

However in 1973 the member communions rejected this plan. The thought of some was that the union plan was precipitous, that it did not make sufficient allowances for understanding and history, etc. (Very little was said about real theological issues such as the Bible, the atonement, etc., but a lot was said about peripheral matters such as ordination, service liturgy, etc.) To uninformed outsiders it appeared that COCU might collapse but over a period of years it moved to retrenchment.

As of 1985 the general secretary of COCU was Gerald B. Moede with offices located in Princeton. The plenary session held in Baltimore in 1984 gave some guidance towards a merger that would grow by consensus. The final matter is still up in the air but it does appear that the movement is gathering some motion in the higher levels.

(2) The presbyterian merger of 1983...

This united the southern Presbyterian church (U.S) and the United Presbyterian Church thus healing a division that had come in the Old School presbyterians at the time of the Civil War. Due to constitutional difficulties it did not involve all the churches...a number were able to leave the merger, some affiliating with the PCA and otherwise. The southern body was more conservative, on the whole, and the merger moved some of its membership to other denominations. The great presbyterian church hoped for has not come to pass however, the loss of membership has been great and the divisiveness of liberalism is still apparent.

(3) The Lutheran merger of 1988

The new Lutheran body was created in Chicago in 1988 with the merger of the Lutheran Church in America, the American Lutheran Church, and the Evangelical Lutheran church plus some smaller synods and groups. The size of the new body is about 5 and 1/2 million members. The Missouri Synod did not merge and about five smaller synods have not joined. The new body has established study commissions of various types with other churches, everything from Reformed bodies to Catholic churches. The Lutheran Church of the Reformation in Washington, DC has celebrated divine worship with Catholic priests and Lutheran pastors as joint celebrants. A new wave of Lutheran interest into ecumenism has had bishopric groups visiting everything from the Pope to the Archbishop of Canterbury. Quite a lot of things are happening in Lutheranism and most of it does not seem like it will work in favor of the interest of the Gospel.

(4) In retrospect: The United Church of Canada

This union featured Presbyterian, Methodist, some Baptist and