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Saksdokumenter:

WCC: Invitation to member churches to name delegates for the 11th Assembly, June 2019

WCC: Christ's Love Moves the World to Reconciliation and Unity, July 2019

Rapport nr. 5/2019

Marianne H. Brekken

Progresjonsrapport Generalforsamlingen i Kirkenes verdensråd

Kirkenes verdensråds kommende generalforsamling i 2021 og prosessen rundt oppnevning av delegasjon fra Den norske kirke

Sammendrag

Kirkenes verdensråds (KV) neste generalforsamling arrangeres i Karlsruhe i Tyskland, 8.-16. september 2021. Tema for generalforsamlingen er «Christ's Love Moves the World to Reconciliation and Unity».

Det totale antall delegater er redusert fra 825 i Busan til 775. Medlemskirkene nominerer 80 % av delegatene, og KVs sentralkomite oppnevner de resterende 20 % på sitt møte i mars 2020. Sentralkomiteen vil balansere deltagelsen.

Den norske kirke har fått **to delegater** (mot tre i Busan). I tillegg kan vi foreslå ekstra delegater. Vi kan også oppnevne en rådgiver for Den norske kirkes delegasjon.

Fristen for å gi KV beskjed om navn på delegater og rådgiver samt forslag på ekstradelegater er **31.12.2019**. Dette innebærer at Kirkerådet på sitt møte i desember gjør vedtak i saken, etter forslag på MKRs novembermøte.

KV opplyser i sitt brev at kirker med to eller flere delegater bes om å ta hensyn til en rettferdig kjønnsfordeling og representasjon av leke, ungdom, mennesker med nedsatt funksjonsevne og urfolk.

Den norske kirkes to delegatene bør ha ulikt kjønn. Det er naturlig at en biskop (preses) er med, og at den andre foreslås av MKR/KR ut fra KVs retningslinjer. En av de to vil være Den norske kirkes kandidat til sentralkomiteen, noe som må tas hensyn til ved oppnevningen.

Vi bør også sende inn forslag på en eller to **ekstrakandidater**. Disse kan brukes til å balansere de hensyn det ikke var rom for blant de ordinære kandidatene. Disse kandidatene må vi argumentere for.

Den norske kirke kan også oppnevne en **rådgiver** for delegasjonen. Dette bør være en person med særlig økumenisk kompetanse. KV foreslår en «ecumenical officer», og i vår sammenheng er dette MKRs generalsekretær.

MKRs medlemmer inviteres til å diskutere saken på møtet og gi innspill til videre kriterier for utvelgelse og prosess fram mot møtet i november.

I brev fra juli 2019 ber KV medlemskirkene om en økonomisk støtte til generalforsamlingen tilsvarende ett års medlemskontingent – fordelt på årene 2019, 2020 og 2021. Den norske kirke har innfridd dette med å betale 1/3-del av kontingenten i 2019, og det legges opp til å gjøre det tilsvarende de to neste årene.

Vedlagt følger også en progresjonsrapport ang. generalforsamlingen i Kirkenes verdensråd fra Marianne H. Brekken.

Forslag til vedtak

Mellomkirkelig råd har følgende innspill til prosessen fram mot valg av Den norske kirkes delegater til Kirkenes verdensråds generalforsamling i 2021:

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World Council of Churches

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Email: assembly@wcc-coe.org www.oikoumene.org

General Secretariat

Direct phone: +41 22 791 6026
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1103 / Europe

Ms Berit Hagen AGØY
Church of Norway
P.O. Box 799 Sentrum
NO-0106 Oslo
Norway

Geneva, June 2019

Invitation to member churches to name delegates for the 11th Assembly

Dear Ms Agøy,

Greetings in the name of the Triune God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit!

1. The WCC 11th assembly

The next assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) will take place in Karlsruhe, Germany, from 8 – 16 September 2021 (arrivals 7, departures 17), under the theme *“Christ’s Love Moves the World to Reconciliation and Unity”*. The central committee accepted the invitation from our member church, the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD), who presented an offer from the Evangelical Church in Baden to host the assembly in Karlsruhe. An assembly of the WCC is a significant, representative and diverse global, ecumenical church gathering.

Assemblies take place every eight years, and this will be the 11th Assembly of the WCC. An assembly is the highest governing body of the WCC. It gives direction for the next eight years and elects the central committee for the next period. As with previous assemblies, the 11th Assembly will contribute to deepening our unity in Christ and give a common witness to the world. The WCC 11th Assembly will be a milestone on our pilgrimage of justice and peace as a fellowship of churches.

2. Naming assembly delegates

It is my privilege to invite all member churches to name their delegates to the assembly (this naming of delegates composes 80% of all the delegates). A WCC assembly is a special event and opportunity, and you are invited to select your delegates with a mandate from the highest authority of your church.

Upon the mandate from the central committee meeting, the executive committee determined the total number of delegates to be 775, which is a reduction from 825 delegates at the last assembly. This will affect the number of delegates some member churches may name directly. However, the central committee may compensate for this when they appoint an additional 20 % of the delegates, based on the nomination of additional delegates (See point 3 below).

The number of delegates per member church is determined by the total membership of each church, using figures supplied by the church. The same logic used for the two previous assemblies is used for allocating seats for the 11th Assembly. Member churches with 2 delegates or more are asked to consider fair and adequate representation of lay persons, indigenous peoples and differently-abled people and balance of men, women and young people.

According to our records, the Church of Norway has a total membership of 3'800'000.

If the total number of members of the church is not correct, please inform the assembly office.

Based on this, the Church of Norway is invited to nominate 2 delegate(s).

When nominating delegates, it is important to keep in mind that elections for the central committee and the presidents for the coming period will take place at the assembly. Only persons present in the assembly can be elected for the central committee or as WCC presidents. The executive committee is elected among the central committee members.

Please submit the name and contact details of each delegate to the assembly office **before 31 December 2019**. The list of delegates will be presented to the central committee in March 2020. Enclosed in this letter is a delegate naming form.

3. Nominating additional delegates

The WCC Constitution and Rules make provision for the appointment of additional delegates based on nominations from the member churches. Therefore, the central committee invites member churches to nominate persons who could serve as additional delegates. The additional delegates (20 %) will be appointed by the central committee to strengthen the diversity of the assembly, and ensure fair and adequate representation of lay persons, indigenous peoples and differently-abled people and balance of men, women and young people, as well as persons with expertise particularly relevant for the assembly. Additional delegates are considered full delegates of their church.

Please submit additional delegate nominations to the assembly office **before 31 December 2019**. They will be presented to the central committee in March 2020. Enclosed in this letter is an additional delegate nomination form.

4. Advisors

Member churches are also invited to nominate one advisor to their delegation. The invitation is particularly intended for "ecumenical officers", i.e. persons representing the ecumenical interests and relationships of their church. However, the assembly also needs advisors with competence in a number of areas, who could contribute to the assembly as a whole. Advisors have a right to speak, but do not participate in decision-making.

Please submit nominations for advisors to the assembly office **before 31 December 2019**. The central committee will appoint advisors in March 2020. Attached to this letter is an advisor nomination form.

5. Other forms of participation in the assembly

The 11th Assembly of the WCC welcomes other people from around the world to participate in the spiritual life and thematic programme of the assembly at their own initiative and cost. Information and registration for general participation in the assembly will be published later on the assembly website at www.oikoumene.org/assembly. There will be a Stewards' programme for young people and a Global Ecumenical Theological Institute (GETI) programme for seminarians, as well as a number of pre-assemblies. Invitations to nominate persons to these programmes will also be shared later.

6. Assembly contributions

Each member church is asked to make a financial contribution to the Assembly Fund that is equivalent to one annual membership contribution. The Assembly Fund is a solidarity fund that helps the member churches share the costs of preparing the assembly and to provide grants for delegate travel, board and lodging. The contributions can be shared in one or multiple payments between 2019 and 2021. Assembly Fund contributions can be made at the same time as membership contributions. For more information, please contact membership@wcc-coe.org.

7. Policy on finance: to ensure fair participation at the 11th Assembly

When a representative of a WCC member church is named or nominated as an assembly delegate, the member church is responsible for all travel, board and lodging costs incurred as a result of the participation of the delegate. However, funds for fair participation can be made available for churches who request them, under the condition that the member church has made its membership contribution for 2019 and 2020 before February 28, 2021. The same policy may apply to advisors. A written request for assistance for participation should be submitted by the church **before 31 May 2021**. More information on the policy will be shared later.

The WCC Assembly office in Geneva can be contacted by email at assembly@wcc-coe.org. As plans develop, more information and resources will be available from June 2019 on the WCC web-site at www.oikoumene.org/assembly.

As we continue the pilgrimage of justice and peace inaugurated by the 10th Assembly in Busan in 2013, I invite you to join in the journey toward Karlsruhe in September 2021. We look forward to the cooperation of your church in preparing for and participating in the assembly. I especially encourage you to take up the assembly theme in the life of your church – in prayer, theological reflection and in your service for God's world – affirming that "Christ's Love Moves the World to Reconciliation and Unity".

Yours in Christ,



Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit
General Secretary

Cc: Mr Christofer SOLBAKKEN, Rev. Einar TJELLE, Rev. Marianne H. BREKKEN



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**To the fellowship of
WCC member churches**

Geneva, July 2019

Christ's Love Moves the World to Reconciliation and Unity

Dear Faithful in Christ,

Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Last year was a remarkable one in the life of the World Council of Churches (WCC). It was 70 years ago that the churches came together as a fellowship united by faith in Christ. We give thanks to God for bringing us together to strengthen our witness to God's amazing love for all creation. We are grateful for the many expressions of celebration that took place all over the world to mark the anniversary. You will find many stories about our common pilgrimage of justice and peace in the enclosed annual review of 2018.

As we look back on 70 years of fellowship, we also look with hope to the future. Preparations are underway for the next WCC Assembly, which will take place in Karlsruhe, Germany from 8 to 16 September 2021. You recently received a letter about the assembly nominations process.

With this letter we are asking you to continue supporting the work of the WCC in 2019 with your annual membership contribution. The membership contribution request for 2019 is enclosed.

In addition to the annual contribution, we are asking every member church to make a special Assembly Fund contribution as a sign of mutual support and solidarity. The fund helps the churches share the costs of preparing the assembly and provides grants for delegates to participate.

We are asking you to give the same amount for the assembly as you contribute each year for membership. The assembly contribution can be made in one or multiple payments between 2019 and 2021.

Every contribution makes a difference to the life and work of the WCC fellowship.

With gratitude,

Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit
General Secretary



World Council of Churches

WCC 11th Assembly in Karlsruhe, Germany
from 8 to 16 September 2021

Christ's love moves the world to reconciliation and unity

What is a WCC Assembly?

- An assembly is the **highest governing body** of the WCC;
- It is the only time that **all WCC member churches** come together;
- The assembly meets **every 8 years**;
- The Assembly **elects WCC presidents**;
- The Assembly elects **central committee members** for 8 years from among the delegates who are **physically present**;
- The Assembly **determines the overall policies** of the WCC for the coming 8 years.

What you need to know about the 11th Assembly:

- The 11th Assembly of the WCC will take place in **Karlsruhe, Germany from 8 to 16 September 2021**
- The Assembly theme is ***Christ's love moves the world to reconciliation and unity***
- Your church is invited¹ to designate **delegates** to the Assembly.
- Submit name and contact details of **delegates** to assembly@wcc-coe.org **before 31 December 2019**
- **Travel and lodging reimbursements** will be available for member churches based on need, with the following guidelines:
 - o **Written request** for to support delegate participation should be submitted to assembly@wcc-coe.org before 31 March 2021;
 - o Church makes a **membership contribution in all 3 years 2019, 2020 and 2021**; and
 - o Church makes an **Assembly contribution in either 2019, 2020, or 2021** or in installments.

¹ A letter was sent to all member churches with further details on the nominations process in June 2019



World Council of Churches

2019 WCC Membership Contribution Request

Geneva, July 2019

Caroline van der Veen
Direct phone: +41 22 791 6061
Email: membership@wcc-coe.org

MC2019-1103
Church of Norway
NOK 1,671,923

Your church's contribution ensures that the WCC can maintain and develop the work with and on behalf of the fellowship of churches.

Please make your 2019 membership contribution **before 30 September 2019** to one of the following WCC bank accounts:

Currency Account	IBAN
CHF account:	CH37 0024 0240 6951 4900 A
EUR account:	CH59 0024 0240 6951 4961 D
USD account:	CH85 0024 0240 6951 4960 X
GBP account:	CH94 0024 0240 6951 4975 K
NOK account:	CH40 0024 0240 6951 4976 J
SEK account:	CH30 0024 0240 6951 4972 H
CAD account:	CH40 0024 0240 6951 4974 P

We already received this - Thank You

UBS SWITZERLAND AG • Rue des Noirettes 35 • P.O. Box 2600
CH - 1211 Genève 2 • Switzerland
Swift code: UBSWCHZH80A
ACCOUNT HOLDER: World Council of Churches
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World Council of Churches

WCC Assembly Contribution Request
Geneva, July 2019

Caroline van der Veen
Direct phone: +41 22 791 6061
Email: membership@wcc-coe.org

ASSEMBLY-1103

Church of Norway

NOK 1,680,000

*Christ's love moves the world
to reconciliation and unity*

Your church's contribution ensures that all WCC member churches can attend the 11th Assembly in Karlsruhe, Germany, 8-16 September 2021.

Please make your Assembly contribution **before 28 February 2021**
to one of the following WCC bank accounts:

Currency Account	IBAN
CHF account:	CH37 0024 0240 6951 4900 A
EUR account:	CH59 0024 0240 6951 4961 D
USD account:	CH85 0024 0240 6951 4960 X
GBP account:	CH94 0024 0240 6951 4975 K
NOK account:	CH40 0024 0240 6951 4976 J
SEK account:	CH30 0024 0240 6951 4972 H
CAD account:	CH40 0024 0240 6951 4974 P

*We already
received part
of this -
Thank You*

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Progresjonsrapport Generalforsamlingen i Kirkenes verdensråd v/*Marianne H. Brekken*

Mellomkirkelig råd fikk i sitt mars-møte rapport fra arbeidet med den kommende generalforsamlingen i Kirkenes verdensråd, som holdes i Karlsruhe september 2021. Som rapportert i mars hadde Assembly Planning Committee (APC) sitt andre møte i januar på Kypros. Siden APC sitt møte har staben i Genève, host-comittee og Worship Committee hatt stor progresjon i arbeidet mot generalforsamlingen.

Møte i eksekutivkomiteen og APC-rapport

Eksekutivkomiteen møttes i mai. I forbindelse med generalforsamlingen var deres oppgave å motta og diskutere rapporten fra APC, kommunikasjonsstrategi og progresjonsrapport. APC sin rapport ble mottatt med takknemlighet, og eksekutivkomiteen gjorde de nødvendige vedtak for at arbeidet mot generalforsamlingen kan fortsette som planlagt. APC-rapporten ligger vedlagt for den som ønsker å lese mer detaljer, Excom gjorde alle APC Recommendations til sine egne. Jeg vil særlig henlede blikket til det som står under punkt 3 Nature and Style og punkt 4 Assembly program hvor man kan få et litt tydeligere inntrykk av hvordan hovedelementer av generalforsamlingen vil bli.

Det teologiske arbeidet med temaet for generalforsamlingen fortsetter, og det er igangsatt flere prosesser for å få temaet belyst fra ulike kanter og med ulike innfallsvinkler. Vedlagt er en artikkel av Olav Fykse Tveit i Ecumenical Review om temaet for generalforsamlingen.

Invitasjonsbrev og delegater til generalforsamlingen

Den norske kirke har nå mottatt invitasjonsbrev til å sende delegater til generalforsamlingen. Svarfrist på oppnevning av delegater er 31. desember 2019. Det vil i 2021 være 775 delegater fra medlemskirkene. 80% av disse oppnevnes direkte fra medlemskirkene, de resterende 20% vil oppnevnes på bakgrunn av nominasjoner fra medlemskirkene. 20% skal benyttes til å jevne ut balanser mellom regioner, kjønn, alder, kirkefamilier, lek/geistlig.

På bakgrunn av Den norske kirkes medlemsmasse inviteres vi til å sende **2 delegater**. I tillegg kan Den norske kirke foreslå kandidater til sentralkomiteen.

Assembly Worship Planning Committee (AWPC)

AWPC møttes i Bad Herrealb, utenfor Karlsruhe, i juli 2019. Dette var deres første møte, og gruppen har en stor mengde arbeid foran seg for å etablere det som blir omtalt som hjertet i en generalforsamling, nemlig bønnelivet på en spirituell og inspirerende måte som både hensyntar kirkenes tradisjoner og legger til rette for at deltakerne kan komme inn i en større økumenisk sammenheng. Dette er et arbeid som krever dyp forståelse for hverandre, grundig arbeid med symbolske og innholdsmessige elementer samt elementer som skaper progresjon gjennom temaet og generalforsamlingen. Som medlem av APC var jeg og biskop Staccato Powell invitert til å delta på møtet i AWPC som et bindeledd mellom dem og APC.

German Host Committee

Siden 1. mars har det vært et assembly-kontor i full drift i Karlsruhe. Den tyske host-committee har startet arbeidet, og det er alt stor interesse og aktivitet i de tyske kirkene for å delta i forberedelsene. Det planlegges et visitors program for andre besøkende på generalforsamlingen i tillegg til at man arbeider med et utfluktsprogram for generalforsamlingens deltakere.

Neste APC møte

Det neste møtet i APC vil bli 3.-8. desember i Karlsruhe.

Vedlegg:

1. APC-rapport
2. Freedom, love and justice – Christ love moves the world to reconciliation and unity.



For action

REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY PLANNING COMMITTEE (APC)

- The executive committee is asked to
- Receive the report of the Assembly Planning Committee
 - Take note of the recommendations
 - Advise the general secretary and the APC on the way forward for assembly planning

Preamble

The second meeting of the Assembly Planning Committee (APC) convened in Paralimni, Cyprus, January 9-16, 2019, upon the invitation of the Church of Cyprus. H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Vasilios of Constantia-Ammochostos hosted the meeting at the diocesan offices, welcomed the group to Paralimni, and gave a historical introduction to the Church of Cyprus. Participants had the opportunity to take part in daily morning prayers at different churches and chapels of the Church of Cyprus, as well as the Sunday Divine Liturgy, celebrated at the St. George Cathedral in Paralimni. The APC was invited to meet with H.B. Archbishop Chrysostomos II of the Church of Cyprus where he offered us to join in a lunch at the Archbishop's palace in Nicosia. An exposure to the occupied territories of Cyprus, guided by H.E. Metropolitan Vasilios, made a lasting impression on the group, as it visited the St. Barnabas monastery and the tomb of St. Barnabas, and witnessed the many churches that have been closed, as well as historical Christian sites. The APC wishes to express its profound thanks for the warm welcome, the generous hospitality and the thoughtful programme designed for the experience of the APC members.

On the opening night, the APC participated in evening lectures at the Open University of Paralimni. Lectures on the assembly theme were given by the WCC general secretary, Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit¹, and the APC moderator, H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima, providing a suitable introduction to the APC deliberations.

The APC expresses its deep thanks to the staff of the World Council of Churches for their work and support before and during the meeting.

1. General Update

- 1.1 The APC received an update from the central committee (June 2018) and the executive committee (November 2018) regarding assembly decisions. One decision

¹ <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/general-secretary/speeches/freedom-love-and-justice>

was on the venue in Karlsruhe, Germany. Additional information on the venue was provided at the meeting. The final decision on dates of the assembly, decided by the executive committee in November 2018, was received, and the APC noted that, compared to Busan, there would be a half to one day fewer for programmes, but that there would be time for a full ecumenical weekend in the programme.

The APC was grateful to receive the central committee decision on the theme, made by an electronic and postal vote at the end of December 2018; “Christ’s love moves the world to reconciliation and unity”, essential to its further work on the programme of the assembly.

The final number of 775 delegates was received, with an update on the central committee decision to leave 80% of the nominations to the member churches, and 20% of the nominations of the churches to be decided by the central committee, in order to secure balances. The APC also received and endorsed an update on the ongoing work to adapt the Busan seat allocation key to the adjusted percentage and the new number of delegates.

The APC was informed of the dates of the assembly, decided by the executive committee at its meeting in Uppsala, 1 – 8 November 2018.

The APC received a financial update, in anticipation of the draft budget, to be presented to the executive committee in May 2019. The APC also received an update on the communications plan, and a first draft of ideas for an assembly communications strategy.

The APC received a helpful request for certain guidelines for their work from members of the assembly worship planning committee (AWPC). The AWPC will gather for their first meeting in Bad Herrenalb, outside Karlsruhe, July 5 – 11, 2019.

- 1.2 The APC received a report to the executive committee on a visit to Karlsruhe in October 2018, when staff met with representatives from the EKD, the Evangelical Church in Baden (EKiBa), the local Tourism office and the Congress centre administration. The report includes information on availability of hotels, the potential of available programme space at the suggested venue, as well as information on negotiations regarding contracts, costs and the like. In addition, a PowerPoint presentation showed photos and details of the venue sites, also providing the APC with an overview of distances between the possible programme spaces.

A visit to Karlsruhe by the WCC central committee vice moderator and moderator of the APC, H.E. Prof. Dr Metropolitan Gennadios of Sassima and the WCC general secretary, Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, accompanied by staff, is planned for February 28 – March 2, 2019.

- 1.3 Rev. Anne Heitmann, central committee member from the EKD, replaced Bishop Dr Christoph Meyns at the APC meeting, and delivered a detailed report from the German hosts, including a film from the region, showing the potential for thematic contributions on reconciliation and dialogue.

An assembly coordination office is being established at Karlsruhe. They will work in close cooperation with Geneva and the EKD office in Hanover. Four positions (supported by EKD and EKIBa) are being advertised currently; a national coordinator; a person responsible for the local logistics and collaboration with local authorities and logistical partners; a theological resource person to support programme and weekend programme planning; and an administrative assistant. The office will be located in the head office of the Evangelical Church in Baden, centrally placed in Karlsruhe in the immediate vicinity to the venue, and with possibilities of making the assembly visible to the public.

A host committee is soon to be established, and will be led by Bishop Petra Bosse-Huber and Bishop Dr Jochen Cornelius Bundschuh. Representatives of EKD member churches and the member churches of the national council of churches (ACK) will be part of the committee. All confessions shall be represented. The churches in the region (including French neighbours the Union des Églises Protestants en Alsace et Lorraine and the Swiss churches) will also be members. Ecumenical (European) bodies, such as the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE) and the Conference of European Churches (CEC), will be invited to be members, as will representatives of specialised ministries. The host committee will work according to the decisions of the WCC, and will establish working groups for concrete tasks.

The host committee aims to involve churches on a national, regional and local level, as there is great interest in the assembly. The theme, resource material, as well as the WCC Pilgrimage for Justice and Peace all help create enthusiasm among the hosting churches, and provides great potential for ecumenical formation. However, the host committee highlights the importance of the fact that the assembly will be in Europe. The committee is therefore in contact with the closest region around Baden-Württemberg, including Switzerland and France, a region with a specific history of conflict and reconciliation, climate justice, and justice and peace. In 2021, the Evangelical Church in Baden will be celebrating 200 years of the union of the Lutheran and Reformed church in Baden, thereby providing a local input to the discussion on unity.

2. Assembly theme

'Christ's love moves the world to reconciliation and unity'

- 2.1 The APC had heard reflections by the general secretary and the APC moderator on the theme "Freedom, Love, and Justice". This also served as an introduction to the APC's discussions on the assembly theme and its potential for the assembly programme and output. The APC was encouraged by the possibilities that the theme presents to the life of the 11th assembly.
- 2.2 The theme of the next WCC assembly in 2021 is a faith affirmation centring on Christ's love: Christ's love moves the world to reconciliation and unity. Against all powers of destruction and sin, it sees the person of the crucified and risen Christ at the heart of this world. In him "creation... is set free from its bondage to decay and obtains the freedom of the glory of the children of God." (Rom. 8:21) In him "all things, whether on earth or in heaven," (Col. 12:20) is reconciled with God – one in

the bond of love between Father, Son and Holy Spirit. “Bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. 4:2-3), everyone and everything is made new. The shackles of sin is lifted. The shattered image of humanity is fully restored. And, life in community flourishes in justice, peace and freedom.

In the context of a fragmented and fractured world, where the future of life and survival are threatened in so many ways, the theme is a timely message of hope. Christ’s love transforms the world in the power of the Holy Spirit. Christ’s love is foundational for all Christian witness in and for the world, and not in an exclusive and triumphalist way. For the church as the body of Christ, it is rather a radical charge to care for all life and to work unceasingly together with all people of good will for just peace and reconciliation within the human family and with all of creation. To be one in Christ’s love is essential for churches to be prophetic signs of the unity of humankind and creation. To receive Christ’s love, embrace it in faith and live it out with compassion and courage entails the promise to renew, refresh and empower the churches in their common witness on their pilgrimage of justice and peace.

By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the assembly will be a place of listening to each other, building trusting relationships, discerning together the way forward, encouraging each other to work together for change, and celebrating Christ’s gift of love with gratitude and joy. Day by day different aspects and dimensions of the theme will be explored and inform the work of the delegates and participants:

Day 1: Wednesday	Opening (main theme?)
Day 2: Thursday	Main theme with accent on Christ’s love
Day 3: Friday	Europe
Day 4: Saturday	Weekend pilgrimage
Day 5: Sunday	Weekend pilgrimage
Day 6: Monday	Christ’s love moves the world
Day 7: Tuesday	Christ’s love moves to reconciliation
Day 8: Wednesday	Christ’s love moves to unity
Day 9: Thursday	Closing

The Assembly outcomes guide the visions and policies of the WCC. This inspires the strategic plan.

The APC *recommends* that the general secretary takes steps to implement a process for the preparation of a statement on Christ’s Love for Unity and Reconciliation, taking into account that the commission on faith and order is harvesting the fruits of its study on ecclesiology.

3. Nature and style of the assembly

- 3.1 The APC received the executive committee decision regarding the dates and length of the assembly and started to analyse consequences of these as regards building blocks. The APC continued the work started at the 2018 APC meeting regarding the

nature and style of the assembly, affirming the directions in the APC report to the central committee in June 2018, a report approved by the central committee.

- 3.2 The APC affirms that WCC assemblies are a space for the broader ecumenical family to gather in order to discern, and commit to a common way of growing the fellowship and addressing the issues of the world. Creating an inclusive atmosphere is vitally important in order to assure that all churches and voices are heard in the assembly.

The APC discussed the aims mentioned in the APC Report 2018:

- creating bridges between church members and partners, and with other organisations within the fellowship;
- building bridges between people in order to achieve justice and peace between and within countries; and
- providing a space for participants to share about Bible studies and thematic plenaries, and reflect on strategic directions for the future work of WCC in a way that the Business plenaries do not cater for.

Therefore, the APC **recommends** offering home groups (4.3), a space for a “Marktplatz” programme (i.e. Madang) (4.12), a visitor’s/participants programme (4.13) and welcomes an ecumenical weekend and exposure programme as suggested by the hosting churches (4.15).

- 3.3 The APC was reminded of the European dimension of the region where the assembly takes place. Bridges have been built where borders used to exist, dividing people. Now, borders in the region are bridges – and not walls.

To have a “crossing border assembly” the APC **asks** the hosts to explore how to make use of the proximity to the border to France and to the European Institutions at Strasbourg, within the given framework of the assembly programme.

- 3.4 The APC **recommends** having an environmentally friendly assembly – as much and as far as possible. It envisages an electronic assembly and encourages new methodologies for presenting material, so that participants are not too weighed down by heavy printed documentation. In particular, it was suggested creating an assembly app.

- 3.5 For more details, see “Communications” under section 7.
The APC **asks** the hosts to report to the next meeting about a concept and consequences of a CO2 neutral Assembly (as practised by the Kirchentag).

4. Assembly programme

- 4.1 The building blocks of the assembly are prayer and Bible study, home groups, business plenaries, thematic plenaries, ecumenical conversations, committees and ‘Marktplatz’ as well as regional and confessional meetings. In its discussion on the building blocks of the assembly, the APC started to discuss the programme of the assembly.

The APC **recommends** that the assembly office be asked to develop the programme based on the APC discussion on building blocks, the logistics and flow of the venue etc.

- 4.2 Thematic plenaries: The thematic plenaries will follow the daily foci based on the assembly theme. The thematic plenaries are not the place where WCC programmes are discussed, the space for this is in the ecumenical conversations. It is rather the space where we take a joint broad outlook on the foci of the day. The APC note that in the design of the plenaries we need to be clear on when and how we speak primarily to ourselves as the ecumenical movement, and when we address the “world”.

In the thematic plenaries, a bridge can be built between the experiences of the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace and the Assembly theme showing that we are on a movement (pilgrimage) that continues.

The APC **recommends** that the European regional plenary focus on the assembly theme as a whole and how it relates to the life of the continent. The APC believes it would be particularly interesting to relate to the European experience on reconciliation within and between countries in Europe during the 20th century as well as to the challenges European societies are facing currently, such as growing extreme nationalism and populism, religious intolerance, xenophobia and racism, that are putting in danger what has been achieved. We also believe many participants will be interested in learning about the German context, in particular the reunification process. Voices from outside of Europe should be included.

- 4.3 Home Groups: The Home Groups will meet every day (except Saturday and Sunday). Each day they will:
- Share reflections from the prayer and Bible reflections session; and
 - Share reflections from the thematic plenaries, focusing on the daily sub-theme.

Using participants’ experiences from the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace, deepening ecclesial fellowship and interfaith relations, this joint reflection on the assembly theme will help discern and formulate a direction for the future work of the WCC and the ecumenical movement.

The home groups replace the Bible study groups from previous assemblies. This means that each morning prayer would include a reflection on the daily bible text, which in turn reflects the daily foci of the assembly.

All participants that have a right to speak (categories 1 & 2) at the assembly will be allocated to a home group. Home groups will be comprised of participants from across regions, confessions, professions, age, “old-timers” and “new-comers” at the assembly. The APC discussed the questions of language and the importance of creating groups that reflect the desired diversity of the fellowship. The number of people in each group will be determined when we know how many rooms we have in the venue, but there would be no more than 50 home groups in total. Home groups could also start before the assembly using virtual meeting places.

Home groups will have one hour for discussion and dialogue and follow after prayer and the thematic plenaries. Suggestions for the precise timings and flows will be looked into by the assembly office. During the time of the home groups, the rest of the participants will be able to take part in the visitors' programme.

The groups will not be writing reports from their meetings, but will be asked to provide a short contribution – a paragraph or two (if they wish), sentence, or symbol to be shared with relevant committees. It might be that this is best achieved by innovative communication mechanisms, and the APC **recommends** that the assembly office consult with the communications department on the possibilities.

Good facilitation for these groups is essential, and will require careful organisation. The APC **asks** the assembly office to provide a proposal on these methodologies.

Given the proposals above on combining Bible studies and morning prayer in order to create space for home groups, the APC suggested that the flow of the each morning (excluding the weekend) proceed as follows:

08.30-09.30	Prayer & short biblical reflection
09.30-10.00	Moving to plenary
10.00-11.30	Thematic plenary
11.30-12.00	Coffee Break and moving to home groups
12.00-13.00	Home groups (incl. elaboration of Bible reflection) / Participants' Programme
13.00-15.00	Lunch

4.4 Workshops: The APC considered the space and role of workshops for assembly participants in relation to the other parts of the programme. These are an important and open part of the programme, in order to allow a sense of full participation in the assembly for other participants as well as for delegates. The host churches are ready to contribute to a participants programme (see below 4.13 – 4.15).

4.5 Pre-assemblies: The APC understands that four pre-assembly preparatory programmes will once again be offered: for women, youth, indigenous peoples, and people with disabilities. These programmes serve to enhance the readiness of participants for active assembly participation. Through messages prepared for and shared with the assembly, pre-assembly events feed directly into the assembly. The underpinnings of the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace, life-affirming economies, climate change, nonviolent peace-building and reconciliation, and human dignity, could serve as resources for the pre-assembly events.

WCC staff prepare these pre-assemblies with their respective commissions/reference groups and networks. These programmes are expected to be open to official assembly participant categories, allowing some flexibility depending on the needs and constituencies of each pre-assembly.

The APC **suggests** that staff consult with the Reference Group for the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace, and **requests** information on pre-assembly plans at the December 2019 APC meeting.

- 4.6 General preparatory events: Pre-meetings of other types may be arranged by others and link to the assembly and its themes in their own ways. Regional Ecumenical Organisations have often organised regional preparatory events in order to prepare their delegates and participants for the assembly. The APC **encourages** this tradition. Upcoming Regional Ecumenical Officers meetings and general secretaries' meetings are encouraged to consider the theme of the assembly in order to facilitate the regional and confessional preparatory events.

Likewise, some Christian World Communions have organised pre-assemblies prior to the WCC assemblies. For instance, there is a tradition of an inter-Orthodox pre-assembly, which often has produced a statement addressed to the WCC assembly. The APC **recommends** the tradition of an inter-orthodox pre-assembly, and will **encourage** other Christian World Communions to prepare prior to the assembly.

Confessional and regional pre-assemblies, as well as similar preparatory events are organised by the Regional Ecumenical Organisations and the Christian World Communions themselves. The APC encourages such initiatives to be in touch with the assembly office, in order to prepare well for the preparatory events, and facilitate that any outcome can feed into the assembly.

The APC **recommends** that the assembly office, in consultation with relevant WCC staff, collect information on regional and confessional preparations, and present a report at the next APC meeting.

- 4.7 GETI: The APC discussed the value of a GETI programme being fully integrated into the life of the assembly. Both preparatory sessions before the assembly and concluding sessions after the assembly should be encouraged. The APC **recommends** that the assembly office speak with the leadership of the Education and Ecumenical Formation programme (EEF) to discuss how an integrated GETI programme could run, and contact the host committee for local collaboration.

- 4.8 Business Plenaries: Business plenaries are the core sessions for decision-making during the assembly. They need to be carefully planned in advance, and monitored by the business committee at the assembly.

In view of the evaluation from Busan, the APC **strongly recommends** that efforts be made to improve the methodologies for the business plenaries.

The APC **recommends** that efforts be made to introduce to and monitor at the assembly the consensus decision making method.

It is **suggested** that moderators and rapporteurs of assembly committees be trained, and so empowered, to implement consensus in committees and prepare documents for decision. It is further **suggested** that an agenda be developed for the assembly that clearly spells out which decisions are to be made by the assembly. In preparing

the assembly it would be a helpful tool for participants to understand the decision making process. During the assembly, it is important to continuously update participants on the next steps of proceedings.

The APC **recommends** that the processes for elections, both before and during the assembly, are prepared in advance.

The APC **recommends** that efforts be made to find a better methodology for the plenary sessions, moving away from strict reading of reports in which only a few comments are allowed and little debate is possible. This could be done by allowing table discussions on each report or an interactive technology allowing collection of input from participants.

The WCC staff are **asked** to prepare proposals on these matters, which shall be presented to the next meeting of the APC for further discussion.

4.9 Ecumenical conversations: It is intended that ecumenical conversations will continue in Karlsruhe. The ecumenical conversations are the space for in-depth conversations on:

- the work of WCC commissions
- WCC programmatic work
- topics proposed by member churches and ecumenical partners
- emerging ecumenical challenges

Among these topics should be some conversations serving to harvest from the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace.

The ecumenical conversations in Busan were of varied quality and the APC asks that methodologies be developed and that these be outcome-oriented, where appropriate. Clear systems are needed to support timely submission of results from the ecumenical conversations to the Assembly Programme Guidelines Committee or Public Issues Committee, etc. The outcomes of the ecumenical conversations might also lead to new avenues of cooperation within the ecumenical movement that are not necessarily implemented by the WCC.

The APC **recommends** that the assembly office monitor a process for inviting suggestions, choosing among them, and build relevant methodologies, informed by the evaluations of the Busan assembly.

4.10 Prayer/Bible reflection: For detailed proposals on prayer/Bible reflection, see section 6.

4.11 Confessional and regional meetings during the assembly: The APC **recommends** that regional and confessional meetings be held during the assembly. Two confessional and one regional event should be considered as programmatic items in the assembly. If necessary, the number of confessional meetings could be reduced to one, depending on the time available in the assembly programme.

The APC **asks** the assembly office, to monitor guidelines for meetings of Christian World Communions and Regional Ecumenical Organisations, so that these events can be well prepared.

- 4.12 **Marktplatz:** The working-title for the exhibition area called “Madang” in Busan is “Ökumenischer Marktplatz” (Marketplace). The “Marktplatz” in the region of the assembly is a very central, important and lively place in the public sphere of almost all towns and villages. It is not purely commercial but a place of communication, encounter and public life – and often these are beautiful places. The venue offers space for such a place.

The APC discussed the guidelines for the ecumenical Marktplatz exhibitors, and **recommends** that the assembly office coordinate this programme, and present a proposal to the December APC meeting. The host committee to finalise the exact wording for the title of this programme.

- 4.13 **Participants’ programme:** A programme for registered participants without the right to speak shall be developed. It aims to foster sharing and ecumenical learning. (“Ökumenisches Lernhaus”) and allow participation from a wide range of people. Initial elements and placements have been discussed by the APC.

While the home groups take place, other participants are offered the opportunity:

- to share together on the biblical reflection and thematic plenary, supported by a participatory moderated session for large groups, possibly in the prayer hall; and
- to participate in workshops addressing special issues or target groups offered on the “Marktplatz”

Other workshops inspired and linked to the assembly theme and lectures for the wider community could be offered on some of the assembly days. (The placement in the programme blocks will depend on the overall programme. Possible places could be during the business sessions and/or in a workshop block for all participants.)

The APC **asks** the host-committee (the host churches) to explore further these ideas in consultation with the assembly office in Geneva, ecumenical and international partners and to report to the next APC meeting.

- 4.14 **Local hosting:** In order to support broad international participation, the Protestant Church in Baden has offered to organise a programme for private hosting in Karlsruhe during the assembly. Private hosting could be offered as an option to “other participants” (not delegates etc.) that reduces their accommodation costs and fosters ecumenical encounter at the grassroots level. Hosts and guests would experience what it means to be in fellowship with Christians all over the world.

The APC **asks** the local hosts to explore further that possibility.

- 4.15 **Ecumenical weekend pilgrimage:** Assembly participants are invited to take part in ecumenical exposure on Saturday and Sunday. The regional hosting churches have pledged to support this actively. They will offer thematically focused visits to

significant places in the region where assembly participants will experience dimensions of the assembly theme in the local context. They will enter into dialogue with local people and congregations and celebrate and pray together with diverse local churches on Sunday. Some of those visits will include elements of pilgrimage.

For those delegates working in committees, worship and local visits will be offered on Sunday.

The APC **asks** the local assembly office to further develop the weekend programme and to report to the next APC meeting.

5. Participation in the assembly

- 5.1 The decisions by the executive committee regarding the seat allocation and the number of delegates were received by the APC, noting the reduction in number of delegates (775) from Busan (825). The proposed key for allocation of delegates to member churches was received.

The APC also noted the timeline for sending out a letter requesting member churches to nominate delegates, including additional ones to facilitate the central committee's allocation of 20% in its meeting. This letter will be sent by the general secretary to WCC member churches before 30 March 2019, with a deadline for responses of 31 December 2019.

The APC **requests** that the general secretary undertake some refinement of the Busan allocation key, which will be necessary to fit the reduced number of delegates

- 5.2 The APC received the potential numbers of participants for the 11th assembly, based on an initial analysis by the assembly office and the number of participants from the Busan assembly. Numbers of participants from categories other than delegates were discussed. It was highlighted that, given the reduction in the number of official delegates, a balance should be maintained in regards to the other categories of participation.

Regarding the participants' programme, it was emphasised that the international participants' categories should be articulated in a way that creates a truly international experience, i.e. not only from within Europe. An example of a "twinning" programme between a global north and a global south church was shared. Further work on the concept needs to be done by the assembly office.

Regarding the determination of the number of stewards, it was highlighted that three elements were important: international representation, the needs for working teams in the venue and the finances available.

The APC **recommends** that the proportions of participation are kept similar to those of the 10th assembly, keeping in balance the reduced number of delegates and other categories.

The APC **requests** that a concept of international and regional/local participants be developed by the assembly office.

5.3 Invitation of partners in the workshop programme/ecumenical conversations: In order to strengthen the participation and interaction among member churches, ecumenical partners and the wider ecumenical movement, the APC **advises** staff to approach members and partners to invite ideas for workshops/ecumenical conversations/Marktplatz. It is **recommended** that staff develop guidelines and pursue the detailed work.

5.4 Christian contemplative communities: The participation of Christian contemplative communities and religious orders, such as Taizé, the Iona Community, Bose, and Grandchamps, and others was considered. There is a possibility of having late night optional sessions hosted by these groups, perhaps linked to an off-venue site location such as the Castle, local churches or hotels. This would allow non-assembly participants to attend as well.

The APC **recommends** that the AWPC coordinate this in consultation with the local host committee.

5.5 Participation of youth: The APC discussed the participation of youth, millennials, and their influence on the life of the assembly. Youth should be fully integrated into all aspects of the assembly, including the planning stages and implementation. The Arusha world mission conference intentionally highlighted young theologians in the keynotes and various plenaries, and this was commended by the APC.

The APC **recommends** that the assembly office and relevant WCC staff ask ECHOS for thoughts at their meeting in August 2019, and coordinate with various other ecumenical youth bodies (EYCE, WSCF, LWF youth programme, SYNDESMOS etc.) The APC also **proposes** to have some specific workshops on issues particularly pertinent to youth (i.e. WSCF, post-youth programmes – a.k.a Where are the millennials?).

The WCC general secretary shall encourage the churches in his invitation letter to include the youth balance within their delegations, according to the 25% quota system.

6. Spiritual life

6.1 In order to achieve better communication and offer guidance to the AWPC for the development of the assembly spiritual life, the APC **invites** the AWPC leadership to attend the next APC meeting in December 2019. The APC also **reminds** the AWPC to take note of the Spiritual Life recommendations from the first APC meeting in January 2018. The APC proposes sending two members, plus staff to the AWPC meeting from 5-11 July 2019 in Bad Herrenalb (Karlsruhe). This needs only be for two/three days of the meeting. The APC also **proposes** that leadership of the AWPC attend the executive committee meeting in May 2019.

- 6.2 Prayer and Bible reflections: The APC awaits proposals on morning prayer being developed by the AWPC. The APC **emphasises** that a prayer for each day be developed for use in all of the various aspects of assembly life and also suggests the use of spiritual symbols from various traditions, along with symbolic acts, which are linked to the themes and sub-themes of the assembly. This introduces a variety of different prayer styles for participants.

With respect to the assembly spiritual life as a whole, Bible studies will be offered in three forms: the first being the reflection on the daily biblical text following the morning prayer; the second the shared reflection together in the home groups; the third, possibly Bible studies groups provided in workshops or in plenary for delegates not participating in the home groups, pending suggestions from AWPC.

The APC **strongly recommends** that the WCC staff convene a meeting of small group of experts to continue the discussion begun in the APC on suggested biblical texts, and prepare a discussion paper for the AWPC meeting in July. A representative from the local host churches would be beneficial to this group. This discussion paper should include some theological rationale and explanation of the thematic flow of the assembly. Stories from the synoptic gospels could provide a good basis for biblical reflection, rather than specific biblical texts. The small group could also refine how the confessional evening prayer services are designed, and produce options for the AWPC.

The APC **proposes** that the combined prayer and Bible reflections should speak to the themes of the day. The APC also **recommends** that Bible study materials should be prepared after consultation with the staff and published by the communications department ahead of time and be made available to all member churches, ecumenical partners and other participants.

As the worship book is of great interest to the whole fellowship and should be circulated in an innovative and accessible way, the APC **recommends** that the AWPC consult with the communications department on the possibilities for this. The worship book will be prepared by the AWPC and sent to APC for approval.

- 6.3 Common Prayer and the Permanent Committee on Consensus and Collaboration (PCCC): The APC **affirms** the existing guidelines for Common Prayer.
- 6.4 There should be confessional prayers in the evening (with various confessional traditions taking turn). The APC **proposes** that the AWPC reflect on this, building on suggested notes from the APC meeting and the small group convened by WCC staff [see 6.2], and come with proposals to the next APC meeting [see Appendix 2]
- 6.5 The APC **recommends** the AWPC create a safe and quiet place, which is reserved throughout the assembly for meditation and prayer. The AWPC should explore the possibility and guidelines for nominating spiritual and pastoral care personnel for the

pre-assemblies and for the assembly, and for their work during the event. The Assembly office should include these guidelines in the assembly handbook.

- 6.6 The APC **asks** the AWPC to explore how the spirituality of the host churches can be included as part of the spiritual life of the assembly. This could include the possibility of celebrating together and connecting spiritually and culturally with local congregations and communities [See 5.4].
- 6.7 Other: The APC **suggests** that:
- The spiritual life workshops should be linked to the theme, able to catch the spiritual experiences of the participants and explore various expressions of spiritualities;
 - Multi-media messages from various confessional traditions, faith stories, and spiritual exercises can also be put on the website and shown on videos in the prayer hall, and included as part of the material shared with member churches in advance of the Assembly; and
 - Main hymns and songs of the assembly should be shared with participants in advance on CD/mp3/digital format.

7. Communications

- 7.1 The APC received a discussion paper on some elements of an assembly communication strategy. This included a timeline towards the assembly. The APC discussed what aspects of communication were most beneficial to the different contexts of the fellowship.

The APC **recommends** that a draft communication strategy for the assembly be presented to the executive committee meeting in May 2019, and shared to the leadership group and the APC by email for comment as soon as it is available. This strategy should include the building of a database and an intentional and inspiring marketing approach.

The APC **recommends** that information and resources relating to the upcoming 11th assembly be launched and shared on the WCC website as early as possible. A separate website is probably not needed, as the assembly is part of the ongoing common journey of the fellowship.

The APC was encouraged by the positive response to the newly-announced assembly theme, and **recommends** that theological reflections on the theme be produced and shared as soon as possible.

In addition, with the help of a panel representing various contexts as well as inputs from other APC members, the following suggestions regarding pre-assembly materials and communication strategies and methods were presented and proposed:

- Materials relating to Bible study, prayer services, major programmes and strategic reports, both in paper and digital forms, should be sent in advance. These can be used for both participants and the whole church community.

Delegates should be asked beforehand whether digital or paper is preferable for them.

- Short introductory video with histories of previous assemblies and short articles on the profile and major issues of the upcoming assembly will be useful for wider circulation (this needs translation into local languages) and to inspire and empower church leaders to help promote participation in the assembly.
- In view of the daunting volume of printed books in the previous assemblies, an easy to use app or other digital tools are essential. This also helps the environmentally friendly impact of the assembly. In addition, app and digital tools can help to build relationships among participants, especially for the younger generation. Suggestions from ECHOS, the WSCF, and other ecumenical youth organisations, should be invited to share ideas on how the young people participate in the assembly. Theological students from various contexts should also be included as potential participants in the assembly through web connection and other means of communication.
- Communications must reach grass-roots level in order to bring new energy to the assembly life. Also, the assembly should communicate with marginalised communities and invite them to reflect on the theme together. Church communications departments should be included when communicating to member churches. All communications regarding the assembly should be addressed to the churches with a request that the church leadership put their communications department in direct contact with the assembly communications team.
- Since people will respond mostly to positive experiences, and prayer materials, it is important that, with these in mind, all should inspire the fellowship in our own ways.
- Consider production of an “Olympic torch” type of symbol or idea, which can prepare the global fellowship for the assembly.

7.2 The APC **recommends** that various forms of resources, including handbook/tool book and digital data materials, be communicated in a timely manner, and directly to the participants.

7.3 The APC received information on the commissioning of an assembly logo and learned that the first attempt will go to a graphic designer based in Brazil. The APC will be informed on the progress of the logo design, before the executive committee approve the final version, hopefully in May 2019.

7.4 Regarding the timing of when the report *From Busan to Karlsruhe* should be published, it is suggested that, in order to include more up-to-date information as well as receive inputs from the new General Secretary, a date six months before the next Assembly will be appropriate to aim for publication. An outline could be shared with the APC for comments before the executive committee receive this report.

The APC **recommends** that the WCC communications department receive these suggestions to inform their work, and request that a report be brought to the next APC meeting.

8. Budget and reimbursement policy

- 8.1 A detailed assembly budget is to be reviewed for approval at the meeting of WCC's central committee in March 2020. A first draft budget is to be prepared for presentation at the WCC executive committee meeting, 22-28 May 2019 and in November 2019.

The APC received a general update on the financial situation, including a report of a joint meeting between the WCC and EKD, held in Bossey, Switzerland, October 27, 2018. At this meeting, the financial profiles of the 9th and 10th assemblies were presented. It was explained that the total cost of the 10th Assembly was likely to have been at least CHF 8 million but that the actual figure was not known as churches from the host country had offered the venue, local transport and other services, but had not reported on the actual costs incurred.

The WCC's assembly finance and fund-raising team will be formed in 2019 with a mandate to oversee assembly budget development, securing income from member churches, ecumenical partners and participants, policies and expense control, contract control. No changes have been made to the existing reimbursement policy so far. This will be looked into, together with handling finances at the assembly.

The meeting further discussed the EKD financial and in-kind contributions. EKD presented a substantial budget, including the estimated contribution by EKiba. The estimates include own staff costs, shared costs and fund-raising costs.

Euro/CHF currency management was discussed, and a written agreement to clarify financial authorities is necessary. The agreement would also clarify the intention that both the contributions administered, and the expenditures, form part of a comprehensive assembly financial report. The meeting ended with an agreement of follow-up actions.

The APC **recommends** that staff look into ethical guidelines for income through sponsorship, in accordance with the WCC investment policy.

9. Other

- 9.1 The APC **recommends** that the report go to the WCC General Secretary, the AWPC, to the permanent committee on consensus and collaboration, and to the local host church committee, with the understanding that the report is confidential, until received by the executive committee in May 2019. The APC **recommends** that the general secretary discuss the terms of reference for the relationship between the WCC and the host churches committees at their meeting in February.

10 Appendices

10.1 List of participants to the January 2019 APC

Moderator H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr GENNADIOS OF SASSIMA Ecumenical Patriarchate

General Secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse TVEIT World Council of Churches

Members confirmed

Rev. Dr Mary Schaller BLAUFUSS, United Church of Christ

Rev. Marianne H. BREKKEN, Church of Norway

Rev. Dr Prof. Yang-en CHENG, Presbyterian Church in Taiwan

Dr David Emmanuel GOATLEY, Baptist World Alliance

Rev. Anne HEITMANN, Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (replacing Bishop Dr Christoph Meyns)

Mr Andrej JEFTIĆ, Serbian Orthodox Church

Ms Kerstin KOLLANDER, Church of Sweden

Mr Luciano KOVACS, World Student Christian Federation (WSCF)

Bishop Dr Alex Gehaz MALASUSA, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania

Mr Philip MODAYIL MANI,, Church of South India

Bishop Dr Staccato POWELL African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

Dr Audeh B. QUAWAS, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem

Dr Ann K. RIGGS, Religious Society of Friends: Friends General Conference

Ms Miriam Jane WEIBYE, Church of Scotland

Resource persons

Mr Georges LEMOPOULOS, World Council of Churches

Ms Aikaterini PEKRIDOU, Conference of European Churches

Rev. Dr Mikie ROBERTS, World Council of Churches

Apologies

Rev. Fr Andrzej CHOROMANSKI, Roman Catholic Church

Fr Heikki HUTTUNEN, Conference of European Churches

Mrs Elenor I. LAWRENCE, Church in the Province of the West Indies

Bishop Dr Christoph MEYNS, Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland

Ms Teny PIRRI-SIMONIAN, Armenian Apostolic Church (Holy See of Cilicia)

Rev. Canon Aida Consuelo SANCHEZ-NAVARRO, The Episcopal Church

Rev. Emma Essie Dzoë SEPAH, Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana

Staff

Ms Marianne EJDERSTEN

Ms Beate FAGERLI

Ms Semegnish Asfaw GROSJEAN

Mr Marc-Henri HEINIGER

Rev. Dr Odair PEDROSO MATEUS

Rev. Dr Martin ROBRA

Local hosts

H.E. Metropolitan Dr VASILIOS OF CONSTANTIA-AMMOCHOSTOS, Church of Cyprus

Mr Tony JENSEN, Church of Cyprus

10.2 AWPC biblical texts suggestions from APC

8th Day 1 – Opening

Confessional Evening Prayer – Methodist

9th Day 2 – Whole theme exploration

Scriptural Focus for Prayer – 2 Cor. 5: 14a (Integration of the Whole Theme)

Confessional Evening Prayer – Reformed, Lutheran, United

10th Day 3 – Regional plenary – Europe

Scriptural Focus for Prayer – Acts 16: 9, 10

(Coming to Europe as answering the Macedonia Call)

Confessional Evening Prayer – Roman Catholic

13th Day 4 – Christ’s love moves the world

Scriptural Focus for Prayer – Rom: 8:18-25; Gen 8: 14-22

(Explore the possibility of having youth representatives from World Student Federation participating during the morning prayer)

Confessional Evening Prayer – Anglican

(Explore the involvement and participation of Indigenous people)

14th Day 5 – Christ’s love moves to reconciliation

Scriptural Focus for Prayer – 2 Cor. 5:18-20; Rom. 5:10, 11

(Explore the utilisation of a combined Orthodox morning prayer service)

Confessional Evening Prayer – Orthodox Reconciliation Service

(Explore the involvement and participation of German Orthodox Refugees)

15th Day 6 – Christ’s love moves to unity

Scriptural Focus for Prayer – Gen. 1:1; Acts 10; Rev. 21:1-5a

Confessional Evening Prayer – Moravian Lovefeast

(Caribbean-style which involves the sharing of the bun)

16th Day 7 – Closing

Two other additional texts that were offered:

Colossians 1:15-22

Ephesians 2:13-16

The following texts which were used for the recent executive committee meeting should also be considered:

Psalms

Psalm 33:1-9 He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the steadfast love of the Lord (33:5)
Psalm 36:5-9 Your steadfast love, O lord, extends to the heavens... (36:5)
Psalm 85:7-13 Show us your steadfast Love, O Lord, and grant us your salvation
Psalm 136:1-9, 26 ...for his steadfast love endures forever...

OT readings

Deut. 10:12-13 ...what does the Lord require of you?
Hosea 10:12 Sow for yourselves righteousness, reap steadfast love
Micah 6:6-8 ...but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God
Isaiah 61: 1-4.8 The spirit of the Lord is upon me...

Gospel readings

Mk 12:28-34 ...you shall love the Lord your God...
Lk 6:27-36 ...love your enemies...
John 3:16-18 For God so loved the world...
John 15:9-13 As the father has loved me

Epistles

Rom. 8:31-39 ...will be able to separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord
1 Cor. 13:1-13 ...and the greatest of these is love.
2 Cor. 5:14-21 The love of Christ compels us...
1 John 3:16-18 & ...for God is love....
1 John 4:7-12

Freedom, Love, and Justice

Christ's Love Moves the World to Reconciliation and Unity

Olav Fykse Tveit

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Abstract

This article starts from love as being a fundamental value, guiding modes of behaviour that establish a reliable framework and basis for the recognition of the rights and dignity of everyone in the community. The affirmation of justice and freedom based on love leads to corrective and transformative action in cases where life is threatened and rights are being violated. Drawing on the experience and witness of Martin Luther King Jr, the article underlines that love empowers the oppressed to stand up and becomes a moral imperative for change, against the background of the many forces promoting conflict and violence, division, and polarization. The power of love is a message to the world, to the powerful, and to the powerless – to all who long for a different reality from what we see in today's world. This needs to be expressed in the quest for the unity of the church and the unity of humankind, serving the sustainability and unity of God's creation.

Keywords

World Council of Churches, freedom, love, justice, reconciliation, unity

From Law to Morality and Faith

The theme that was chosen for this address – “Freedom, Love, and Justice” – relates closely to the theme for the next assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) to take place in Germany in 2021: “Christ’s love moves the world to reconciliation and unity.” It is timely and necessary for us to consider carefully the vital role of love as a moral imperative at the heart of our vision of God’s reign to come, and God’s promise of life in abundance with freedom and justice for all.

Freedom, love, and justice: if we were looking at this from the standpoint of political ethics, I would expect the slightly different sequence of “freedom, *rights*, and justice.” In political ethics we see rights at the centre, regulating the relationship between the freedom of citizens over against the state, and ensuring everyone’s just share in the wealth and life of society. If we were to explore further this sequence of “freedom, rights, and justice,” we would need to analyze the self-interest of the different actors in society and the power relationships between them. In this context, we would turn to human rights and address the interdependence between the essential freedoms of individual human rights and the shared responsibility for the implementation of economic social and cultural rights.

That we have to do both of these – defend freedom and care for justice – has been a hallmark of all ecumenical engagement for human rights over the decades. Confronted with the realities of climate change and the loss of biodiversity, we have also learned that we need to add to the individual and social dimensions of law the rights of all living beings on planet earth.

“Freedom, rights, and justice” – there is more to be said about this later. Speaking instead of “freedom, *love*, and justice,” however, we are required to move from the area of law and rights and delve much deeper into the area of morality and the ethos of a given society. Anthropologically and socially, the term “love” reminds us of the communal bonds and relationships of a community.¹ Law and rights point to the institutional arrangement of enforceable obligations and rules that ensure social justice and cohesion while recognizing the dignity of human beings and their freedom. Law and rights are means to establish social order and to resolve conflicts of interest and power peacefully. Love, however, is a fundamental value, guiding modes of behaviour that establish a reliable framework and basis for the recognition of rights and dignity of everyone in the community. The affirmation of justice and freedom based on love leads to corrective and transformative action in cases where life is threatened and rights are being violated.

¹ For this and the following see Konrad Raiser, *Religion, Power, Politics*, trans. Stephen Brown (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2013), 128ff.

This has critical importance in the struggle for liberation from structural injustice and oppression. Structural injustice leaves no space for loving relationships but favours and imposes exploitative and anonymous patterns of exchange.

Law and morality, rights, and love support each other in the quest for life in viable and sustainable communities. Traditionally, both are deeply rooted in the cultural and religious heritage and ethos of a given community. All too often, though, there is the tendency to limit and reserve the gifts of rights and love to one's own community and not to extend them to others. We see this today in the rejection of refugees and migrants and in claims of privilege and superiority that are increasingly poisoning relationships between and within nations of this world. In the face of such realities, we see the vital importance of rights and mutual love that together affirm human dignity across boundaries and motivate the struggle for liberation and just relationships.

But this is not all we have to say as Christians. The sequence of freedom, love, and justice changes its meaning again when we look at it in the light of the theme of the forthcoming WCC assembly that I mentioned earlier. Love then carries a name: it is first of all Christ's love that informs our lives and reflections and indeed our whole being as his disciples who are called to follow in his footsteps. Such understanding of love puts the person and power of Christ at the centre of our considerations. It shapes how we think about freedom and justice in relationship to him and the community of the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

In taking this step, we are moving from law and morality to faith. We now look at freedom, love, and justice in the perspective of faith in the triune God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The theme of the next WCC assembly in 2021 is an affirmation of faith centring on Christ's love: "Christ's love moves the world to reconciliation and unity." Over against all powers of destruction and sin, it sees the person of the crucified and risen Christ at the heart of this world. In Christ "creation . . . will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God" (Rom. 8:21). In Christ, "all things, whether on earth or in heaven" (Col. 1:20) will be reconciled with God. "Bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:2-3), everyone and everything will be made new. The shackles of sin will be lifted. The shattered image of humanity will be fully restored. And life in community will flourish in justice, peace, and freedom.

Love – a Gift of Faith and a Moral Imperative

In my reflections so far, I have moved from law to ethos and faith, and from rights to love as a moral imperative and as a gift of faith in Christ. I now want to change

perspective, moving the other way around from faith to ethos and law, from love as an issue of faith to love as a moral imperative and life in community based on rights. I will do this by reflecting on the life and witness of Dr Martin Luther King Jr. In 2018, we remembered the 50th anniversary of the WCC's 4th Assembly in Uppsala in 1968. Martin Luther King should have entered Uppsala cathedral on 4 July 1968 to preach at the opening service of the assembly. But he never came. Only weeks before, on 4 April 1968, he was assassinated in the city of Memphis in the USA.

King had broadened the focus of the civil rights movement through creating the Poor People's Campaign. The protest movement that was fighting against racial discrimination was to become the core of a broader movement for social justice and freedom for marginalized and economically disenfranchised people and communities. King visited different cities all over the country, mobilizing people to participate in a national march on Washington, DC, later in 1968. Five years earlier, in 1963, several hundred thousand people had heard him speak at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington when he spoke of his dream of overcoming racism and economic injustice and becoming "free at last." In 1968 he probably would have gathered many more people. There were some who were afraid of him.

King mobilized people for freedom and social justice, rejecting hate speech and building his message on the moral imperative of love.² I believe that when we look at the realities today, especially in North America and Europe, this is as crucial now as it was 50 years ago. King saw love as the key to creating just and inclusive communities where everyone would care for each other, communities that would benefit all and not just the few at the expense of the many.

When King spoke of love, it was not a sentimental echo of love songs in the charts. He was far from calling the oppressed to feel love for their oppressors in the same way that they felt love for their children and partners. A storyteller and a preacher, King spoke of love based on the biblical message of Christ's loving presence in the world, putting those at the margins at the centre. "Agape," he said, referring to one of the words in the Greek Bible for love, "is a willingness to go to any length to restore community."³ Love for him was first of all the love of God that had taken shape and was revealed in Jesus Christ to reconcile and renew this world. Love was the movement of God's presence

² King developed his vision further in his last book, *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?* See the revised edition, Martin Luther King Jr., *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2010).

³ Martin Luther King Jr, "Pilgrimage to Nonviolence," in *Ethics: Theory and Contemporary Issues*, 8th ed., ed. Barbara MacKinnon and Andrew Fiala (Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning, 2010), 533.

with and in the world, of God's reconciling and healing power in the Holy Spirit, of God's continued blessing of all life.

Strongly rooted in faith, love for King meant confronting sin in all its forms, the destructive consequences of hopelessness and despair, and the brokenness of communities and lack of solidarity. Love for him would empower the oppressed to stand up and tell their oppressors what was wrong, to struggle for change, not submitting to the terms of those who believed they were in power and control. Love rooted in faith would become the moral imperative for change.

This moral imperative for change had to be translated into the political struggle for more justice and freedom for all. It had to influence and to change legislation and structures that privileged a few and kept the many in poverty. Addressing poverty and discrimination on a larger scale, the civil rights movement had to become a movement for the basic human rights for all, surely fighting racism as the dehumanizing sin it was and is, and surely struggling for freedom from oppression, economic justice, and equality before the law for all human beings, irrespective of race, gender, or religion.

The Struggle Continues

More than 70 years after the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and 50 years after the assassination of Dr Martin Luther King Jr, I am convinced that this struggle for freedom and justice has to continue. King's martyrdom reminds us that there have been others before us who did not ask what such concrete witness for the love of God in Christ would cost them. There are people around us who call us to action. There are still refugees and children of refugees of the war on this island of Cyprus. Still Cyprus is divided. Still the region of the Middle East finds itself in the midst of violence and war. Children and young people and generations to come will ask us what we have done to live our witness of faith to God's love in the face of injustice, violence, and destruction:

- Are we moved by Christ's love for the common good of all people and this world? Are we ambassadors of Christ in the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:20), working for reconciliation, peace, and justice?
- Are we fully committed to unity in Christ so that the churches really become a prophetic sign and foretaste of the unity of humankind and all creation?

These are the kind of questions we are compelled to ask ourselves when we want to engage as Christians for freedom and justice motivated by Christ's love and when we begin now to respond to the theme of the WCC's 11th Assembly in Karlsruhe, Germany, in 2021.

Whose freedom, whose justice, whose love are we talking about? It is never the freedom, justice, and comfortable lives for only a few. It is always the love of God and the freedom and justice that flow from it. Motivated by our faith and guided by the moral imperative of life, we struggle for a change of structures and laws in favour of marginalized and excluded people and the suffering creation. The theme of the WCC's 5th Assembly in Nairobi in 1975 was "Jesus Christ frees and unites." Freedom, justice, and unity have never been seen by the ecumenical movement as static goals or principles. They point to the dynamic reality of change that was brought about by Jesus Christ and the coming of God's reign: "Jesus Christ frees and unites." We find life and meaning becoming part of this movement of Christ that is driven by God's love for this world. The witness and the unity of the church is not static. It cannot be captured in a series of statements and declarations. We are deepening our unity on the way, witnessing together and working for change that is inspired and motivated by the reality of Christ's love for the world. In this perspective we can accept, even embrace and celebrate, what are imperfect but real and diverse expressions of unity and shared service for justice and peace. Even if our unity is imperfect, it has dimensions that are driven by the love of Christ to us and to all humankind and the whole creation.

There has always been an emphasis in the ecumenical movement on God's promise of life in abundance in expectation of God's reign to come. Such an eschatological perspective has motivated the struggle for justice and peace. The eschatological dimension of our lives, including life eternal, is both a matter of what lies beyond time and what is a matter of concrete qualities, of life in abundance, here and now. What unites these two dimensions are the characteristics and presence of God's blessings and love.

Without the eschatological dimension, we might become simple materialists or pursue only an immanent political agenda. Everything would then be limited to what we achieve in this world. The alternative, of focusing only on life after death, has been caricatured as "pie in the sky by and by." For many honest believers, perhaps most, it has been a hope that has kept them going through many tribulations and pains and losses, and this promise has given strength to be salt to the earth and light in the world. Still, it is a real risk that if we are too focused on the life after this one, we will overlook the needs of our neighbours here and now and those who come after us. This was and remains a real challenge in some Christian faith communities. A much greater risk, however, is that the believer's focus is turned from "heaven" to the "world," yet not to the needs of others, but solely to our own health, prosperity, interests, even wealth. An article I read recently raised the question "Why give such priority to stopping climate change when we believe that God will create a new heaven and a new earth?" Well,

what is the answer to that? Because God loves the world, because God loves the human beings living now and those coming after us.

There is a unity in love that also has an eschatological dimension. Love transcends death. We continue to love our loved ones even after they are gone, and their love remains with us as a treasure. However, there is more to be said. We are called to be one so that the unity that is in the triune God should also be reflected in the unity among us; the mutual love in God should be the model for our unity, so beautifully expressed in John 17: “As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me” (21); “I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them” (26).

This is also why I think the proposal for the theme for our 11th Assembly brings us back to our common origin in Christ and therefore to the triune God who promises to make all things new. It also connects us to the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace as a way to describe the ecumenical movement, and it opens up another dimension of the ecumenical movement as an alternative to the many other approaches to the world, also in the name of religion and our own Christian traditions: an open and inclusive, radical expression of love in our time.

The Nairobi assembly already underlined in 1975 that our concern for human rights is based on our conviction that God wills a society in which all can enjoy full human rights. All human beings are created in the image of God, equal, and infinitely precious in God’s sight and ours. Jesus Christ has bound us to one another by his life, death, and resurrection, so that what concerns one concerns us all. The WCC’s 6th Assembly in Vancouver in 1983 underscored the essential Christian calling and motivation for engagement in working for human rights, observing that love of our neighbour is the essence of obedience to God. In this ecumenical work for human rights, we have particularly focused on responding to the victims of injustice and oppression. The 7th Assembly in Canberra in 1991 declared: “We manifest the life of the Spirit by striving for the release of those who are captive to sin by standing with the oppressed in their struggle for liberation, justice and peace. Liberated by the Spirit, we are empowered to understand the world from the perspective of the poor and vulnerable and to give ourselves to mission, service and the sharing of resources.”⁴

Meeting in 1998, the year of the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the WCC’s 8th Assembly experienced again God’s call to

⁴ “Report of the Report Committee,” in *Signs of the Spirit: Official Report Seventh Assembly*, ed. Michael Kinnamon (Geneva: WCC Publications and Grand Rapids, MI.: Eerdmans, 1991), 244.

jubilee, “and this leads us to reaffirm our commitment to human rights, to the dignity and worth of the human person created in God’s image and infinitely precious in God’s sight, and to the equal rights of women and men, of young and old, of all nations and peoples.”⁵ The assembly recognized the adoption of the UDHR as “one of the landmark achievements of humanity,” but acknowledged

the many shortcomings of the churches’ actions for human rights; . . . our unwillingness or inability to act when people were threatened or suffered; . . . our failure to stand up for people who have experienced violence and discrimination; . . . our complicity with the principalities, powers and structures of our time responsible for massive violations of human rights; and the withdrawal of many churches from work on human rights as a priority of Christian witness.⁶

The 10th Assembly of the WCC in 2013 in Busan called all Christians and all people of goodwill to a pilgrimage of justice and peace, engaging in transformative actions. It is in this broader horizon of the world that our witness as Christians has to find common ground with people of other faiths, indeed with all people of goodwill. We have our distinct message, but this message is good news for all and not just for us or for a few. Therefore, we welcome allies and partners on our way and are committed to build common ground for transformation. In moving beyond declarations and engaging in transformative actions, support for and defence of human rights is crucial.

In this spirit, the WCC central committee in June 2018 reaffirmed the commitment of the WCC to the principles of human dignity and human rights and to the commitments expressed in international human rights law as codified in the UDHR and the family of international human rights treaties. It stated again that international human rights law is an essential framework for the promotion, protection, and practical recognition of the God-given human dignity of every human being. And it called on WCC member churches and ecumenical partners to reprioritize human rights and their active support for the legal instruments of international human rights law as a bulwark against injustice, oppression, occupation, and tyranny.

The Power of Love

I have spoken in recent years of the love of Christ that frees and unites us and moves us forward to decisive action. “The power of love” is a message to the world, to the powerful and to the powerless, to all who are longing for a different reality from what we see

⁵ “A Statement on Human Rights,” in *Together on the Way: Official Report of the Eighth Assembly of the WCC*, ed. Diane Kessler (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1999), 197.

⁶ Ibid.

in today's world. This needs to be expressed in our quest for the unity of the church and the unity of humankind, serving the sustainability and unity of God's creation.

We cannot leave the quest for unity on a side track. The message of the "power of love" has much to contribute in these efforts, bringing other perspectives and dimensions into proper relationships that we need to develop and build in our time. There are many forces promoting conflict and violence. There are enormous forces of division and polarization, widening the gaps between the rich and poor, the privileged and the non-privileged (in terms of wealth, security, health, and so on). There are shocking signs that some powerful nations seek only their own interests rather than world peace or care for creation and for our one and only planet. There are signs of nations ignoring international law or utilizing it for their own purposes, of the breakdown of multilateral regulations and accountability, of the lack of care for the lives of innocent people, of the lack of willingness to share the burdens of responding properly to the needs of refugees from situations of war and conflict, of the use of the international financial architecture for the benefit of the strongest and the richest. The list goes on. Even our own elevated objectives of unity, justice, and peace are sometimes reinterpreted or abused by powers to dominate or to discriminate. Through a serious dialogue among us, even a critical one, we can discern when they are serving the love we are called to promote.

Unity, for example, might become a means of enforcing an oppressive uniformity or demand for agreement, or a frontier, a border, a wall against others who are not included in the protected and unified area or country. This might happen even in churches which are not serving primarily the needs of those who are suffering or supporting those who are struggling. A reference to justice is in some cases seen as the rule of the stronger and privileged, neglecting the needs of those who are excluded from the safety of citizenship with equal human rights. Peace, too, might be defined as an objective but pursued by some in practices that divide and create conflict. There are strong forces that undermine the need to see one another as participants in the one humanity, where we seek our common good and our common interests. There needs to be somebody and something that represents a counter-power of unity, justice, and peace.

As the WCC, we are not shy of presenting ourselves as a fellowship of churches, as people of faith, sharing the vision of something better, something built on another scale of values, something that binds peoples and nations together from mutual respect, dignity, accountability – even love. Love will bind us as churches and as Christians to each other and to our neighbours across the street and around the world. Love will free us from distorted values and deep prejudices. Love will see through the falsehoods of racism and tribalism. Love will open us up to learn from criticism and self-criticism of our own complicity. Love will fire our dreams of freedom and peace. Love will unleash

new visions, creative thinking, and fresh approaches to our steepest challenges. And love will give us the courage and stamina, the heart and soul, to rescue progress from profound danger, and peace from serious peril.

Fellow pilgrims on God's pilgrimage of justice and peace, you are – we are – building this movement of love, grounded in the one Spirit of Christ, ever eager and alert to journey on together in faith and hope for a better world.