jewish evangelism. And if that is what the resolution in question last year in San Francisco basically was about, then fine! Discussions about Jewish identity for a Jesus-believing Jew – and his or her relationship to the Law – certainly come within the scope of LCJE. But if the purpose of the resolution in question is to solve that problem in the name of LCJE, then I find it more problematic. In my opinion, it is better

- to continue the discussion orally at LCJE's meetings and also in written form in articles published by LCJE, but not through resolutions
- to do the same in our respective organizations, where each organization can pass its own resolutions in the name of the organization.

I believe that the cause of LCJE will be served best by such a procedure.

But as I have already hinted, LCJE NA are free to issue the resolutions that they can agree about. I have now indicated my position. In connection with our discussion of this topic our President, Tuvya Zaretsky, writes the following to me:

“Whenever LCJE stands to ‘rule’ on something other than the merits of Jewish evangelism, I agree that we may step beyond our mandate for existing. The forum for debate, report and discussion – in an irenic community – is our most valuable asset.”

Eighth International LCJE Conference

In connection with the European LCJE conference in Hungary we had the opportunity to look into possibilities of holding the eighth international LCJE conference in Budapest.

We found Hotel Agro on the outskirts of Budapest, with which we have signed a contract. The facilities are perfect and the hotel is set in beautiful surroundings with a fine view.

Unfortunately we have been giving misleading information in the LCJE Bulletin about the dates for the conference. The conference will be held from the 9th to the 14th of August 2007 – Deo Volente!

As soon as possible the program for the conference will be completed by the committee, which consists of Tuvya Zaretsky, Bodil F. Skjøtt and myself. More information will be given in the LCJE Bulletin and on our website.

At the latest international conference, in Helsinki, several organizations had their own meetings before or after the LCJE conference. I hope this will also be the case in 2007 in Budapest. Since we will be staying at a hotel this time, and not a Bible school, it is important that such decisions are made rather soon. Budapest is filled with tourists in the summer.

Greatest is he who serves

And lastly: I mentioned that we had an LCJE CEO conference in 2005. I have heard that in Israel some people have felt offended that we use a term like CEO – Chief Executive Officer – in LCJE. Why? Because only one, namely God, should be called CEO. I must admit that I find it difficult to take such an objection seriously. But others may disagree.

However, I do agree that greatest is he who serves. Jesus showed us that through his life and death. May we continue, with joy and boldness, to serve him who gave his life as a ransom that Jews as well as non-Jews may share in God's salvation.