



Metropolitan Hilarion meets with head of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church

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On 13 September 2010, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, currently on a visit to Estonia with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, met with the head of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church, Archbishop Andres Pyder.

The meeting that took place at the consistory of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church was attended on the part of the Moscow Patriarchate by Metropolitan Korniliy of Tallinn and Estonia; Rev. Dmitry Ageyev and hierodeacon Ioann (Kopeikin), assistants to the DECR chairman; archpriest Toomas Hirvoja, assistant to Metropolitan Korniliy; and on the part of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church by the president of the Estonian Council of Churches Bishop Einar Soone, and pastors Urmas Viilma, Peeter Kaldur and Arho Tuhkru.

Addressing the Archbishop, Metropolitan Hilarion said:

"We highly appreciate the uncompromising position of the Lutheran Churches in the Baltic countries that stand firmly against liberalization of Christian values. We are aware of the document dated 2006, which criticized the decision of the Church of Sweden to bless homosexual marriages. We know the results of the meeting between the heads of the Lutheran Church of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in November 2008 and share the views of the Lutheran bishops presented in its final document on the danger of such innovation that estrange Christians from the Church.

"We are glad that the representatives of your Church actively participate in the work of the Christian Interconfessional Consultative Committee and that talks are being held on a greater involvement of its members in common social service."

Archbishop Pyder invited Metropolitan Hilarion to attend the consecration of St. Jan's church in St. Petersburg on 20 February 2011 and presented him with the blessing of Aaron in the Estonian language made by a modern calligrapher.

The DEC chairman presented Archbishop Pyder with an icon of the Saviour made in the Moscow Patriarchate's workshops.

After the meeting, Metropolitan Hilarion and his suite went to the Dome Cathedral of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church. The church was built in the 13th century on the Toompea Hill. There are

burial sites of the 13th-19th cc. in it, including the tomb of the Russian Admiral Krusenstern (1770-1846).

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