

Historical Sketch of WCC Development

1910-1928		
<i>LIFE AND WORK</i> <small>(formalised 1922 at Helsingborg)</small>	<i>FAITH AND ORDER</i>	<i>INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY COUNCIL</i> <small>(formed in 1921 at Lake Mohonk)</small>
EDINBURGH 1910		
Commission Report Titles		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Carrying the Gospel to All the non-Christian World 2. The Church on the Mission Field 3. Education in Relation to Christianization of National Life 4. The Missionary Message in Relation to Non-Christian Religions 5. The Preparation of Missionaries 6. The Home Base of Missions 7. Missions and Governments 8. Cooperation and Promotion of Unity 		
Observations and Evaluation		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A new type of conference; to organise and coordinate mission efforts (Johnston, <u>Battle</u>, pp. 29, 43; Yri, <u>Battle</u>, p. 71) with the dream unifying Christendom in such a way as to reach the world for Christ (Hedlund, <u>Roots</u>, p. 39) 2. It provided the foundation for ecumenism (Hedlund, <u>Roots</u>, p. 39), pushing that "the unity of the people of God must be expressed as the missionary task is carried forward" (Yri, <u>Quest</u>, p. 36). Johnston, however, feels that it was too inclusive in nature, not wanting to antagonise anyone over theological issues. As a result, the foundation was laid for the later inbreaking of inclusivistic theology (Johnston, <u>Battle</u>, pp. 36, 41, 43-7) 3. They were not able to refer to the authority of Scripture; instead referred to the authority of Christ or the authority of the Christian faith (Johnston, <u>Battle</u>, p. 38). 4. Though evangelism was generally viewed in a conservative way, the beginning of social and political action as part of evangelism was seen (Johnston, <u>Battle</u>, p. 42)--Yri notes that the early ecumenical leaders were "to a greater or lesser degree . . . all influenced by the religiously pragmatic Ritschilianism that dominated liberal theology from circa 1875 to 1914. They held that Jesus Christ is the inspiring example of the sort of faith that accepts God as the One who loves and forgives." He adds, "Furthermore, . . . these same men were increasingly convinced that church and mission should face the world not only with a message of individual salvation, but also with a mandate to effect the redemption and renovation of society." (Yri, <u>Quest</u>, p. 57). 5. "Men and women of great vision and faith dreamed together of evangelizing the world in that generation. Their burning zeal characterized the missionary movement at its best" (Hoekstra, <u>Demise</u>, p. 31); though interpret the attitude as a triumphalistic one of "Christianizing" the world" by overcoming all other religions and (Johnston, <u>Battle</u>, p. 49). 6. The establishment of the Continuation Committee ensured that Edinburgh was not an end in-and-of itself--it was the beginning of a process which resulted in the ecumenical movement as we know it today (Hedlund, <u>Roots</u>, p. 38). 		
Stockholm 1925	Lausanne 1927	Jerusalem 1928
The Gospel applied to all realms of life	Interchurch Collaboration	The application of the Christian message to religions and secular life
Reports:	Reports:	Reports:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Church's Obligation in View of God's Purpose for the World 2. The Church and Economic and Industrial Problems 3. The Church and Social and Moral Problems 4. The Church and International Relations 5. The Church and Christian Education 6. Methods of Co-operative and Federative Efforts by the Christian Communions 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Call to Unity 2. The Gospel--the Church's Message to the World 3. The Nature of the Church 4. The Church's Common Confession of Faith 5. The Church's Ministry 6. The Sacraments 7. The Unity of Christendom and the Place of Different Churches in It 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Christian Message in Relation to non-Christian Systems of Thought and Life 2. The Younger and Older Churches 3. Religious Education 4. Missions and Rural Problems 5. Missions and Industrialism 6. Missions and Race Conflicts 7. International Missionary Cooperation
Observations and Evaluation:	Observations and Evaluation:	Observations and Evaluation:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The focus was on building unity through service, not doctrine (Yri, <u>Quest</u>, p. 44). 2. Theological tension arose over the nature of the Gospel and God's kingdom (especially whether man can usher it in; Yri, <u>Quest</u>, pp. 44-5). 3. "The first time in the history of the church when secularized concerns and even secularized approaches to societal problems were identified with those of Christians" (Yri, <u>Quest</u>, p. 45; see also Johnston, <u>Battle</u>, pp. 56, 58). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Established to wrestle through the theological issues related to attaining church unity (Yri, <u>Quest</u>, p. 40). 2. Many delegates were frustrated over the lack of genuine discussion on some of the most thorny issues (Yri, <u>Quest</u>, p. 42). 3. There was great tension between conservative churches and "modern" leaders on the relationship of evangelism and social concerns; this arose because the leaders dropped their previously held high view of the Bible (Yri, <u>Quest</u>, p. 60). 4. The seeds were planted for organisational unity taking prominence over doctrinal integrity (Yri, <u>Quest</u>, p. 72). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Most controversial IMC conference (Johnston, <u>Battle</u>, p. 62). There was a massive shift in emphasis--the call was to service rather than conversion (Yri, <u>Authority</u>, pp. 40, 66, 72). 2. Though the optimism was muted (due to WW I; Hedlund, <u>Roots</u>, p. 47), the theology was thoroughly modern, based on the social gospel in terms of salvation, evangelism, and conversion (Ibid., p. 53). Leaders began to look for a "Christ-like" world based on the ethic of Jesus (Johnston, <u>Battle</u>, p. 48). 3. Right to evangelize non-Christian lands was no longer self-evident (Johnston, <u>Battle</u>, 57); elements of syncretism crept in (Bassham, <u>Theology</u>, p. 22).

1928-1938		
<i>LIFE AND WORK</i>	<i>FAITH AND ORDER</i>	<i>INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY COUNCIL</i>
Oxford 1937	Edinburgh 1937	Tambaram (or Madras) 1938
The Church and Its Function in Society	The Church in the Purpose of God	The World Mission of the Church
Sections:	Sections:	Sections:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Church and Community 2. Church and State 3. Church, Community, and State in Relation to the Economic Order 4. Church, Community, and State in Relation to Education 5. The Universal Church and the World of Nations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ 2. The Church of Christ and the Word of God 3. The Church of Christ: Ministry and Sacraments 4. The Church's Unity in Life and Worship 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Authority of the Faith 2. The Growing Church 3. Evangelism 4. The Life of the Church 5. The Economic Basis of the Church 6. The Church and the State
Observations and Evaluation:	Observations and Evaluation:	Observations and Evaluation:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Phrase "Let the Church be the Church" is "quintessence of the Oxford adventure" (Rouse and Neill, <u>History</u>, p. 591). 2. Was basically an attempt to clarify the relation between the Church and the World--it "served to undergird the growing conviction that social and political questions were basically religious and theological issues" (Yri, <u>Quest</u>, p. 86). 3. It reaffirmed "the fundamental unity of all Christians and churches in their allegiance to Jesus Christ" (Yri, <u>Quest</u>, p. 87). 4. It did not effectively deal with the question of revelation, especially the uniqueness of Christian revelation and whether God reveals Himself through other religions and/or events (see Yri, <u>Quest</u>, p. 87; note the conclusions of the Hocking Report summarised in Hedlund, <u>Roots</u>, pp. 56-9). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strong place given to Bible, but it was a Bible with human limitations (Johnston, <u>Battle</u>, p. 68; <u>World</u>, pp. 184-5). 2. Though the syncretism of Jerusalem 1928 was avoided, a broad view of revelation was maintained ("God makes himself known in nature and in history"; cited in Johnston, <u>World</u>, p. 184). 3. "Evangelism did not seem to be conceived as an extension of the Gospel out into the world but as a ministry within to individuals ["to convince those who are already Christians that they are Christians!"] and outward by corporate community witness" (Johnston, <u>World</u>, p. 187). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Due to Barth's influence, the IMC returned to a higher regard for the Bible (Hedlund, <u>Roots</u>, p. 75; also Johnston, <u>World</u>, p. 188). 2. Evangelicals from Western churches had withdrawn from the IMC; they were replaced by evangelicals from the younger churches in the two-thirds world (Johnston, <u>Battle</u>, p. 69). 3. Focus shifted from the atonement of Christ to the incarnation (Johnston, <u>Battle</u>, p. 70). 4. The "acts" of God (especially the incarnation) were viewed with greater confidence than the "Word" of God (the Bible; Johnston, <u>Battle</u>, p. 70); no clear position was taken on the extent to which the Bible is inspired (Johnston, <u>World</u>, 189) 5. "Larger evangelism" was introduced; it was a compromise between conservative Edinburgh 1910 and modernist Jerusalem 1928 (Johnston, <u>World</u>, p. 187). 6. Hope was placed in the Church as the instrument of world evangelisation; it was to be a transforming society in the world (Johnston, <u>World</u>, p. 191)--continued to emphasize a close relationship between evangelism and social involvement (Bassham, <u>Theology</u>, p. 24).
<p>We note with Johnston several trends established by both Oxford and Edinburgh which continue to influence the Ecumenical Movement today (Johnston, <u>Battle</u>, pp. 68-9):</p>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The utilitarian value of evangelism in the social scene of the world, in contrast to an eternal importance because of the eternal value of the soul. 2. The prominence of the Church visible and organized in evangelism, in contrast to the responsibility of individual Christians to evangelize. 3. The authority of the Church as an institution in evangelism, in contrast to the authority of Scripture. The Bible has human limitations, but has validity because it is in the tradition of the Church. 4. The testimony of the Church in society becomes fundamental for evangelism, in contrast to the inner witness of the Holy Spirit accompanying and commending the proclamation of Scripture. If the testimony of the Church is defective because of disunity, or is unaccompanied by social concern or action, the authority of the Church in its witness to the world is lost, and evangelism is either hindered or impossible. 		

1938-1952		
LIFE AND WORK	FAITH AND ORDER	INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY COUNCIL
Amsterdam 1948		Whitby 1947
WCC Assembly I: Man's Disorder and God's Design		Christian Witness in a Revolutionary World
Sections:		Sections:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Universal Church in God's Design 2. The Church's Witness to God's Design 3. The Church and the Disorder of Society 4. The Church and the International Disorder. 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The World in Ferment 2. World of Redemption 3. Partners in Obedience
Observations and Evaluations:		Observations and Evaluations:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Did not contribute much new material on mission thinking, but formalised a new (and permanent) body through which churches could continue to explore issues together (Bassham, <u>Theology</u>, p. 29). 2. "Uncovered a hard core of disagreement among the delegates on their views related to the Church"--but underlying this was the issue of authority (whether it was the Word of God in Barthian terms or the church's tradition; Yri, <u>Quest</u>, p. 156; see also Johnston, <u>Battle</u>, pp. 84-5). 3. Noted that Church and mission could not be separated (Johnston, <u>Battle</u>, 84). 4. Though it appeared to give a more receptive attitude toward conservative thinking, the pluralistic base prevented more than "receptivity" (see Johnston, <u>Battle</u>, p. 80). 5. Adopted a Basis of Membership of WCC: "The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour" (cited in Johnston, <u>Battle</u>, p. 90). Note that this statement says nothing about Scripture. 6. Accepted an evangelical evangelism; "reflected the pietistic elements of evangelism inherent within some of the older denominations, State churches, and Third World churches" (Johnston, <u>Battle</u>, p. 98). At the same time, the distinction between "mission" and "evangelism" was broken down (<i>Ibid.</i>, p. 99). 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Became increasingly "Churchcentric"; ignored differences between mission and Church (Hedlund, <u>Roots</u>, p. 80). 2. Significant positive emphasis: partnership in obedience; removed paternalism in mission thinking (Hedlund, <u>Roots</u>, p. 79; also Newbiggin, "Six Continents", p. 177). 3. Reversed previous thinking: the requests of the younger churches were now to be viewed as the basis for missionary policy (Hedlund, <u>Roots</u>, p. 79). 4. Though no agreement could be reached on the nature of mission, generally, "The Great Commission was seen in relation to the transformation of the whole man and all society through the Gospel" (Yri, <u>Quest</u>, p. 141-4).
Lund 1952		Willingen 1952
Christ and the Church		The Missionary Obligation of the Church
Sections:		Sections:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Christ and His Church 2. Continuity and Unity 3. Ways of Worship 4. Intercommunion 5. Where Do We Stand? 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Missionary Obligation of the Church 2. The Indigenous Church 3. The Role of the Missionary Society in the Present Situation 4. Vocation and Training 5. Reviewing the Pattern of Missionary Activity
Observations and Evaluations:		Observations and Evaluations:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At Lund the WCC began to move away from process of a <i>comparative</i> approach (in which differences in teachings/doctrines, etc. were compared with each other; Yri, <u>Quest</u>, pp. 130-1) toward a <i>commonality</i> approach (in which the similarities and common roots were stressed; <i>Ibid.</i>, p. 147) 2. With no authoritative Scriptures, the quest for authority turned to the "common history which we have as Christians" (see Yri, <u>Quest</u>, pp. 159; 161-2). 3. "The need to relate the mission and the unity of the church, because both flow from the purpose of Christ, was clearly recognized" (Hoekstra, <u>Mission</u>, p. 37). 4. Challenged the churches "whether they should not act together in all matters except those in which deep differences of conviction compel them to act separately" (cited by Hoekstra, <u>Mission</u>, p. 37). 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No linkage was made between the Bible and its authority and God's activity in the world in general--this was left undefined (Yri, <u>Quest</u>, pp. 155, 161). 2. First real deadlock in IMC over the nature of the missionary obligation of the Church (Newbiggin, "Six Continents", pp. 178-9; see also Johnston, <u>Battle</u>, pp. 86-7 and Hoekstra <u>Demise</u>, pp. 34-5). 3. "Realized evangelism" came into vogue--an incipient universalism in which Christ already reigns over all, and our job is only to declare that as fact so that men may realize it (see Johnston, <u>Battle</u>, p. 87; <u>World</u>, pp. 233-5). 4. Question as to the relationship between the IMC and WCC arose; declaration was that "Church and mission are one" (Hedlund, <u>Roots</u>, p. 81). 5. "It has become plain that a completely 'Churchcentric' theology of mission is inadequate. The mission of God is more than Church extension" (Newbiggin, "Six Continents", pp. 179-80); <i>Missio Dei</i> coined here (Yri, <u>Quest</u>, p. 143).

1952-1961		
<i>LIFE AND WORK</i>	<i>FAITH AND ORDER</i>	<i>INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY COUNCIL</i>
Evanston 1954 ----- WCC Assembly II: Jesus Christ--The Hope of the World ----- Sections: 1. Our Oneness in Christ and Our Disunity as Churches 2. The Mission of the Church to Those Outside Her Life 3. The Responsible Society in a World Perspective 4. Christians in the Struggle for World Community 5. The Church Amid Racial and Ethnic Tensions 6. The Christian in His Vocation ----- Observations and Evaluation: 1. "Although a biblical theme was chosen . . . the Assembly was unable to agree as to the relationship between the Church and the World, much less show how Christ could be the world's Hope Why offend the devotees of non-Christian religions!" (Yri, <u>Quest</u> , p. 185). 2. The direction of focus began to change. Theologians were frustrated that the introspective thinking had been self-defeating. To continue to look inwardly was to betray God's call to the church as a sent community. As a result, "They abruptly terminated all further ecclesiastical introspection and added 'mission' to the essential marks of the Church" (Yri, <u>Quest</u> , p. 185) 3. There was continuing evidence of conservative theology in the WCC. However, the WCC was unable to decide on an eschatological position (though the debate was not as radical as in the IMC at Willingen (Johnston, <u>Battle</u> , p. 108).		
		Ghana 1958 ----- The Christian Mission at This Hour ----- Observations and Evaluation: 1. <i>Missio Dei</i> developed more fully: "God's mission embraces both the Church and the world, and consequently, the Church is to be of service to a world in social upheaval (Johnston, <u>Battle</u> , p. 228; see also Yri, <u>Quest</u> , pp. 170-1). 2. After much debate, the decision was made to integrate the IMC with the WCC. It is in this context that it is said "Mission became Church" (Johnston, <u>World</u> , p. 240). 3. Several study projects of significance and the Theological Education Fund were initiated (see Bassham, <u>Mission</u> , p. 43).
New Delhi 1961 ----- WCC Assembly III: Jesus Christ--The Light of the World; the Lordship of Christ All Over the World ----- Sections: 1. Witness 2. Service 3. Unity ----- Observations and Evaluation: 1. Revised the Basis of membership in the WCC: "The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit" (cited in Johnston, <u>Battle</u> , p. 91). 2. In the section on Witness, it was noted that "The reconciliation wrought through Christ embraces all creation and the whole of mankind" (Yri, <u>Quest</u> , p. 169)--incipient universalism had become more explicit! 3. With the IMC now integrated into the WCC, mission became a division (DWME) within the WCC. At Bangkok, it would be further lowered to one sub-unit (CWME) of a larger division (Faith and Witness) in the WCC organizational structure. It was no longer the central purpose for the existence of the church (see Hedlund, <u>Roots</u> , pp. 86-7).		

1961-1968		
<i>LIFE AND WORK</i>	<i>FAITH AND ORDER</i>	<i>DIVISION OF WORLD MISSION AND EVANGELISM</i>
	Montreal 1963	Mexico City 1963
	The Church in the Purpose of God	Witness in Six Continents
	Sections:	Sections:
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Church in the Purpose of God 2. Scripture, Tradition and the Traditions 3. The Redemptive Work of Christ and the Ministry of the Church 4. Worship and the Oneness of Christ's Church 5. "All in Each Place": The Process of Growing Together 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Witness of Christians to Men of Other Faiths 2. The Witness of Christians to Men in the Secular World 3. The Witness of the Congregation in its Neighborhood 4. The Witness of the Christian Church across National and Confessional Boundaries
	Observations and Evaluation:	Observations and Evaluation:
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Radical critical theology undercut any apparent unity of the Bible. A new hermeneutic was needed to unravel the contradictions and diverse meanings to be found in the Bible (Yri, <u>Quest</u>, p. 202). 2. Though the "authoritative tradition" was important to mission, that tradition could not be objectively discerned because God cannot be reduced to mere propositions (e.g., the Bible can only witness to God; see Yri, <u>Quest</u>, p. 201 and Johnston, <u>Battle</u>, pp. 148-50) 3. Christians are to seek to be truly human in a secular world (Yri, <u>Quest</u>, p. 174). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On the positive side, all six continents were viewed as in need of mission--the paternalistic division between "Christian" west and "pagan" Two-Thirds world was erased (Hedlund, <u>Roots</u>, p. 87). 2. World development replaced traditional evangelism (Johnston, <u>Battle</u>, p. 151). 3. "Mission" was now seen as anything done by men to change evil societal structures (see Yri, <u>Quest</u>, p. 173), as there was no distinction between "saved" and "unsaved" since "in Jesus Christ humanity has already been saved" (see Hedlund, <u>Roots</u>, pp. 87-8).
Geneva 1966	Bristol 1967	
Christians in the Technical and Social Revolution of our Time	New Directions in Faith and Order	
Observations and Evaluation:	Observations and Evaluation:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WCC urged to come to grips with the world's agenda (Yri, <u>Quest</u>, p. 176), specifically in terms of revolution (Johnston, <u>Battle</u>, p. 153). 2. Gave 3 areas of ongoing influence: 1) the world is the locus for mission; 2) deeper insights into issues affecting the world as a basis for mission planning; and 3) attempt to develop theological basis for mission (Bassham, <u>Mission</u>, p. 75). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discussion focussed on finding criteria on which to "decide for or against certain passages in the Bible" (Yri, <u>Quest</u>, p. 204). Once again, there was no ultimate source of authority. 	
Uppsala 1968		
WCC Assembly IV: Behold I Make All Things New		
Sections:		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church 2. Renewal in Mission 3. World Economic and Social Development 4. Towards Justice and Peace in International Affairs 5. Worship 6. Towards New Styles of Living 		
Observations and Evaluations:		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "While "mission" became wholistic (later holistic) . . . by a synthesis of proclamation and social justice, the first priority of missions was toward centers of power. . . . The second priority was revolutionary movements. . . . Furthermore, the new humanity cannot fully come without the revolutions necessary to establish just order" (Johnston, <u>Battle</u>, p. 236). 2. The pre-conference papers totally ignored those who do not know Christ in favour of social and political justice. As a result of sharp evangelical reaction, some statements noting the need for a vertical elements in mission were included, but it was more of a means of appeasing conservatives than showing true theological conviction. The final result was a patchwork that no one was happy with (see Bassham, <u>Mission</u>, pp. 79-83; Hedlund, <u>Roots</u>, pp. 115-8). 3. With the world as the focus, humanization became the goal of mission; traditional evangelism rejected as proselytism (Hedlund, <u>Roots</u>, p. 113). 		

1968-1975		
<i>LIFE AND WORK</i>	<i>FAITH AND ORDER</i>	<i>DIVISION OF WORLD MISSION AND EVANGELISM</i>
	Louvain 1971 Unity of the Church and the Unity of Mankind ----- Reports: 1. Interpreting the Sources of our Faith 2. On the Way to Communion in the Sacraments 3. Where is the Spirit Leading? 4. Catholicity and Common Witness ----- Observations and Evaluation: 1. "Authority of the Bible" report only acknowledged that one's approach to hermeneutics was an important presupposition to one's view on its authority (Yri, <u>Quest</u> , pp. 180-1). 2. One essential contribution: the key to relating the authority of the Bible to secular and political theologies was "from the situation at any given time" (Yri, <u>Quest</u> , pp. 205-10; 212-3)	Bangkok 1973 Salvation Today ----- Reports: 1. Culture and Identity 2. Salvation and Social Justice 3. Churches Renewed in Mission ----- Observations and Evaluation: 1. Continued to justify Uppsala's conclusion that "both Church and Mission were now regarded as the component parts of God's one, overall mission to the world" (Yri, <u>Quest</u> , p. 211). 2. Presented a secular, humanistic salvation; battle lines were drawn with conservatives which continue today--what does "salvation" mean? (Hedlund, <u>Roots</u> , p. 122; see especially Beyerhaus, <u>Bangkok 73</u>). 3. It was agreed that the CWME would be considered as a sub-unit of the Programme Unit under the Division "Faith and Witness"--it was now only a sub-unit of a unit of a division within the WCC (Hedlund, <u>Roots</u> , pp. 128-9)!
Nairobi 1975 ----- WCC Assembly V: Jesus Christ Frees and Unites ----- Sections: 1. Confessing Christ Today 2. What Unity Requires 3. Seeking Community--The Common Search of People of Various Faiths, Cultures and Ideologies 4. Education for Liberation and Community 5. Structures of Injustice and Struggles for Liberation 6. Human Development--The Ambiguities of Power, Technology and Quality of Life ----- Observations and Evaluation: 1. Nairobi did not change the course of the WCC in a biblical direction (Kato, "No Turning Point", p. 319; Hedlund, <u>Roots</u> , p. 148; contra Bassham, <u>Mission</u> , pp. 101-3). "The thrust of Uppsala--to put Christians, the Church and the ecumenical movement in the world rather than over against it--was certainly sustained at Nairobi" (Bassham, <u>Mission</u> , p. 99). 2. The Evangelical voice was definitely stronger at Nairobi than it had been at Uppsala, though the net influence was still spotty at best (Kato, "Nairobi Assembly"; contra Bassham, <u>Mission</u> , p. 106, who is far more optimistic of the convergence of evangelism and social concerns). 3. The idea that all men are already saved came out more strongly at Nairobi than previous WCC conferences (see Hedlund, <u>Roots</u> , p. 146); though evangelical scholars seem to be divided over whether or not evangelism was given more prominence and over their evaluation of Bishop Mortimer Arias' major address on evangelism (see Hoekstra, Demise, pp. 133-57).		

1975-1983		
<i>CHURCH AND SOCIETY</i>	<i>FAITH AND ORDER</i>	<i>COMMISSION FOR WORLD MISSION AND EVANGELISM</i>
Cambridge 1979 Faith, Science and the Future	Bangalore 1978 Sharing in One Hope	Melbourne 1980 Your Kingdom Come
		Sections: 1. Good News to the Poor 2. The Kingdom of God and Human Struggles 3. The Church Witnesses to the Kingdom 4. Christ--Crucified and Risen--Challenges Human Power
	Lima 1982 Towards Visible Unity	Observations and Evaluation: 1. Evangelical phraseology was seen more than in previous conferences, but the underlying concept of mission as societal structural change remained the same. 2. Sin seen in terms of oppressive social and/or corporate structures rather than man's rebellion toward God. 3. The signs of the kingdom of God are seen in the church involvement in human struggles and in the church's organizational unity. When the church does these, it "becomes a sign of the kingdom of God to many people" (<i>Your Kingdom Come</i> , p. 183). 4. The poor (defined horizontally) are accepted by God simply because of their poverty. We must likewise display God's attitude.
	1. Out of Lima came the document on "Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry"	
Vancouver 1983		
WCC Assembly VI: Jesus Christ--The Life of the World		
Sections: 1. Life as a Gift from God. 2. Life Confronting and Overcoming Death. 3. Life in Its Fullness. 4. Life in Unity		
Observations and Evaluation: 1. By far the most evangelical sounding of the recent WCC conferences. In fact, the evangelical camp was split over how to respond. The vast majority (more than 200) signed a letter of commendation to the WCC which invited evangelicals to "add their gifts to the process" (Lovelace, "Winds of Change", p. 33). On the other hand, a small group drafted and signed a counter letter in which, though the progress was noted, it was stated that there were still many areas about which we should remain concerned. It concluded by warning evangelicals to stay clear of the WCC process (see Johnston, "Evangelical Division", p. 4). 2. This was the first WCC conference in which a theological atheist was invited to address the assembly on the central theme "Jesus Christ--the Life of the World"!		

1983-1991		
<i>CHURCH AND SOCIETY</i>	<i>FAITH AND ORDER</i>	<i>COMMISSION FOR WORLD MISSION AND EVANGELISM</i>
	Stavanger 1985 (Plenary Commission Meeting)	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discussion of a common <i>recognition</i> of the apostolic faith as expressed in the creeds of the undivided church; 2. A common <i>explication</i> of the faith in terms understandable today; 3. A common <i>confession</i> by the churches today of that same apostolic faith in relation to the contemporary challenges to the gospel ("Life and Death Issues"). 	
	Budapest 1989 (Plenary Commission Meeting)	San Antonio 1989 Your Will Be Done--Mission Christ's Way
		Sections:
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Turning to the Living God 2. Participating in Suffering and Struggle 3. The Earth is the Lord's 4. Towards Renewed Communities in Mission
	Observations:	Observations and Evaluation:
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One item of discussion was 185 church responses to the document on "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry" (BEM) that came out of the Lima 1982 conference ("1989: The Year in Review", p. 8). 2. Further consideration was given to a major long-term study on apostolic faith 3. Another major study considered was on unity and renewal. It was noted that some issues affecting church unity include "resurgent multilateralism" among North Atlantic churches, 'insistent contextualization among Third World and other ecclesial majorities', and 'a concern . . . with authoritative church teaching processes and ecclesiological significance' ("WCC Chronicle", p. 27). 3. Preparations were made for a 5th world conference in Faith and Order in 1993. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One report noted, "We cannot point to any other way of salvation than Jesus Christ; at the same time we cannot set limits to the saving power of God." ("Mission Issues", p. 15) 2. Another, concerning cross-cultural missions, stated, "Crossing frontiers in mission demands profound sensitivity to the cultures and values of others, a posture of incarnational dialogue and identification with people in their struggles for justice, freedom and human dignity . . ." ("Mission Issues", p. 18). 3. Over 250 evangelicals signed a letter which noted the positive aspects of the conference as well as expressing continuing concerns, especially over the "ambivalent Christology", including assertions that "Christ's spirit is present salvifically in all religions" ("A Look Back", pp. 17-8)
	Canberra 1991	
	Holy Spirit--Renew the Whole Creation	
	Sub-Themes	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Giver of Life--Sustain Your Creation! 2. Spirit of Truth--Set Us Free! 3. Spirit of Unity--Reconcile Your People! 4. Holy Spirit--Transform and Sanctify Us! 	
	Observations:	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In the pre-conference document on religious plurality, the WCC still equivocates on taking a clear stand of the lostness of people without Christ. VanElderens notes, "The report affirms that 'God has been present in the seeking and finding' of other religious traditions; that the 'truth and wisdom in their teachings and love and holiness in their living . . . [are] the gift of the Holy Spirit'; and that 'God is with them as they struggle, along with us, for justice and liberation'." (VanElderens, "On Religious Plurality", p. 7). 2. This will be the first WCC conference to take the Holy Spirit as the uniting theme. 3. One section, "Mission in the power of the Spirit", "deals with the churches' call and empowerment by the Spirit to a ministry of proclamation and healing, justice and reconciliation. It asks how the church can express the wholeness of its mission and how its ministry can be a sign of hope for the world" ("Looking Ahead to Canberra", p. 5). 	