



Une visite en Corée du Nord pour promouvoir le dialogue et la paix

La délégation de la Communion Mondiale d'Églises Réformées (CMER) en visite en Corée du Nord (République Démocratique Populaire de Corée) a, selon le secrétaire général de la CMER « entendu l'urgent souhait d'une réduction des provocations et tensions, le besoin de rétablir le dialogue et les négociations ainsi que le désir de remplacer l'armistice par un traité de paix. »

La visite qui a eu lieu du 24 au 29 septembre 2016 se situe dans le cadre de l'engagement pris de longue date par la CMER, le Conseil Œcuménique et le mouvement œcuménique en général d'être en contact avec les chrétiens de Corée du Nord et de promouvoir la réunification pacifique de la péninsule de Corée.

« On nous a assuré fermement que la Corée du Nord demeure attachée à la réalisation de la paix et de la réunification, même face à la situation actuelle » a expliqué le pasteur Ferguson, lors d'une conférence de presse tenue à Seoul immédiatement après son séjour à Pyongyang.

« Nous voulons mettre fin aux armes nucléaires. Nous voulons que l'Asie tout entière devienne une région dénucléarisée et que le monde entier soit libéré de la menace d'une escalade nucléaire, dit Chris Ferguson, mais cela exige la formation d'une plateforme où tous les pays se sentiraient écoutés, honorés et respectés. »

Le Pasteur Jerry Pillay, président de la CMER, ajouta : « Alors que nous avons entendu la très ferme volonté de vouloir œuvrer en faveur



La délégation à Pyongyang devant le monument dédié à la réunification de la Corée.

de la paix, la réconciliation et la réunification, il reste que les visions et idées sur la façon d'atteindre ces buts diffèrent et rendent nécessaire un dialogue et un engagement collectif. »

La délégation de la CMER qui fut accueillie par la Fédération Chrétienne de Corée du Nord (KCF) participa au culte du dimanche à l'église protestante de Bongsu et rencontra le pasteur et quelques chrétiens de la paroisse de Chilgol à Pyongyang. Elle eut des entretiens avec les dirigeants de la KCF et une rencontre avec le vice-président de l'Assemblée suprême du peuple, M. Kim Yong Dae.

La KCF souligna son désir de vouloir maintenir de bonnes relations avec les églises et les organisations

œcuméniques du monde entier et leur adressa à nouveau un appel en faveur de la paix et de la réunification de la péninsule de Corée.

La KCF reçut favorablement l'invitation de la CMER à envoyer des représentants à l'Assemblée Générale de la CMER qui se tiendra à Leipzig, en Allemagne, en juin 2017.

La délégation de la CMER a aussi remis une aide financière pour aider les victimes de la catastrophe causée fin septembre dans le nord-est du pays par le typhon *Lionrock*. Le Conseil national des églises de Corée (du Sud) avait, lui aussi, lancé un appel en faveur des milliers de victimes touchées par les inondations.

Suite page 2

Suite de la page 1

« Tout doit être mis en œuvre, pour que les gens soient logés et aient un refuge avant le début de l'hiver, expliqua le pasteur Ferguson, Dans les églises que nous avons visitées à Pyongyang, nous avons entendu que le sort des victimes occupait une place importante dans les prières des chrétiens. »

La pasteure Carola Tron, modératrice de l'Eglise Vaudoise du Rio de la Plata (Argentine, Uruguay) et membre du comité exécutif de la CMER ainsi que la pasteur Dora Arce-Valentin, responsable de la Justice au bureau central de la CMER ont fait partie de la délégation menée par les pasteurs Jerry Pillay et Chris Ferguson. La délégation fut accompagnée par le pasteur Collin Isaiah Cowan, secrétaire général du Council for World Mission en tant que partenaire œcuménique ainsi que par le professeur Victor Hsu de Taiwan et le pasteur Paul Oppenheim d'Allemagne en tant que conseillers experts. ●



Salutations après le culte.

수해복구와 수재민들을 위한 WCRC의 호소문

내가 주릴 때에 너희가 먹을 것을 주었고
목마를 때에 마시게 하였고 나그네 되었을 때에
영접하였고, 헐벗었을 때에 옷을 입혔고 병들었을
때에 돌보았고 옥에 갇혔을 때에 와서 보았느니라,
임금이 대답하여 이르시되 내가 진실로 너희에게
이르노니 너희가 여기 내 형제 중에 지극히 작은
자 하나에게 한 것이 곧 내게 한 것이니라 하시고
- 마태복음 25 : 35-36, 40

세계개혁교회커뮤니언(WCRC)은 북한의 수재민들에 대한 지원을 첫번째 사명으로 세웠다.

9월 초 태풍 라이언록은 함경북도 북쪽의 가장 가난한 지역을 강타했고, 태풍으로 인한 폭우는 대규모 홍수로 이어졌다.

뉴욕타임즈에 의하면 이 태풍으로 인하여 130여명이 사망하였고, 100여명이 실종되었으며, 3만5천 가구 이상이 파괴되었고, 약 5천만평 (=4만 에이커) 이상의 경작물이 손해를 입은 것으로 알려졌다. 이번 태풍 라이언록으로 인한 피해자는 60만명에 육박할 것으로 추산되었다.

특히 겨울이 다가오는 상황에서 수많은 경작물의 피해로 인한 굶주림이 가져올 2차 재난이 더욱 우려되는 상황이다.

남북간의 정치, 군사, 외교적 긴장의 고조에도 불구하고 북한의 수해 복구를 위한 인도적 지원은 활발하게 진행되고 있다. UN 또한 지난 반세기만에 최악의 수해를 입은 함경북도의 수해복구와 지원을 위해 미화 2천820만 달러를 모금하겠다는 계획을 발표했다.

국제 적십자사와 적신월사연맹은 수해복구를 위해 52만 달러를 긴급 지원하였지만, 겨울이 다가오는 상황에서 2차 재난을 방지하기 위해서는 1천550만 달러가 더 필요하다고 국제 사회에 호소하였다.

9월 중순 방북했던 WCRC 대표단은 북측으로부터 수해복구에 대한 지원을 요청받았고, 제리 필라이 총재와 크리스 퍼거슨 총무가 이끄는 대표단은 조선그리스도교연맹에 수해복구를 위한 지원금을 전달하였다.

퍼거슨 총무는 “방북 기간동안 봉수회와 칠골교회에서 기독교인들과 함께 예배를 드리며, 북측의 우리 형제 자매들이 자연재해로 인해 고통 받고 있는 그들의 이웃을 위해 함께 기도하는 목소리를 들었다.” “그리고 우리는 회원교회들에게 고난 받는 이웃들을 위해 기도를 비롯한 물질적 후원을 요청한다.”라고 전했다.

별도로 진행된 일부의 추가적인 지원을 제외한 전반적인 WCRC의 수해복구 지원은 NCCK의 지원정책을 따라 진행되었다. 수해복구를 위한 지원금은 WCRC의 파트너십 펀드를 통해 모금할 수 있다. ●

Sekolah GEM diakhiri dengan harapan untuk masa depan yang lebih baik

Sebagai seorang professor ekonomi dan etika ekonomi dengan latar belakang teologi, dan sebagai dekan dari sekolah GEM, saya dapat mengatakan bahwa ekonomi pluralistik -- yang saat ini berkembang sebagai inisiatif mahasiswa secara internasional -- merupakan sebuah usaha untuk menantang ekonomi monolithik neo-liberal. Sudah saatnya ada cara berpikir yang baru mengenai ekonomi," demikian pernyataan Prof. Martin Büscher, kepala bidang etika bisnis dan ekonomi di Institut Diakonia dan Manajemen, Universitas Protestan Wuppertal/Bethel, Jerman, pada penutupan sekolah Pemerintahan, Ekonomi dan Manajemen (Governance, Economics and Management/ GEM) yang diadakan di Hong Kong pada 22 Agustus - 2 September yang lalu.

Melalui sebuah proses belajar selama 10 hari yang diinisiasi oleh Dewan Gereja Sedunia (World Council of Churches/WCC) dan World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC), sekolah GEM mengumpulkan pada pemimpin maupun calon pemimpin gereja serta para ahli di bidang ekonomi, dan diakhiri dengan sebuah pengharapan untuk masa depan yang lebih baik. Sekalipun ada banyak hal yang perlu dilakukan untuk menghadapi model-model yang terfokus pada diri sendiri dalam bidang ekonomi, tampak jelas bahwa sangat penting untuk mengambil langkah-langkah awal mulai saat ini.

"Para ekonom perlu melihat dasar etis mereka yang sudah kadaluarsa dan mulai mempertimbangkan dengan lebih realistis apa yang mereka anggap sebagai 'pengaruh eksternal,' seperti kemiskinan, ketidakadilan, masalah ketenagakerjaan, dan perusakan ekologis. Tantangan utama yang dihadapi manusia berasal dari

bidang ekonomi -- para ekonom yang mempertahankan model kepentingan-pribadi dan model matematis neo-liberal perlu meninggalkan menara gading mereka," tambah Büscher.

Sekolah GEM diadakan berdasarkan usaha bersama beberapa organisasi kepercayaan untuk bekerja bersama-sama menuju sebuah arsitektur finansial dan ekonomi internasional yang baru (new international financial and economic architecture/NIFEA).



Mempertimbangkan kontribusi sekolah ini terhadap proses NIFEA, Pdt. Dora Arce-Valentin, sekretaris eksekutif WCRC untuk Keadilan dan Kerjasama mengatakan, "Sekolah GEM adalah salah satu prioritas yang disebutkan dalam dokumen 'Ekonomi Kehidupan bagi Semua Sekarang: Sebuah Rencana Tindakan Ekumenis untuk Arsitektur Finansial dan Ekonomi Internasional yang Baru.' Tujuan dari sekolah GEM adalah untuk membangun kompetensi ekonomi dalam gerakan ekumenis dan terkait dengan itu sekolah GEM bermaksud memampukan komunitas dengan memberikan bahan yang dibutuhkan untuk menginterpretasi konteks mereka masing-masing dan mencari alternatif."

"Sekolah GEM dapat memberikan kontribusi terhadap inisiatif NIFEA sebagai salah satu cara ekumenis untuk menantang kekuasaan-kekuasaan dunia masa kini, bersama-sama. Jika kita mampu bergerak

maju di jalur yang sama, sekolah GEM akan menjadi sebuah jaringan pemimpin ekumenis yang mendorong gereja-gereja mereka untuk menggunakan potensi advokasi dalam mengemulakan sistem yang ada dan menawarkan alternatif. Program ini juga akan menjadi sumber berbagai proyek yang dapat memberikan kontribusi terhadap area prioritas lainnya dengan kreatifitas dan profesionalisme tinggi," tambah Arce-Valentin.

Sekolah GEM yang berlangsung selama 10 hari diakhiri dengan persiapan proposal proyek oleh para peserta yang akan dijalankan selama 2-3 tahun ke depan. "Para peserta menghasilkan ide-ide yang menginspirasi namun sekaligus juga praktis berdasarkan apa yang mereka pelajari," kata Athena Peralta, eksekutif program WCC untuk keadilan ekonomi dan ekologis. "Proposal-proposal proyek ini antara lain bertujuan untuk mengembangkan imajinasi teologis di antara gereja-gereja dan orang-orang Kristen yang akan memperkuat usaha membangun sebuah NIFEA, membentuk kembali kurikulum ekonomi di universitas Protestan berdasarkan nilai-nilai Kristiani, menghasilkan indikator alternatif untuk mengukur nilai kehidupan, dan meninjau kembali standar sosial dan ekologis yang diterapkan oleh perusahaan-perusahaan."

Büscher menyimpulkan bahwa ide-ide dan proyek-proyek untuk menantang dan merestrukturisasi sistem finansial dan ekonomi saat ini baru dimulai. "Sekolah GEM diadakan untuk pemberdayaan dan untuk mengadvokasi ekonomi kehidupan. Sekolah ini bersifat interdisipliner dan tujuan akhirnya adalah pengaruh sosial," kata Büscher.

Ini adalah rilis berita gabungan antara World Council of Churches dan World Communion of Reformed Churches. ●

Anglican-Reformed dialogue focuses on the nature of communion

The International Reformed-Anglican Dialogue between the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) and the Anglican Communion met for its second meeting, at Clare College, Cambridge, England, 2 to 8 September 2016. The co-chairs are Elizabeth Welch (Reformed) and David Chillingworth (Anglican).

The current series of discussions is the first that the Anglican and Reformed communions have had since 1984, when their dialogue wrote the statement, *God's Reign and our Unity*. The dialogue has been mandated to study the nature of communion (*koinonia*), a wide range of missiological challenges facing the two communions and the sources wherein the work of the Spirit may be discerned, notably authority and governance, episcopate and episcopacy. The theme of this second meeting was "the nature of communion and its challenges."

As part of its reflection on the nature of communion, there have been presentations and discussion from the perspectives of the Trinity in seventeenth century English Reformed theology in dialogue with contemporary Orthodox theology; a theology of *koinonia* from the perspective of the sending (*missio*) of the Son rather than the mutually dependent interpersonal relationships (*perichoresis*) between the Three Divine Persons and a reflection on the historical instruments within which *koinonia* has been maintained.

In a series of meetings the commission discussed the nature of communion, its quality and intensiveness, misunderstandings over theological and adiaphoral issues (neither authoritatively required nor forbidden matters), the continuities which provide the perennial bedrock of the two ecclesial traditions, and the ways in which such continuities are ritualized in contrast to society outside the church. In an atmosphere of reflection the commission considered how communion can be cared for and sustained when challenges threaten to overwhelm. The commission took stock of the challenges to communion experienced by both traditions, but remembered the creative improvisation and the joy and hospitality of the Word made Flesh on our behalf.

Members of the Commission were delighted to see the only autograph manuscript of the Westminster Confession at Westminster College, Cambridge, thanks to

the good offices of Stephen Orchard, principal emeritus of the College. They were also made welcome by Christopher de Hamel and allowed see priceless treasures of the Anglican tradition in the Parker Library at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

The dialogue began with a celebration of Holy Communion in King's College, Cambridge, using a liturgy of the Scottish Episcopal Church at which the Anglican co-chair presided and the Reformed co-chair preached, and closed with a celebration of Holy Communion according to the Reformed tradition in the Chapel of Clare College, at which the Reformed co-chair presided and the

Anglican co-chair preached. The members of the dialogue prayed together each morning and evening.

This second meeting of the commission was hosted by the Anglican Communion and greatly facilitated by James Hawkey, Dean of Clare College.

To experience an example of vibrant ecumenical worship, the

Commission was welcomed by the Philipa King to St Luke's Parish Church which is a Church of England/United Reformed Church Local Ecumenical Partnership. Members of the commission later worshipped at Evensong in Ely Cathedral, thereby gaining a sense of the thousand year history of worship in cathedral churches.

The commission will meet again at Princeton Theological Seminary in early September 2017.

Anglican Communion participants: David Chillingworth (co-chair), Scottish Episcopal Church; Clint Le Bruyns, Anglican Church of Southern Africa; Renta Nishihara, Nippon Sei Ko Kai; Helene T. Steed, Church of Ireland; James Hawkey, Church of England; staff: John Gibaut (co-secretary); Neil Vigers, Anglican Communion Office.

WCRC participants: Elizabeth Welch (co-chair), United Reformed Church, England; Iain R. Torrance, The Church of Scotland; Royce M Victor, Church of South India; Gertrude Aopesyaga Kapuma, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian; R. Gerald Hobbs, United Church of Canada; staff: Aruna Gnanadason (WCRC consultant); Stephen Orchard, United Reformed Church (England). ●



Diálogo de alto nivel plantea agenda latinoamericana y caribeña para incidir en el G20-2018

Después de dos días de nutridos paneles y debates sobre la dinámica económica y financiera de América Latina y el Caribe, representantes de las iglesias y organismos internacionales de desarrollo de la región y de entidades gubernamentales de Argentina, convocadas por CREAS, PIDESONE, Globethics y Caritas, identificaron ejes claves para contribuir a la transformación de políticas públicas y a la reducción de la desigualdad en Latinoamérica y que marcan una ruta de incidencia hacia la reunión del G20 de 2018, con sede en Argentina.

Las apuestas identificadas para este propósito tienen que ver con la búsqueda de procesos de transición económica alternativa a la extracción indiscriminada de recursos naturales en la región, así como la promoción de políticas más eficientes con tolerancia cero a la corrupción, un mejor sistema fiscal, mejores instituciones y mayor impacto en lo social, lo laboral y en la equidad e igualdad de género.

Los representantes de iglesias que participaron es el diálogo, reafirmaron su compromiso de continuar trabajando con los organismos gubernamentales e internacionales “para buscar soluciones que den respuesta al clamor de las periferias”, enfatizando en que el proceso de desarrollo debe contemplar la visión de los más pobres y vulnerables.

La Reverenda Dora Arce, Secretaria Ejecutiva de Justicia de la Comunión Mundial de Iglesias Reformadas, concluyó en el cierre de este evento: “Es importante trabajar en dos problemáticas que deben ser visibilizadas con mayor fuerza: la ideología hegemónica patriarcal y la violencia intrínseca del sistema económico y financiero internacional, que hemos reconocido como insostenible en este diálogo.”



La CMIR estuvo bien representada en el diálogo.

Por su parte, Monseñor Jorge Lozano, Presidente de la Comisión Episcopal de Pastoral Social Argentina hizo hincapié en la necesidad de “No quedarnos solo en la descripción de la fatalidad, tenemos que ponerlas sobre la mesa pero la realidad no se modifica con un control remoto, estamos llamados a trabajar apasionadamente por el bien, para transformar la realidad.”

René Valdéz representante del PNUD, dijo: “Animo a seguir adelante con la reflexión ecuménica e antirreligiosa y desde la fe para discutir cómo continuar trabajando

para devolverle la ética al desarrollo desde los objetivos planteados en la agenda 2030”.

Para el Vicecanciller del Gobierno Argentino, Carlos Foradori, “En este encuentro se puso el acento en un principio ético que es la erradicación de la pobreza, lugar donde la Argentina quiere estar, especialmente de camino al G20.” ●

Booklet delves into General Council theme

The World Communion of Reformed Churches's next General Council, bringing together hundreds of delegates to discern God's will through Scripture to set the WCRC's direction and elect new leadership, will be held in Leipzig, Germany, 29 June to 7 July 2017.

The Council's theme—**Living God, renew and transform us**—not only reflects the WCRC's heritage but centres the Council around the God of Life and challenges participants to renew themselves and the church so that the world can be transformed.

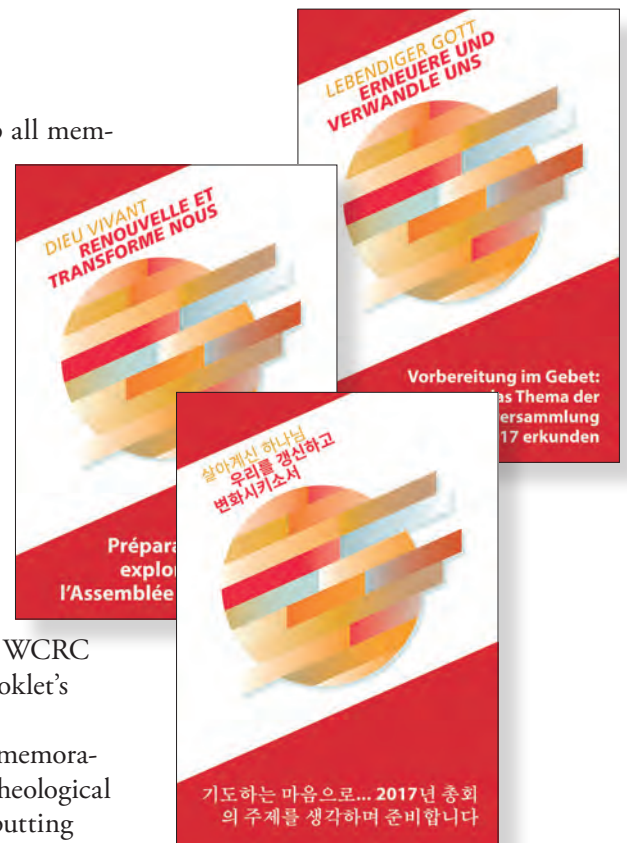
"This theme is reflected as a prayer to God who lives and reigns in the world to make us more like Jesus," says Jerry Pillay, WCRC president. "It is a prayer that God will make us to be what God wants and wills for us to be, and that God will use us to change the world so that it may reflect God's reign and presence bringing justice, peace, love and abundance of life to all."

The WCRC has brought together outstanding theological thinkers,

teachers and leaders to help all member churches and congregations enter deeply into the work of the Council by engaging its theme. The result is *Prayerful Preparation*, a booklet containing Bible studies; theological, confessional and contextual essays; and worship resources.

"The point of this critical reflection is to move forward in faith and in response to the God of Life," says Chris Ferguson, WCRC general secretary, in the booklet's preface.

"The Reformation commemorations are for us not about theological nostalgia. They are about putting the Reformation into the present tense," Ferguson continues. "This means not just the here and now; it means bringing Reformed traditions, theology and the confessing faith stance into the tense present—into the tensions, conflicts, violence, suffering, beauty, wonder and promise of this historical moment."



Prayerful Preparation is available in six languages: English, French, German, Indonesian, Korean and Spanish. It can be downloaded for free from the WCRC's General Council website: wrc.ch/gc2017. Printed copies may be obtained by writing to wrc@wrc.eu. ●

Youth invited to special gathering

Making new friends from around the world, deepening a relationship with Christ and engaging in critical issues is only a taste of what's planned for the Youth Gathering in the week before the 2017 General Council.

"This event is for young Christians from all around the world to share their unique context, embrace the diversity and together build fellowships," says Wan-Jou Lu, a member of the Youth Gathering team from Taiwan.

"It is also a wonderful opportunity to travel to a city in Germany—Leipzig—that has an important place in history and is currently a creative hub," adds Gretchen Schoon Tanis, an American team member.

The Youth Gathering will include Bible studies, worship experiences, workshops, participative games, artistic opportunities and a focus on making a difference in the world.

"Individual and societal transformation towards global justice and the protection of God's creation has been central to the members of the WCRC," says Helge Seekamp, a German and chair of the team. "At this event, we'll focus on climate justice and 'degrowth'—how we can work for a democratically-led redistributive downscaling of production and consumption in industrialized countries as a means to achieve environmental sustainability."

The Youth Gathering will run 23-28 June 2017 and will be centered at a conference grounds just outside of Leipzig, with trips planned into the city. Individuals aged 18-28 and youth groups from the Communion are invited to attend. More information can be found online here: <http://youth.wrc.eu> ●



28 JUNE-6 JULY 2017

2017 GENERAL COUNCIL VISITORS PROGRAMME

THE GENERAL COUNCIL

The World Communion of Reformed Churches' next General Council will be held in Leipzig, Germany, in 2017—the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. The WCRC is returning to the birthplace of the 16th-century Reformation to demonstrate that this event belongs to Christians around the world—and to witness to the world in these times of injustice and violence.

THE VISITORS PROGRAMME

The Visitors Programme provides an opportunity for persons who would like to attend the General Council. Visitors are invited to the public sessions of the General Council. Visitors:

- can fully participate in worship life and Bible studies;
- can accompany the General Council during its sessions in Berlin and in Wittenberg;
- are welcome to listen to the speakers that unfold the Council theme during the plenary sessions;
- have the opportunity to be in discussion with these speakers in special workshops for visitors;
- are invited to the cultural events that will take place during the Council;
- can take part in sightseeing trips in and around Leipzig.



Leipzig, Germany

Leipzig

The business of the Council will be taken up in Leipzig. Leipzig is an appropriate site for such a gathering. It has welcomed visitors to its conference grounds for 1,000 years. The local Reformed congregation is a vibrant cultural centre in a city known for its dedication to the arts. And the candlelit peace prayer vigils of 1989 sparked the reunification of Germany.

Wittenberg

In Wittenberg, the birthplace of the Reformation, the General Council will affirm its visible support to Christian unity at a worship service close to Martin Luther's church and in acts of agreement with the Lutheran and the Roman Catholic churches. Historic sites will be visited.

Berlin

Berlin will see the Council engage in the Church's witness to the world. An internationally broadcast worship service will be held in the Berliner Dom. The Council will immerse itself in the life of the city—visiting diaconal institutions, historic sites and local congregations. And it will engage globally at a reception hosted by Germany's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

2017 PROGRAMME POSSIBILITIES

Wednesday, 28 June

4:30 p.m.	Welcoming of visitors	Reformed Church, Leipzig
6:00 p.m.	Evening of Encounters	Reformed Church, Leipzig

Thursday, 29 June

10:00-11:30	Opening Service	St Nikolas Church, Leipzig
12:00-1:00	Reception by the Mayor of Leipzig	New Town Hall, Leipzig
2:00-4:00	Theme input 1	Leipzig Messe

Friday, 30 June

8:30-10:00	Worship, Bible study presentation and groups	Leipzig Messe
10:30-11:00	Information for visitors	Leipzig Messe
11:00-12:30	Workshop with presenters of theme input 1	Leipzig Messe
2:00-4:00	Theme input 2	Leipzig Messe
4:30-6:30	Workshop with presenters of theme input 2	Leipzig Messe
Afternoon	Different sightseeing activities	Leipzig
10:00	Worship	Reformed Church, Leipzig

Saturday, 1 July

8:30-10:00	Worship, Bible study presentation and groups	Leipzig Messe
10:30-11:00	Information for visitors	Leipzig Messe
11:00-12:30	Theme input 3	Leipzig Messe
2:00-4:00	Workshop with presenters of theme input 3	Leipzig Messe
Afternoon	Different sightseeing activities	Leipzig
7:30	Visit of social art projects	Leipzig

Sunday, 2 July - Trip to Berlin

9:30-10:15	Worship in Berlin Dom	Berlin Dom
12:00-2:00	Reception by Federal Government	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2:30-5:30	Solidarity visits to diaconic projects	Berlin
2:30-5:30	Visit of historical sites	Berlin

Monday, 3 July

8:30-10:00	Worship, Bible study presentation and groups	Leipzig Messe
10:30-11:00	Information for visitors	Leipzig Messe
11:00-12:30	Theme input 4	Leipzig Messe
2:00-4:00	Workshop with presenters of theme input 4	Leipzig Messe
Afternoon	Different sightseeing activities	Leipzig
5:00	Peace Prayer	St Nikolas Church, Leipzig
7:30-9:00	Organ Concert	Reformed Church, Leipzig

Tuesday, 4 July

8:30-10:00	Worship, Bible study presentation and groups	Leipzig Messe
10:30-11:00	Information for visitors	Leipzig Messe
11:00-12:30	Theme input 5	Leipzig Messe
2:00-4:00	Workshop with presenters of theme input 5	Leipzig Messe
Afternoon	Different sightseeing activities	Leipzig
7:30-9:00	Psalm Concert	St Nikolas Church, Leipzig

Wednesday, 5 July - Trip to Wittenberg

10:00-11:00	Worship service	Schlosskirche, Wittenberg
12:00-1:30	Visit of the World Reformation Exhibition	Wittenberg
2:30-4:00	Ecumenical acts	Wittenberg

Thursday, 6 July

8:30-10:00	Worship, Bible study presentation and groups	Leipzig Messe
10:30-11:00	Information for visitors	Leipzig Messe
All day	Trips to religious and cultural sites	Various

Registration Costs

	North America/ Western Europe			All Other Regions		
	Full-Time Visitors <i>(Includes public transportation)</i>	Day Pass <i>(Excludes public transport)</i>		Full-Time Visitors <i>(Includes public transportation)</i>	Day Pass <i>(Excludes public transport)</i>	
		Leipzig	Berlin or Wittenberg		Leipzig	Berlin or Wittenberg
Meals included	470 €	50 €	70 €	390 €	40 €	60€
Without meals	155 €	15 €	35 €	75 €	5 €	25 €

Enquiries

Please direct all enquiries to

Rev. Hanns Lessing (*General Council Coordinator*) or

Rev. Sylvia Bukowski (*Coordinator of the Visitors Programme*)

under the following email: visitors@wrcr.eu



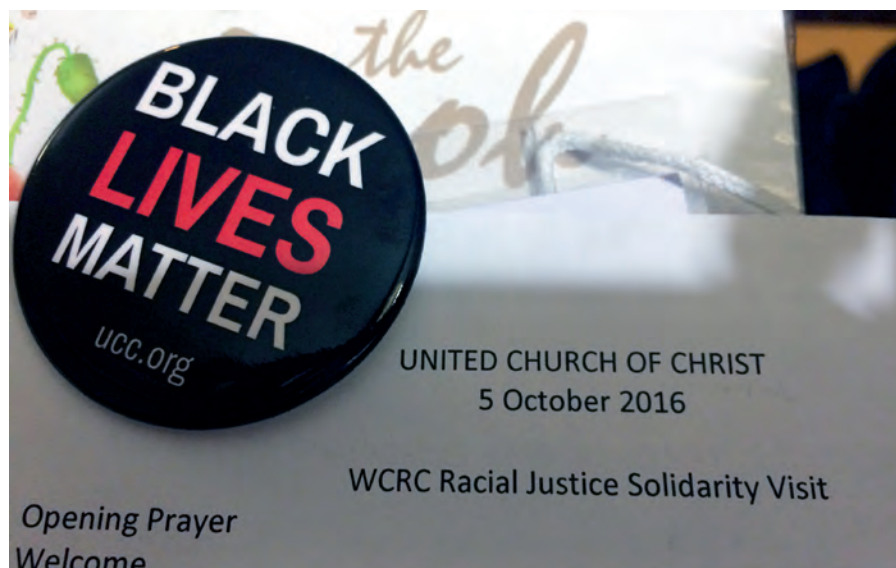
**World Communion
of Reformed Churches**

The World Communion of Reformed Churches is comprised of 80 million Christians in Congregational, Presbyterian, Reformed, United, Uniting and Waldensian churches. The WCRC, working with its 225+ member churches, is active in supporting theology, justice, church unity and mission in over 105 countries.

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WCRC calls for racial justice in USA



A WCRC “Racial Justice Solidarity Visit” to the United States has underlined the Communion’s commitment to be a prophetic voice for racial justice.

“The meeting in Cleveland is a strong statement that we do not support racism and violence of any kind. It is also a firm indication that we stand in solidarity with those who are affected by this and those who actively work for peace and racial acceptance. The Gospel of Christ calls us to treat all people with dignity, respect and value,” said Jerry Pillay, WCRC president.

The WCRC delegation—which also included Vice Presidents Yueh-Wen Lu and Helis Barraza Diaz, General Secretary Chris Ferguson, Dora Arce Valentin, WCRC executive secretary for justice, and members of the WCRC Justice Network—heard from representatives of US member churches on the following topics:

- Historical Overview/Theological Framework
- U.S. and Canadian Context
- Confession of Belhar
- Dominant Culture/Church in Current Racial Injustice and Resistance Movement
- Global Framing

“This time together gave us the opportunity to listen to stories of pain, fear, frustration and impunity, and moved us to commit with our sisters and brothers in the USA and everywhere to work together



to overcome injustice in all its expressions,” said Arce Valentin.

Speaking from his experience as a South African, Pillay said, “We have seen and witnessed the role the church can play in addressing racism. Our experiences in South Africa tell us that there is hope for justice, peace, human dignity and possibilities of changing mind-sets and indoctrinated beliefs.”

The WCRC will move this issue ahead in a number of ways, including bringing it to the 2017 General Council to both

globalize and focus the specific work for the next seven years.

Arce Valentin also cited the United Nations’ “International Decade for People of African Descent” (2015-2024) as an opportunity to engage member churches in “recognition, justice and development. Our Communion has the chance to use the decade to reflect about the complicity of churches on transatlantic slave trade and make the connections with the current situation with the different waves of migrants running away from violence, war, poverty and climate disasters,” she said.

“We should help provide material resources that strongly challenges racism, biblically,” adds Pillay. “The Belhar Confession, now adopted by both the Presbyterian Church (USA) and Reformed Church in

WCRC President Jerry Pillay listens as Cynthia Holder Rich and Everette Thompson make presentations.

America, should be highlighted, published and used as a resource for dialogue and support.”

Hosted by the United Church of Christ, the one-day event, on 5 October 2016, included participation by the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the Christian Reformed Church in North America. ●

Eine Arbeitsgruppe von WCRC Europe befasst sich mit Flüchtlingsfragen

Der noch nie da gewesene Flüchtlingsstrom nach Europa hat den Rat der Weltgemeinschaft Reformierter Kirchen in Europa (WCRC Europe) dazu gebracht, eine Arbeitsgruppe „Migration und Flucht“ ins Leben zu rufen, um angemessene Antworten auf diese Krise zu finden.

Zu den Antworten gehören eine vertiefte theologische Reflexion über Migration, die Aufnahme eines Dialogs über christlich-muslimische Beziehungen, die Partnerschaft mit Kirchen im Nahen Osten, der Austausch von *best practice* Beispielen aus unterschiedlichen Kontexten und dies alles mit konkreten Zeichen der Solidarität zu verbinden.

Die Arbeitsgruppe ist sowohl in Ungarn als auch in Griechenland gewesen, um aus erster Hand zu erfahren, was Mitgliedskirchen tun.



Sie hat auch Berichte anderer europäischer Mitgliedskirchen angehört.

Im Folgenden sind einige Beispiele, von denen berichtet wurde:

Die Kirche von Schottland hat sich an einer ökumenischen Aktion beteiligt, die Flüchtlinge, die nach Schottland kommen, willkommen heißt und bei ihrer Ansiedlung unterstützt; von den 5.000 Flüchtlingen, die bisher in Großbritannien aufgenommen wurden, sind 2.000 nach Schottland gekommen.



Die Waldenserkirche in Italien gehört seit Jahren zu den Vorkämpfern bei der Flüchtlingshilfe; ihre Synode hat vor Kurzem beschlossen, die biblische Lehre über die Aufnahme der Fremden in ihrer Verkündigung stärker zu berücksichtigen.

Angesichts dessen, dass die Rechte in Schweden die Entscheidungen der Regierung, tausende von Flüchtlingen ins Land zu lassen, rückgängig machen will, engagiert sich die *Uniting Church in Sweden* in ökumenischen Gruppen, an denen auch Orthodoxe und Katholiken mitwirken, gegen solche Bestrebungen und unterstützt Gemeinden bei Einwanderungsfragen.

Nach ihrer Tagung in Griechenland hat die Arbeitsgruppe eine Stellungnahme verfasst, in der unter anderem zu lesen ist:

Die Ankunft hunderttausender von Flüchtlingen in Europa seit dem Sommer 2015 hat eine Situation geschaffen, die die Kirchen in ganz Europa herausfordert. Wir sehen, dass Frauen und Kinder, Männer und alte Menschen vor Krieg, Armut und Verfolgung fliehen. Jeden Tag riskieren Menschen ihr Leben auf der Suche nach Leben, Frieden und Gerechtigkeit in Europa. Die täglichen Nachrichten über Menschen,

die im Mittelmeer ertrinken, über den Menschenhandel von Frauen und Kindern, über Terrorangriffe in Europa, die angstverbreitende Rhetorik von Politikern und Bilder von Kriegsverbrechen und Verwüstung in Syrien scheinen zum normalen Alltag zu gehören.

Als reformierte Kirchen verkündigen wir das Evangelium von Jesus Christus und eine Vision des Lebens in Fülle für alle (Johannes 10,10). Daher können noch wollen wir dies als eine Realität hinnehmen. Die Menschen, die Schutz suchen, stellen nicht nur eine ethische oder politische Herausforderung für die Kirche dar. Sie stellen vielmehr die innerste theologische Identität und die Mission unserer Kirchen auf die Probe. In Treue zum Zeugnis der Bibel, zu ihrer Berufung und ihrer Mission weiß sich die reformierte Kirche seit langem verpflichtet, für das Leben, die Würde und das Wohl von Flüchtlingen einzutreten.

Die Arbeitsgruppe wird ihre Arbeit fortsetzen und fordert die Mitgliedskirchen in Europa dazu auf, ihre Zusammenarbeit zu diesem Thema zu verstärken. ●

Greek evangelicals welcome refugees

It began with simple acts of hospitality and has since become a life-changing mission.

The arrival of thousands upon thousands of Middle Eastern refugees more than a year ago shocked members of the Greek Evangelical Church (GEC) into action. Already assisting fellow Greeks who were struggling through tough economic times, the GEC members couldn't ignore the horrific conditions facing the refugees in the makeshift camps around Idomeni.

"They were in the middle of nowhere in an open space. It was a terrible situation," says Alexandra Nikolara, an elder of the Greek Evangelical Church of Katerini and coordinator of their refugee programme.

GEC members from churches in Katerini and Neos Mylotopos, a village with a population far smaller than the number of refugees in the camps, began by providing basic supplies. This soon expanded to information resources, including internet connections. The network of volunteers grew, as did the support, with the GEC receiving donations from its daughter churches around the world.

"At the beginning there weren't many NGOs," says Savvas Anastasiou, an elder from Mylotopos, "just us and the church in Katerini—so we were improvising."

During their regular visits, the volunteers realized that the refugees needed more than what could be provided for in the camps. They needed respite from their current condition, and so, with permission from the UNHCR, they invited refugees to their homes for a meal, a bath and a chance to wash their clothes.

"And then we decided not to take them back," says Nikolara. "We kept bringing more—this is how it started."

The programme now run in Katerini is able to "create a safe and peaceful environment for approxi-

mately 100 refugees with an objective to give them a professional helping hand" as they work their way through the European Union's resettlement system, says Nikolara.

The church focuses on helping the most vulnerable refugees—single mothers with children—and houses them in rented apartments throughout Katerini. A staff of seven is guided by a committee of three church



elders, each of whom are focused on different aspects: spiritual issues, financial needs and overall management. Besides food and housing, the church helps provide medical care and legal assistance, as well as educational opportunities.

"The Lord has touched our lives through these people, and we feel honoured," says Yiannis Yfantidis, the church's pastor, who is also engaged in the work. "They become part of our families, and I hope they will remember that."

Similar work is happening in Mylotopos, with the church there housing up to two dozen refugees at a time in apartments in the village. To provide more stability for housing, the church is renovating one apartment above a space that holds piles of donated clothing and is con-

verting another building across from the church.

"The situation energized not only this church but the whole of the community," says Anastasiou. "When the refugees first came to the village, people were afraid, but now they're saying to bring more."

"We put into practice what we believe and what we preached from the pulpit," he continues. "Our main goal is to help them, to give them the example of the Christian helping the neighbour—and through this ministry to show and tell them what the actions of a Christian should be."

The same spirit and dedication is also manifest in Thessaloniki, Greece's second largest city. Steki, a food pantry serving Greeks, has expanded its services to refugees while housing has been provided for several families. The GEC congregation is working to open a day centre to provide a focal point for refugees in the centre of the city.

"Our faith needs to be applied in life. If they see our faith in life this is the greatest thing they can see. Sometimes you don't need to speak words," says Antonis Sakkelaridou, coordinator of Steki.

With an estimated 60,000 refugees still in Greece—and the system to settle them in other countries within the European Union slow-moving at best—the work of the GEC's missions to refugees will continue well into the future. Financial support and volunteers are welcomed by the Greek Evangelical Church. Offers and inquiries should be made through the synod office: www.gec.gr ●

Aclamado e histórico el acuerdo de paz en Colombia

La Comunción Mundial de Iglesias Reformadas (CMIR) y sus iglesias miembro prometen continuar trabajando con la gente en Colombia para lograr una paz justa.

Chris Ferguson, secretario general de la CMIR, celebró el acuerdo de paz firmado en Colombia afirmando que “es un paso significativo para la paz y para la justicia de Colombia, América Latina y el mundo entero”.

El acuerdo pone fin al conflicto interno más largo en el mundo, medio siglo de conflicto entre las guerrillas de las FARC y el gobierno colombiano. Como parte del acuerdo, las FARC renunciaron a su lucha armada y buscarán sumarse al proceso político.

“La guerra terminó”, declaró Humberto de la Calle, el negociador en jefe por parte del gobierno colombiano, “es momento de darle una oportunidad a la paz”.

“Creo que hemos ganado la más hermosa de las batallas, la de la paz para Colombia. Termina la guerra con las armas y comienza el debate con las ideas”, dijo Iván Márquez, el negociador principal por parte de las FARC.

“Las negociaciones han sido largas y difíciles, pero nos dejan ver que es posible lograr una paz justa, incluso bajo las circunstancias más desafiantes”, dijo Ferguson. Antes de ser nombrado secretario general de la CMIR,

Ferguson sirvió durante tres años al Programa Ecuménico de Acompañamiento, apoyando y acompañando a comunidades en Colombia que eran víctimas de la violencia.

El acuerdo aborda las causas que originaron el conflicto, así como sus consecuencias. Incluye también un programa para miles de guerrilleros de las FARC, el cual tiene como principal objetivo lograr que dejen las armas y reinsertarlos en la sociedad colombiana. El gobierno se compromete a desarrollar programas que disminuyan la enorme desigualdad que se vive en el tan olvidado sector rural del país; asimismo, se compromete a incrementar las posibilidades de participación política de movimientos políticos pequeños, incluido el partido que las FARC pudieran crear una vez desmovilizadas.

“Este tratado de paz es muy importante porque pone fin a un conflicto que ha arrastrado a Colombia a una espiral de violencia, pobreza y muerte”, dijo Helis Barraza Díaz, moderador de la Iglesia Presbiteriana de Colombia y vicepresidente de la CMIR.

Desde hace mucho tiempo la Iglesia Presbiteriana de Colombia ha estado involucrada apoyando el proceso de

paz, así como con la justicia social que las FARC tanto han recalcado. “La iglesia ha estado activa ayudando a comunidades y personas que han sido desplazadas, defendiendo sus derechos y brindándoles asesoría legal”, dijo Barraza Díaz.

Por una beca del programa Otto per Mille de la Iglesia Valdense en Italia, la CMIR está ayudando a financiar esta constante labor, próximamente enfocándose a apoyar y verificar el proceso de paz. La Iglesia Presbiteriana de Colombia, incluidas sus congregaciones locales y sus organizaciones ecuménicas y civiles, trabajarán en las regiones más afectadas por el conflicto, verificando que los términos del tratado de paz sean realmente implementados.

“Como colombiano, le doy gracias a Dios por tener un acuerdo que sienta las bases para compensar a las víctimas

y construir la paz que es fruto de la justicia, donde el horror de las guerras que hemos vivido en Colombia no se repitan jamás”, dijo el Rev. Milton Mejía, miembro de la Iglesia Presbiteriana de Colombia y secretario general del Consejo Latinoamericano de Iglesias (CLAI).

Durante la reunión en La Habana, Cuba, en mayo, el Comité Ejecutivo de la CMIR se entrevistó con una



Partidarios de la paz de muchas confesiones rodean al presidente colombiano.

delegación de paz de las FARC, cuyo líder, Marcos León, dijo: “Contamos con ustedes, las iglesias, para que en conjunto con nuestras comunidades podamos lograr condiciones de vida dignas”.

“El acuerdo puso fin al periodo de conflicto, pero lograr que la paz perdure es cuestión de esfuerzo constante y a largo plazo, lo cual necesitará el apoyo de la comunidad internacional y del movimiento ecuménico”, dijo Ferguson. “Sin justicia social no habrá paz, y el camino que lleva a la justicia en Colombia es largo”.

Según Reuters, las FARC se levantaron en armas en 1964 para pelear en contra de la marcada desigualdad social y económica, de la que aún queda bastante rastro. Financiada por el tráfico de cocaína y los rescates cobrados por secuestros, el número de participantes de las FARC aumentó hasta 17,000 para fines de la década de los noventa, controlando gran parte del país. Las bandas criminales que surgieron de los grupos paramilitares de derecha, activos durante los peores periodos del conflicto, han tomado desde entonces algunas de las principales rutas para el tráfico de drogas. ●



Members of the *Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland* (EKD) met with WCRC leadership at the beginning of December to share plans for the coming year and explore possibilities for partnerships. Irmgard Schwaetzer, president of the EKD synod, noted the appropriateness of holding the 2017 General Council in Leipzig, Germany, as it is a “city of renewal and transformation...and shows that church can be a place where change starts for the whole of civil society.” ●



The WCRC welcomes to staff Rev. Moon-Ki Kim (left), seconded from Presbyterian Church in Korea, as the Coordinator for Peace and Development while wishing Doyoung Chung (of the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea) the best as he completes his internship year. ●



A capacity building workshop was held in Kigali, Rwanda, for members of the Africa Communion of Reformed Churches (ACRC). It was hosted by ACRC President Lydia Adajawah (centre) and was facilitated by the Reformed Partnership Fund. ●



Rev. Salome Twum (far left), a member of the WCRC Executive Committee, passed away in late November after a lengthy illness. Salome was an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. She served on both the Reformed Partnership Fund Committee and Communications Core Group of our Executive Committee and was also an active leader in the Africa Communion of Reformed Churches. ●



Chris Ferguson, WCRC general secretary, joins with other world religious leaders to light candles for peace at the conclusion of the International Meeting for Peace in Assisi, Italy, in September. ●



Two meetings between leaders and staff of the Council for World Mission and the WCRC were held over the fall, both aimed to deepen the working partnerships between the organizations. ●



Chris Ferguson
General Secretary

FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY

God's People Are Comforted

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

—Isaiah 40:1-5 (NRSV)

But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honour to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it.

—I Corinthians 12:24b-26 (NRSV)

In the last 6 months I have had the privilege to be with WCRC member churches in some of the most troubled parts of our world. Our churches in Colombia, North and South Korea and Lebanon and the Syria to name just a few. All witnessing to the good news of Jesus Christ in situations of war and violence that are amongst the worst and most protracted on the entire planet. We all know how troubled, broken and turbulent the world is, and I saw how great the burden and suffering in those contexts, but the churches are implacable in hope and work for justice, peace and reconciliation in the face of it all. One can't overstate the enormity of the suffering, human tragedy, displacement and pain, nor the yearning for peace.

There is also no minimizing the persistent, stubborn resurrection hope rooted in faith in God that leads our churches—with other churches, other faiths and other people of good will—to insist on ending the spiraling military violence and seeking dialogue and peaceful solutions based on justice and reconciliation.

The classic Advent text from Isaiah lands in the midst of the yearning and suffering grounding the hope that restoration, healing and peace are coming. And the suffering need that word of comfort. They need to know in this outrageously troubled, violent, death-dealing world that God's peace and justice are at hand.

Standing in the pulpit of the National Evangelical Church in Damascus, Syria, the need for the suffering to end was palpable—but so was the hope. I stood in a new pulpit, replacing the one destroyed by a missile two years ago. God's promises of comfort, peace and reconciliation felt real because members of the same Body of Christ had remembered this church in their prayers and sent funds for a new pulpit and new pews—but what they also sent was a renewal of hope. The certainty of God's presence through the love and solidarity of others in the same family. They witness for peace in a desperate situation without any doubt that they are NOT alone. That Jesus Christ in and through and with the WCRC family are with them. They know the truth and hope in the words "...when one suffers..."

This sense of solidarity and hope was also present in September, worshipping with two congregations in North Korea. And God's transforming presence in the midst of war shone forth in Colombia when the Presbyterian Church there boldly supported the peace process accompanied by other members of the WCRC family.

The WCRC is a worldwide family called to communion, committed to justice, making visible God's love in the midst of great suffering.

Thanks be to God!

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