

ACHTERBERGH DECLARATION

From November 6-8 (2006), 127 representatives of the Reformed Church in Africa, The Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa, The Dutch Reformed Church in Africa and the Dutch Reformed Church met at Achterbergh near Krugersdorp to discuss the reunification of the family of DRC churches and how this can be realized.

As a follow-up to a meeting of the four executives at Bloemfontein on 16th August 2006 a broader representation of all four these churches solemnly committed themselves to the reunification of the DRC family.

The meeting realized anew the importance of the own identities, which include differences in language and practice, for these individual churches. The meeting is convinced that the richness expressed by this diversity should be nurtured in the re-united church and used constructively to the benefit of the church and the Southern African society.

The meeting identified core values for the re-unification process. It appointed ten task teams to work on these different aspects of reunification, in the light of these core values. A follow-up meeting is scheduled for March 2007.

The meeting is convinced that church reunification requires shared faith convictions, mutual trust and respect. Members at the levels of church council, presbytery and synod are encouraged to get to know one another better and to address common challenges together, since the key to a reunited church is local congregations and their acceptance of ownership of this challenge. The meeting gratefully acknowledges the many places where this is already done. The celebration of Pentecost next year presents an excellent opportunity to strengthen relationships.

The meeting acknowledged the specific requirements and procedures of the different churches that need to be complied with in this reunification process. The meeting is part of a process in which the different churches with their congregations should be partners. The meeting is convinced that the unification process is God's way for the DRC family and that God himself will open the doors when people see no obvious way forward. The spirit of unity and enthusiasm at the meeting was encouraging and brought hope.

The meeting acknowledges the common calling of the family of DRC churches in Southern Africa and is bound to this commitment.