



Gemeinschaft Evangelischer Kirchen in Europa (GEKE)
Communion of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE)
Communion d'Eglises Protestantes en Europe (CEPE)

Being Church Together in the Light of Hope

Strategy 2025–2031



Bear with one another in love,
eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit
in the bond of peace. There is
one body and
one Spirit – just as you were called to the
one hope of your calling –
one Lord,
one faith,
one baptism,
one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.
(Eph 4,2b–6)

Church communion means that, on the basis of the consensus they have reached in their understanding of the Gospel, churches with different confessional positions accord each other fellowship in word and sacrament and strive for the fullest possible co-operation in witness and service to the world.

(cf. Leuenberg Agreement 29)



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The Presidium at the inauguration of General Secretary Susanne Schenk in Vienna in April 2026 (l–r: Rita Famos, Georg Plasger, Susanne Schenk and Marko Tiitus; Photo: CPCE)

Mission Statement

The CPCE lives as a church communion in Europe and strives to intensify this.

The CPCE realises unity of the Church in reconciled diversity and thus makes a visible contribution to ecumenism and coexistence in Europe.

The Communion of Protestant Churches in Europe witnesses to the joyful and liberating message of Jesus Christ forming a common voice of Protestantism.

Preface

“In the Light of Christ – Called to Hope“. This motto of the 9th General Assembly in Sibiu provides the spiritual basis for the present strategy. Because the light shines in the darkness, it encourages us to witness to the hope to which we are called together.

The Communion of Protestant Churches in Europe lives and is to be experienced in four main dimensions – as the doctrinal document “Church Communion“ describes them: as communion in worship, in learning and teaching, in witness and service, and in shaping its structures. As this concrete communion, the CPCE strives to serve the unity of the church.

One of the priorities for the years 2025–2031 is a doctrinal conversation on Doctrinal Diversity in the Church Communion – richness and weakness of diversity inside and outside the church. A Study Process looks at the diversification that has taken place in the field of Ministry, Ordination, Episkopé since 2012 when the General Assembly adopted the results of a doctrinal conversation on the same topic. One further priority is to bring the member churches together on the urgent question of safeguarding. The Young Theologians Programme shall again serve to integrate young perspectives in all the processes – and connect the CPCE's young generation across Europe.

We are convinced that this strategy helps us to focus on being church together in the light of hope.

Georg Plasger

Rita Famos

Marko Tiitus

CPCE–Presidium

Communion in Worship



Celebration of the Lord's Supper during the CPCE Worship Service in Vienna, in April 2026
(l-r: Ingrid Bachler, Ulrike Scherf; Photo: CPCE)

Church communion grows out of the encounter between the witness of the gospel and human beings. For that reason, it comes to expression most profoundly in the common celebration of worship. Thus, in the CPCE, Lutheran, Reformed, Methodist and United are joined with one another in worship, they have fellowship at the Lord's Table, and their ministers exchange pulpits. The CPCE as a communion reconciled in Christ has lived from the outset in pulpit and table fellowship.

(Church Communion, §19)

Continuous Tasks

The CPCE organises worship consultations that provide suggestions on how to make the church communion visible in worship services.

The CPCE maintains and updates a multilingual collection of liturgical resources on its website.

The CPCE also fulfils its responsibility for Europe by publishing liturgical resources for special occasions such as memorial days, European political events or disasters.

Priorities 2025–2031

The CPCE is setting up an Advisory Board on Worship, which will monitor liturgical developments in the member churches and support the CPCE's work on worship.

The CPCE advocates for setting up a Europe-wide multilingual database of hymns in cooperation with member churches.

The CPCE is organising a worship consultation on the topic of occasional offices (for example, weddings and funerals) in changing societies.

Communion in Learning and Teaching



Some CPCE publications – for further information, visit: leuenberg.eu (Photo: CPCE)

Church communion is deepened by theological teaching and learning together. The Leuenberg Agreement commits the signatory churches to further theological work: in general, in the deepening, examination and constant updating of the common understanding of the gospel in the light of the witness of Holy Scripture (cf. Leuenberg Agreement 38); and in particular, through doctrinal conversations or through theological work on the doctrinal differences »that persist within the participating churches and between them without being grounds for division« (Leuenberg Agreement 39).

(Church Communion, §21)

Continuous Tasks

The CPCE deepens church communion through theological work. It organises doctrinal conversations, study processes and theological consultations.

The CPCE makes the results of its work known through seminars and appealing media as well as translations and promotes their reception in the member churches.

The CPCE promotes pastoral training programmes that are open to all member churches. Where possible, these are organised by regional groups or member churches.

Priorities 2025–2031

The CPCE is holding a doctrinal conversation on the topic of “Doctrinal Diversity in the Church Communion”.

The CPCE is organising a consultation to evaluate the effects of the doctrinal conversation “Ministry, Ordination, Episkopé” including questions about ordination rites and alternative access to pastoral ministry in the view of the shortage of pastors.

The CPCE is exploring the theological foundation of renewal processes (e.g. Mixed Economy of Church) in the churches by working on elements of a “Theology of Change” in different European regional contexts.

The CPCE reflects on the ethics and practices of agreement and disagreement including use of Scripture in ethical discernment. It considers the development of a Code of Conduct to aid creating safe meeting spaces which encourage frank and honest sharing.

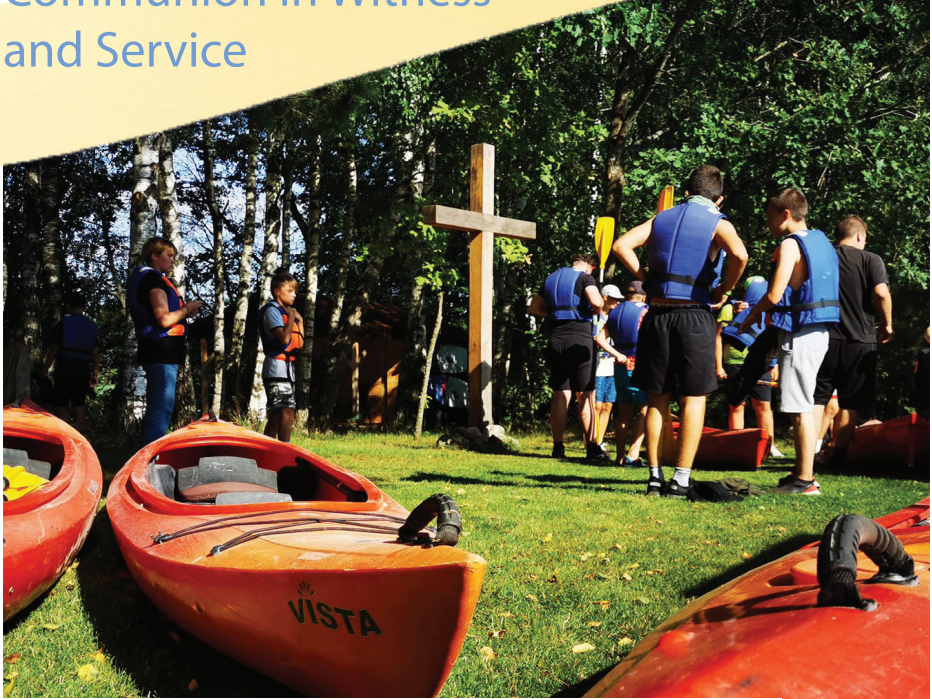
The CPCE is developing new target group-specific forms and processes for the reception of its work results (e.g. through videos in social media).

The CPCE is introducing its European Protestant perspective on peace and war in the ongoing processes of ecumenical bodies (LWF, CEC, etc.).

The CPCE welcomes discussion on the missional sharing of the Christian faith and its transmission to the next generation within its member churches, and monitors this process. At the European meeting of synod members, it invites participants to focus on this topic.

The CPCE is running a pilot project on “Being Human”. The aim is to determine key questions and establish whether there is a need for future studies or doctrinal conversations.

Communion in Witness and Service



With the support of the Euro-Orphans Project, the CPCE enables summer camps (here: in Lithuania) and other initiatives in Eastern European countries for children and young people who often grow up without their parents due to labor migration. (Photo: GAW)

The unanimous testimony of the gospel is an important concern of the Agreement. From that grows the liberation of the churches and their common commitment to service. Service is regarded as »service of love ... which focuses on human distress and seeks to remove the causes of that distress. The struggle for justice and peace in the world increasingly requires that the churches accept a common responsibility« (Leuenberg Agreement 36).

(Church Communion, §29)

Continuous Tasks

The CPCE promptly formulates current statements on socio-ethical and European policy issues. The Advisory Board on Ethical Issues advises the CPCE on the identification of these issues and prepares the statements.

The CPCE represents Protestant positions at the European institutions, for which it is registered with the Council of Europe as an international non-governmental organisation with participatory status.

The CPCE supports its member churches in their public positioning on social developments through consultations and guidance.

The CPCE supports exemplary ecclesial-diaconal projects of its member churches that are related to its substantive work. It does this in cooperation with the Gustav-Adolf-Werk.

The CPCE is responsible for Protestant religious education in the European Schools of the European Union. The Advisory Board on Education and a coordinator provide support in ensuring the quality of religious education.

Priorities 2025–2031

The CPCE is developing a guide on the topic of “Being Church Together in Times of Uncertainty”.

The CPCE represents the interests of Protestant churches as an iNGO in the Council of Europe.

The CPCE is setting up a working process to share and evaluate experiences with safeguarding measures against sexual violence and to promote good practice in the Protestant churches in Europe.

The CPCE, together with the Gustav-Adolf-Werk, is focusing on aid projects for Euro-orphans.

The CPCE is continuing its work on “Democracy as a Challenge for Churches and Societies”. The CPCE provides material for further work in its member churches.

Communion that Shapes its Structures



CPCE Delegates during a vote at the 2024 General Assembly in Sibiu (Photo: CPCE)

Church communion is dependent on reliable forms of communication and organisation. In the 1990s it became increasingly clear that with the institutional weakness of the Leuenberg Fellowship, problems had surfaced for which an appropriate solution had to be found. Through the doctrinal conversations, areas of work were to be developed which would also require a stronger institutional structuring. These should take into account the evolving shape of the communion in worship, in doctrine and in witness and service.

(Church Communion, §24)

Continuous Tasks

Church communion enables local and regional churches to exchange ideas. The CPCE enables the work of the regional groups. The leaders of the regional groups liaise regularly.

The CPCE involves young people in its work processes. The Council appoints the reference group “CPCE Young Theologians” to accompany the CPCE’s study and work processes.

Through its regulations, the CPCE ensures that the member churches can actively participate in the work of the CPCE. It is committed to ensuring that the member churches support the work of the CPCE both financially and in terms of personnel.

The CPCE cooperates with the Centro Melantone in Rome and the Centre for Protestant Theology in Eastern Europe (ZETO) in Sibiu to promote Protestant theological studies in a Catholic and Orthodox context.

The CPCE organises meetings for synod members of the member churches and meetings of church leaders.

The CPCE sets the topic of “Empowering Ordained Women” as a cross-cutting theme in its work.

The CPCE Council promotes the deepening of church communion between the General Assemblies.

The CPCE will hold its 10th General Assembly in 2031 to present the results of its work, identify the challenges facing churches at the European level, and set priorities for the coming years. Efforts will be made to ensure adequate representation of lay people among both participants and candidates.

Priorities 2025–2031

The CPCE enables greater participation in the work of the CPCE – primarily through the launch of a new website, but also through the planning of open projects. It is using digital networking technologies that enable the exchange of knowledge and experience between member churches.

The CPCE examines its existing cooperation partners and potential new partners to determine the extent to which cooperation with them is conducive to the realisation of the CPCE’s strategy.

The CPCE is exploring new sources of funding in connection with its work processes.

The CPCE keeps sufficient resources free in its work planning to be able to react to unforeseen events.

When planning and implementing work processes, the CPCE pays attention to criteria of sustainability and resource conservation.

The CPCE installs an advisory board of public relations.

Service to the Unity of the Church



The Pentecost as a Symbol of Ecumenism (Photo: Gemini AI)

Ecumenical commitment is inseparable from church communion. In declaring and realizing church communion amongst themselves, the churches signatory to the Agreement »do so as part of their responsibility to promote the ecumenical fellowship of all Christian churches. They regard such a fellowship of churches in the region of Europe as a contribution to this end« (Leuenberg Agreement 46f.).

(Church Communion, §33)

Continuous Tasks

The CPCE carries its model of unity in reconciled diversity and more than 50 years of experience of living church communion to ecumenical dialogues.

The CPCE maintains an intensive exchange with the Fellowship of Middle East Evangelical Churches (FMEEC) with the aim of mutual learning, e.g. through reciprocal invitations. It supports church aid projects in the FMEEC region.

The CPCE strives for church communion with other churches in Europe that share a common understanding of the Gospel, in particular the churches involved in the work of the Leuenberg Agreement (participating churches).

The Advisory Board on Ecumenical Issues advises the Council, monitors the CPCE's work processes with regard to their ecumenical implications and draws up statements on ecumenical issues.

Priorities 2025–2031

The CPCE resumes dialogue with the European Baptist Federation with the aim of creating a pathway for individual EBF member unions to enter into communion with the CPCE.

The CPCE concludes an agreement with the FMEEC which consolidates the relationship between their communions ecclesiologically and institutionally.

The Advisory Board on Migration and Church Communion conducts exploratory talks with churches that have emerged from migration to Europe with the aim of establishing church communion and clarifying forms of cooperation.

The CPCE continues a dialogue with the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity on the understanding of the church and church communion.

The CPCE is seeking to strengthen its ties with the Anglican churches in Europe, with the aim of deepening mutual relationship.

The CPCE is developing new models to integrate churches with which it has no church communion, but with which it co-operates, into the work of the CPCE.

The CPCE, in cooperation with the Centre for Protestant Theology in Eastern Europe (ZETO), is exploring opportunities for joint conversations with the Orthodox Churches, particularly on issues of social ethics.



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Participants in the 2024 General Assembly of the CPCE in Sibiu/Hermannstadt (Photo: CPCE)

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