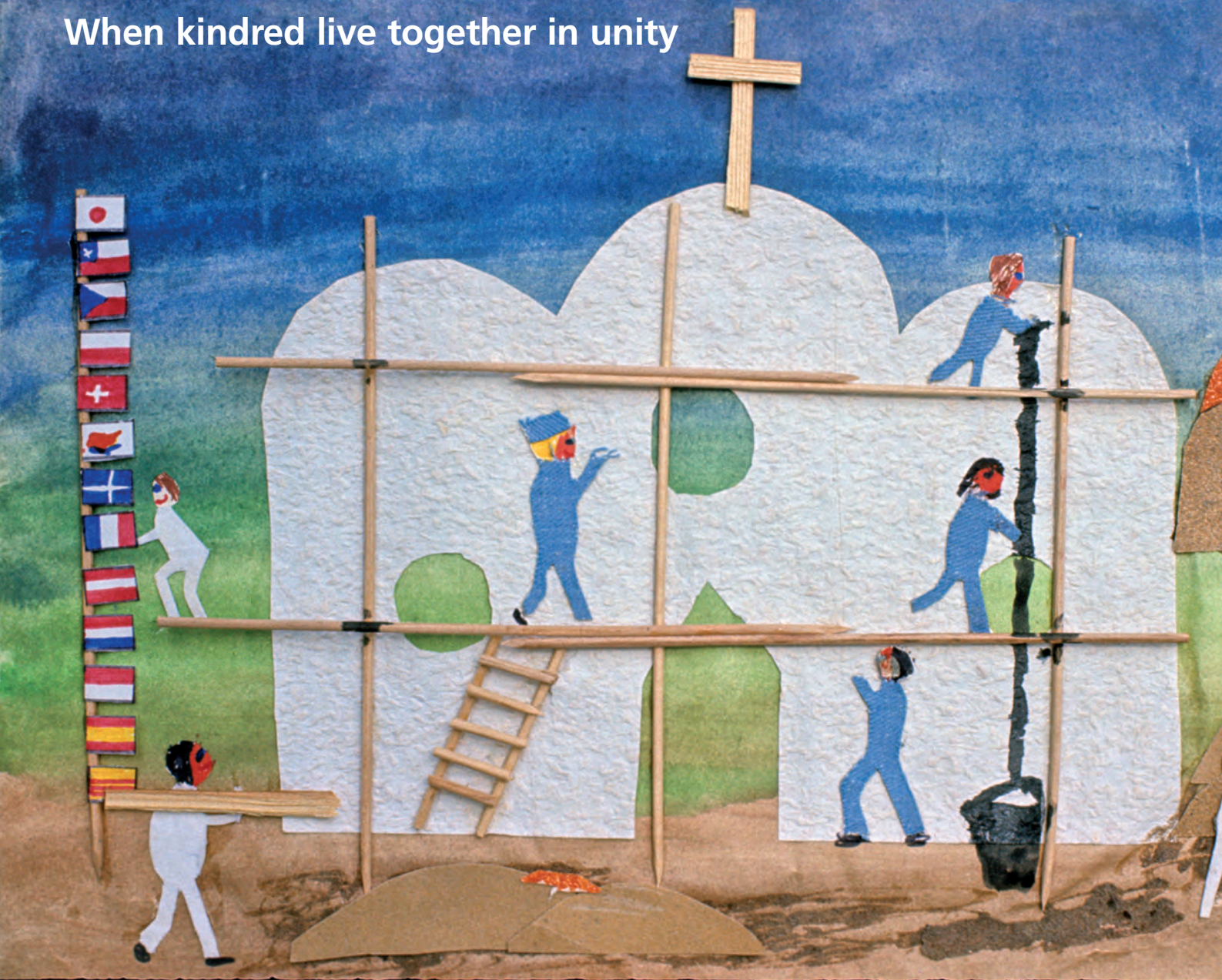


When kindred live together in unity



World Council of Churches
Annual Review 2008



THE WCC FELLOWSHIP OF CHURCHES

AFRICA

Africa Inland Church - Sudan
 African Christian Church and Schools [Kenya]
 African Church of the Holy Spirit [Kenya]
 African Israel Nineveh Church [Kenya]
 African Protestant Church [Cameroon]
 Anglican Church of Burundi

The World Council of Churches has 349 member churches representing 18 church families in more than 140 countries on six continents.

Anglican Church of Kenya
 Anglican Church of Southern Africa [South Africa]
 Anglican Church of Tanzania [Tanzania]
 Association of Baptist Churches in Rwanda [Rwanda]
 Association of Evangelical Reformed Churches of Burkina Faso
 Church of Christ - Harrist Mission (Harrist Church) [Ivory Coast]
 Church of Christ in Congo - Anglican Community of Congo [DRC]
 Church of Christ in Congo - Baptist Community of Congo [DRC]
 Church of Christ in Congo - Community of Disciples of Christ in Congo [DRC]
 Church of Christ in Congo - Evangelical Community of Congo [Republic of Congo]
 Church of Christ in Congo - Mennonite Community in Congo [DRC]
 Church of Christ in Congo - Presbyterian Community of Congo [DRC]
 Church of Christ in Congo - Presbyterian Community of Kinshasa [DRC]
 Church of Christ in Congo - Protestant Baptist Church in Africa/Episcopal Baptist Community in Africa [DRC]
 Church of Christ Light of the Holy Spirit [DRC]
 Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar
 Church of Jesus Christ on Earth by his Special Envoy Simon Kimbangu [DRC]
 Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)
 Church of the Brethren in Nigeria
 Church of the Lord (Aladura) Worldwide [Nigeria]
 Church of the Province of Central Africa [Zambia]
 Church of the Province of the Indian Ocean [Madagascar]
 Church of the Province of Uganda
 Church of the Province of West Africa [Ghana]
 Council of African Instituted Churches [South Africa]
 Episcopal Church of the Sudan
 Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Church

Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus
 Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church
 Evangelical Baptist Church in Angola
 Evangelical Church of Cameroon
 Evangelical Church of Congo [Republic of Congo]
 Evangelical Church of Gabon
 Evangelical Congregational Church in Angola
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in Congo [DRC]
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa [South Africa]
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe
 Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana
 Evangelical Pentecostal Mission of Angola
 Evangelical Presbyterian Church in South Africa
 Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Togo
 Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana
 Evangelical Reformed Church of Angola
 Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church
 Lesotho Evangelical Church
 Lutheran Church in Liberia
 Malagasy Lutheran Church [Madagascar]
 Methodist Church Ghana
 Methodist Church in Kenya
 Methodist Church in Zimbabwe
 Methodist Church Nigeria
 Methodist Church of Southern Africa [South Africa]
 Methodist Church of Togo
 Methodist Church Sierra Leone
 Moravian Church in South Africa
 Moravian Church in Tanzania
 Native Baptist Church of Cameroon
 Nigerian Baptist Convention
 Presbyterian Church in Cameroon
 Presbyterian Church in Rwanda
 Presbyterian Church of Africa [South Africa]
 Presbyterian Church of Cameroon
 Presbyterian Church of East Africa [Kenya]
 Presbyterian Church of Ghana
 Presbyterian Church of Liberia
 Presbyterian Church of Mozambique
 Presbyterian Church of Nigeria
 Presbyterian Church of the Sudan
 Protestant Church of Algeria
 Protestant Methodist Church of Benin
 Province of the Anglican Church of Rwanda
 Reformed Church in Zambia
 Reformed Church in Zimbabwe
 Reformed Church of Christ in Nigeria
 Reformed Presbyterian Church of Equatorial Guinea
 The African Church [Nigeria]
 Union of Baptist Churches in Cameroon
 United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe
 United Church of Zambia
 United Congregational Church of Southern Africa [South Africa]
 United Methodist Church of Ivory Coast
 Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa [South Africa]
 Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa [South Africa]

ASIA

Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia
 Anglican Church in Japan
 Anglican Church of Australia
 Anglican Church of Korea [Republic of Korea]
 Bangladesh Baptist Church Sangha Baptist Union of New Zealand
 Batak Christian Community Church (GPKB) [Indonesia]
 Bengal-Orissa-Bihar Baptist Convention [India]
 China Christian Council
 Christian Church of Central Sulawesi (GKST) [Indonesia]
 Christian Church of Sumba (GKS) [Indonesia]
 Christian Churches New Zealand
 Christian Evangelical Church in Minahasa (GMIM) [Indonesia]
 Christian Evangelical Church of Sangihe Talaud (GMIST) [Indonesia]
 Christian Protestant Angkola Church (GKPA) [Indonesia]
 Christian Protestant Church in Indonesia (GKPI)
 Church of Bangladesh [Bangladesh]
 Church of Ceylon [Sri Lanka]
 Church of Christ in Thailand
 Church of North India
 Church of Pakistan
 Church of South India
 Church of the Province of Myanmar
 Churches of Christ in Australia
 Convention of Philippine Baptist Churches
 East Java Christian Church (GKJW) [Indonesia]
 Episcopal Church in the Philippines
 Evangelical Christian Church in Halmahera (GMIH) [Indonesia]
 Evangelical Christian Church in Tanah Papua (GKITP) [Indonesia]
 Evangelical Methodist Church in the Philippines
 Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China
 Indonesian Christian Church (GKI)
 Indonesian Christian Church (HKI)
 Javanese Christian Churches (GKJ) [Indonesia]
 Kalimantan Evangelical Church (GKE) [Indonesia]
 Karo Batak Protestant Church (GBKP) [Indonesia]
 Korean Christian Church in Japan
 Korean Methodist Church
 Lao Evangelical Church
 Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church [India]
 Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar [India]
 Mara Evangelical Church [Myanmar]
 Methodist Church in India
 Methodist Church in Indonesia (GMI)
 Methodist Church in Malaysia
 Methodist Church in Singapore
 Methodist Church of New Zealand
 Methodist Church, Sri Lanka
 Methodist Church, Upper Myanmar
 Myanmar Baptist Convention
 Nias Christian Protestant Church (BNKP) [Indonesia]
 Orthodox Church in Japan
 Pasundan Christian Church (GKP) [Indonesia]
 Philippine Independent Church
 Presbyterian Church in Taiwan
 Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea

Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand
 Presbyterian Church of Korea
 Presbyterian Church of Pakistan
 Protestant Christian Batak Church (HKBP) [Indonesia]
 Protestant Christian Church in Bali (GKPB) [Indonesia]
 Protestant Church in Indonesia (GPI) [Indonesia]
 Protestant Church in the Moluccas (GPM) [Indonesia]

The total membership represents more than 550 million people. Among these Europe as a region and the Eastern Orthodox as a church family have the largest membership of churches within the WCC.

Protestant Church in Sabah [Malaysia]
 Protestant Church in South-East Sulawesi (GEPULTRA) [Indonesia]
 Protestant Church in Timor Lorosa'e [East Timor]
 Protestant Church in Western Indonesia (GPIB)
 Protestant Evangelical Church in Timor (GMIT) [Indonesia]
 Samavesam of Telugu Baptist Churches [India]
 Simalungun Protestant Christian Church (GKPS) [Indonesia]
 Toraja Church (GT) [Indonesia]
 United Church of Christ in Japan
 United Church of Christ in the Philippines
 United Evangelical Lutheran Church in India
 Uniting Church in Australia

CARIBBEAN

Church in the Province of the West Indies [Bahamas]
 Jamaica Baptist Union
 Methodist Church in Cuba
 Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas [Antigua and Barbuda]
 Methodist Church of Puerto Rico
 Moravian Church in Jamaica
 Moravian Church in Suriname
 Moravian Church, Eastern West Indies Province [Antigua and Barbuda]
 Presbyterian Church in Trinidad and Tobago
 Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba
 United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands
 United Protestant Church [Netherlands Antilles]

EUROPE

Armenian Apostolic Church (Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin)
 Baptist Union of Denmark
 Baptist Union of Great Britain
 Baptist Union of Hungary
 Catholic Diocese of the Old-Catholics in Germany
 Church in Wales
 Church of England
 Church of Greece
 Church of Ireland
 Church of Norway
 Church of Scotland
 Church of Sweden
 Czechoslovak Hussite Church [Czech Republic]
 Ecumenical Patriarchate
 Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church

Evangelical Baptist Union of Italy
 Evangelical Church in Germany
 - Bremen Evangelical Church
 - Church of Lippe
 - Evangelical Church in Baden
 - Evangelical Church in Berlin-Brandenburg-Silesian Oberlausitz
 - Evangelical Church in Central Germany
 - Evangelical Church in Hesse & Nassau
 - Evangelical Church in Rhineland
 - Evangelical Church of Anhalt
 - Evangelical Church of Kurhessen Waldeck
 - Evangelical Church of the Palatinate
 - Evangelical Church of Westphalia
 - Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria
 - Evangelical Lutheran Church in Brunswick
 - Evangelical Lutheran Church in Oldenburg
 - Evangelical Lutheran Church in Württemberg
 - Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hanover
 - Evangelical Lutheran Church of Mecklenburg
 - Evangelical Lutheran Church of Saxony
 - Evangelical Lutheran Church of Schaumburg-Lippe
 - Evangelical Reformed Church in Bavaria and North-West Germany
 - North Elbian Evangelical Lutheran Church
 - Pomeranian Evangelical Church
 Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren [Czech Republic]
 Evangelical Church of the Augsburg and Helvetic Confessions in Austria
 Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Poland
 Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Romania
 Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Slovakia
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark
 Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland
 Evangelical Lutheran Church of France
 Evangelical Lutheran Church of Iceland
 Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia
 Evangelical Methodist Church in Italy
 Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Portugal
 Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Romania
 Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches
 Greek Evangelical Church
 Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad [Germany]
 Lusitanian Church of Portugal
 Lutheran Church in Hungary
 Mennonite Church in Germany
 Mennonite Church in the Netherlands
 Methodist Church [United Kingdom]
 Methodist Church in Ireland
 Mission Covenant Church of Sweden
 Moravian Church in Western Europe [Germany]
 Old-Catholic Church in Austria
 Old-Catholic Church in the Netherlands
 Old-Catholic Church of Switzerland
 Old-Catholic Mariavite Church in Poland
 Orthodox Autocephalous Church of Albania
 Orthodox Church in the Czech Lands and Slovakia
 Orthodox Church of Finland
 Polish Autocephalous Orthodox Church in Poland

Polish Catholic Church in Poland
 Presbyterian Church of Wales
 Protestant Church in the Netherlands
 Protestant Church of the Augsburg Confession of Alsace and Lorraine [France]
 Reformed Christian Church in Serbia and Montenegro
 Reformed Christian Church in Slovakia
 Reformed Church in Hungary
 Reformed Church in Romania
 Reformed Church of France
 Reformed Protestant Church of Alsace and Lorraine [France]
 Remonstrant Brotherhood [Netherlands]
 Romanian Orthodox Church
 Russian Orthodox Church
 Scottish Episcopal Church
 Serbian Orthodox Church
 Silesian Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in the Czech Republic
 Slovak Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Serbia & Montenegro
 Spanish Evangelical Church
 Spanish Reformed Episcopal Church
 Union of Welsh Independents
 United Free Church of Scotland
 United Protestant Church of Belgium
 United Reformed Church [United Kingdom]
 Waldensian Church [Italy]

LATIN AMERICA

Anglican Church of the Southern Cone of America [Argentina]
 Association The Church of God [Argentina]
 Baptist Association of El Salvador
 Baptist Convention of Nicaragua
 Bolivian Evangelical Lutheran Church
 Christian Biblical Church [Argentina]
 Christian Reformed Church of Brazil
 Episcopal Anglican Church of Brazil
 Evangelical Church of the Disciples of Christ in Argentina
 Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil
 Evangelical Church of the River Plate [Argentina]
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chile
 Evangelical Methodist Church in Bolivia
 Evangelical Methodist Church of Argentina
 Free Pentecostal Missions Church of Chile
 Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil
 Methodist Church in Brazil
 Methodist Church in Uruguay
 Methodist Church of Chile
 Methodist Church of Mexico
 Methodist Church of Peru
 Moravian Church in Nicaragua
 Pentecostal Church of Chile
 Pentecostal Mission Church [Chile]
 Presbyterian Church of Colombia
 Salvadorean Lutheran Synod [El Salvador]
 United Evangelical Lutheran Church [Argentina]
 United Presbyterian Church of Brazil

MIDDLE EAST

Armenian Apostolic Church (Holy See of Cilicia) [Lebanon]
 Church of Cyprus
 Coptic Orthodox Church [Egypt]

Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East [Israel/Palestine]
 Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Iran
 Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Egypt, Synod of the Nile
 Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa [Egypt]
 Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East [Syrian Arab Republic]
 Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem [Israel/Palestine]
 National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon
 Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East
 Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East [Lebanon]

NORTH AMERICA

African Methodist Episcopal Church [USA]
 African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church [USA]
 American Baptist Churches in the USA
 Anglican Church of Canada
 Baptist Convention of Haïti [USA]
 Canadian Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
 Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Canada
 Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States of America
 Christian Methodist Episcopal Church [USA]
 Church of the Brethren [USA]
 Episcopal Church in the USA
 Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad [Canada]
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada
 Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East [USA]
 Hungarian Reformed Church in America
 Internationa Council of Community Churches [USA]

International Evangelical Church [USA]
 Moravian Church in America
 National Baptist Convention of America, Inc.
 National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.
 Orthodox Church in America
 Polish National Catholic Church [USA]
 Presbyterian Church USA
 Presbyterian Church in Canada
 Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc. [USA]
 Reformed Church in America
 Religious Society of Friends: Friends General Conference [USA]
 Religious Society of Friends: Friends United Meeting [USA]
 United Church of Canada
 United Church of Christ [USA]
 United Methodist Church [USA]

PACIFIC

Church of Melanesia [Solomon Islands]
 Congregational Christian Church in American Samoa
 Congregational Christian Church in Samoa
 Congregational Christian Church of Niue
 Congregational Christian Church of Tuvalu

Cook Islands Christian Church
 Evangelical Church in New Caledonia and the Loyalty Isles
 Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea
 Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga (Methodist Church in Tonga)
 Kiribati Protestant Church
 Maohi Protestant Church [French Polynesia]
 Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma
 Methodist Church of Samoa
 Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu
 United Church in Papua New Guinea
 United Church in the Solomon Islands
 United Church of Christ - Congregational in the Marshall Islands



The World Council of Churches (WCC) is a global fellowship of churches whose relationship and activities are an expression of their common faith in Jesus Christ.

The WCC is the broadest and most inclusive among many organized expressions of the modern ecumenical movement. It represents more than 550 million Christians. The fellowship includes most of the world's Orthodox churches, churches of the historic denominational traditions such as the Anglican, Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist, Reformed and many united and independent churches.

The Roman Catholic Church has a formal working relationship with the WCC but is not a member. There are emerging relationships with evangelical and Pentecostal churches not already in membership. Churches in the fellowship of the WCC pursue a vision of ecumenism which seeks visible unity in one faith and one eucharistic fellowship; promote a common witness in work for mission and evangelism; and engage in Christian service by meeting human need through WCC partner agencies, breaking down barriers between people, seeking justice and peace and upholding the integrity of creation.

The WCC was officially formed in 1948 by representatives of 147 churches gathered in its First Assembly in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Today the WCC has six programme areas.

- WCC and the Ecumenical Movement in the 21st Century
- Unity, Mission, Evangelism and Spirituality
- Public Witness: Addressing Power, Affirming Peace
- Justice, Diakonia and Responsibility for Creation
- Education and Ecumenical Formation
- Inter-Religious Dialogue and Cooperation

Each programme is rooted in a three-fold vision for transformation of the church and world. This vision is to live out Christian unity more fully, live as churches being neighbours to all through addressing threats to the human community and encouraging churches to take greater care of creation through protection of the earth and its people.



“How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!”
– Psalm 133:1, NRSV

Looking back on the early days of 2008, we rejoice that Christians joined in worldwide celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. This exercise in shared spirituality bears living testimony to how good and pleasant it is when believers demonstrate that we are truly one in Christ. I was privileged to represent the World Council of Churches at the Vatican for a service of common prayer and commemoration of this milestone in the quest for full Christian unity. This event coincided with a meeting of the Joint Working Group between the Roman Catholic Church and the WCC, a consultation of representatives drawn from many traditions who even now are exploring new opportunities for dialogue among the churches and their cooperation in mission to the whole creation.

Throughout the year the World Council of Churches observed its 60th anniversary. In a February celebration His All Holiness Bartholomew I, Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, reminded a near-capacity crowd at Geneva's St Pierre Cathedral that the WCC has accomplished much during the past six decades.

“The Council has provided an ideal platform where churches with different outlooks and a great variety of theological and ecclesiological traditions have been able to engage in dialogue and promote Christian unity,” he said.

The 60th anniversary gave us pause to reflect on how far the ecumenical movement has come since the Council was born in 1948 and where the Holy Spirit is leading as we proceed into the uncharted territory of the 21st century.



This annual report reflects some of the initiatives we have taken as a Council and shares some of the ways in which we have joined in partnership with others. We have endeavoured to confront the economic upheavals of our time, threats to our planet, offences against human rights and the proliferation of violence and warfare. We have travelled far and wide to stand in solidarity with the poor, the oppressed, the physically exhausted and those who mourn. We have also promoted greater visible unity among Christians through theological consultation and the experience of life together. In 2008 we wept with those who weep, yet we also found cause for joy in many opportunities given us by God.

I visited the 2008 World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland to speak frankly with political and financial leaders; at the same time, the Council was instrumental in preparations for the 2009 World Social Forum and related events in Belém, Brazil. Concern over climate change has taken me and many ecumenical partners from conference rooms in Helsinki, to talks with indigenous leaders in Latin America, to encounters with the people of Pacific island churches. We have stood in solidarity with Christians and their neighbours caught up in conflict, from Gaza to Sri Lanka, and we have borne witness to Christ's will for peace with justice in tense cities on every continent. This past year saw tragic scenes of internal turmoil in too many places, north and south, including my home country of Kenya. We have worked with international bodies and national churches to address the roots and consequences of such troubles.

As you will see in these pages, there is reason for hope despite the many challenges that face us. Young people are demanding fuller participation in finding solutions to the problems of this age. New conversations are opening up between factions within divided churches. Inter-religious discussions and understanding are more and more in evidence, with a proposal

for a United Nations "Decade" for inter-religious dialogue and cooperation for peace. Ecumenical efforts, particularly in Africa, are yielding results in the establishment of HIV-competent churches and defining the role of congregations as they support local healthcare and sustainable communities. I am grateful to have been able to play a part in these ecumenical activities and in so many others.

In May 2008, Desmond Tutu visited the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva to honour the Council and its 60th anniversary. Before becoming an archbishop, he served on the staff of the WCC. Watching him interact with a group of schoolchildren who were also visiting the World Council that day, one could sense both the history and potential of Christian fellowship lived within the providence of God. Archbishop Tutu reminded an audience made up of the children and members of the Ecumenical Centre staff, "We in South Africa would not be free if it had not been for the support of the WCC." He added, "Evil, injustice, oppression, all of those awful things, are not going to have the last word. Goodness, laughter, joy, caring, compassion, the things that you do and you help others do, those are going to prevail."

We hope that the information presented in this report will leave you with the sort of enthusiasm and determination exhibited by Archbishop Desmond Tutu during his visit. And may the grace, communion and love of God be with us all throughout the coming year. ■

*Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia
General Secretary
World Council of Churches*





2008 Highlights

Living letters carry hope

Eleven ecumenical delegations traveled to locations around the world where Christians strive to overcome violence. These “Living Letters” teams composed of WCC member church representatives visited Kenya, Sudan, Germany, Indonesia, Uganda, Liberia and Sierra Leone, Nicaragua, South Africa, Pakistan, Haiti and Colombia. In the first such visit in 2008, a “Living Letters” delegation to Kenya witnessed the country’s fragile return to peace after disputed elections sparked devastating violence along ethnic lines. For Rev. Canon Peter Karanja, general secretary of the National Council of Churches of Kenya, Kenyans “need to understand that the interests of any ethnic community are linked to all the others and that the country is large enough for all of us to have a place.”

Forging religious encounters among young people

During three weeks in July, 22 young people from four continents and three religious backgrounds lived, ate and reflected together on religious prejudices, differences and common values at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey. The intense inter-religious dialogue, facilitated by Geneva-based and international Christian, Muslim and Jewish experts emphasized the importance of encountering and understanding more about other religions. Participants were encouraged to carry these experiences back to their home communities.

Witnessing to the peace of God in Oceania

Churches around the world prayed for the peoples of the Pacific as the 2008 regional focus of the Decade to Overcome Violence. Prayers and worship resources from a variety of denominations in the region were collected and shared, particularly for the International Day of Prayer for Peace on 21 Sept. A Stories of Peace competition invited children and young people to depict through art what “peace in the Pacific” meant to them.

Exploring the “Promised Land”

A conference held in Bern, Switzerland, on “Promised Land” aired different theological approaches to this key issue in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. A key result of the discussions by church leaders and theologians was a better understanding of the question of land in the Bible, in theology and in the conflict. The Bible “must not be utilized to justify oppression or supply simplistic commentary on contemporary events,” the final declaration states.

A need for water is shared by all

The first Ecumenical Water Network Summer School was held at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey bringing more than 20 young men and women from 18 countries together for eight days of intense learning about the global water crisis. Participants came from privileged countries where a constant supply of clean water is taken for granted and from countries where water scarcity is a daily fact of life. The Summer School generated enormous energy among a new generation of Christian leaders. The participants committed themselves to take up water issues in their home churches and youth networks.



Respecting democracy and decrying violence

Ecumenical election observers organized by the WCC and the All Africa Conference of Churches for the 29 March elections in Zimbabwe reported that the balloting was “far from being free and fair” and that the current scenario in the country created “a dangerous vacuum that could lead to total disintegration of the nation.” As the situation in Zimbabwe deteriorated the WCC called on Zimbabwean leaders and the international community to place the welfare of the people of Zimbabwe as a priority.

Seeking healing words and actions

A WCC pastoral delegation visited Russia and Georgia in early September to listen to WCC member churches in both countries, encourage their efforts for peace and visit people displaced by the violent dispute over South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Earlier, a joint statement by the WCC and the Conference of European Churches affirmed the interventions of the Russian Orthodox Church, the Georgian Orthodox Church as well as the Evangelical Baptist

Church of Georgia, all of which had called for a ceasefire, a negotiated solution to the conflict and urgent relief for those affected.

UN and WCC relationships strengthened

UN secretary-general Ban Ki-moon visited the WCC offices in Geneva in March and discussed closer cooperation between the two organizations, particularly in the areas of climate change and democratic electoral processes. “We would like to maintain a close partnership with the WCC,” Ban Ki-moon stated. “You have a high moral power and what you are doing is based on your Christian beliefs.”

Strengthening cooperation with the Roman Catholic Church

The Joint Working Group (JWG) between the WCC and Roman Catholic Church met twice in 2008 to develop its agenda and a work plan leading up to the next WCC Assembly. In addition to work on the spiritual roots of ecumenism and exploring the “reception” of 40 years of cooperation, the JWG is also focusing on strengthening ecumenical youth participation, for example during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and Catholic World Youth Day and connecting to WCC work on migration and its ecclesial significance.

Search opens for new WCC general secretary

A search committee was formed at the February meeting of the WCC central committee after the current general secretary, Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia, announced he would not seek a second term in office. An invitation to nominate candidates for the position was sent to all member churches, and the new general secretary is to be elected at the central committee meeting to be held from 26 August to 2 September 2009.

Responding to the crisis in Gaza

Building on its decades of work advocating for a just and lasting peace for Palestinians and Israelis, the WCC spoke urgently in 2008 about the worsening situation in Gaza. A central committee statement in February called for “an immediate lifting of the blockade” that was greatly restricting the movement of people, goods and essential services to and from Gaza. When the Israeli military began an intensive

“bombardment of one of the most densely populated places on earth,” WCC general secretary Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia condemned the violence and called on “governments in the region and abroad” to see to the protection of “those who are at risk [...] on both sides of the border”.

Singing for peace

Giving voice and energy to peacemaking, Caribbean Christians joined together in a festival of songs and prayers for peace in July. The workshop helped to develop liturgical material for the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation which will take place in May 2011 in Jamaica. Basing material on the “real-life situations of worshippers and worship leaders”, the workshop took place at the evangelical theological seminary in Matanzas, Cuba, at the invitation of the Cuban Council of Churches and the seminary. The event was jointly organized by the WCC and the Red Create network (Latin America) with the financial support of FEAUTOR (USA).



The World Council of Churches and the Ecumenical Movement in the 21st Century

Visible unity of the church remains a central goal of the ecumenical movement and the WCC. Through the WCC churches and other ecumenical partners find a platform to pray, reflect, plan and move towards visible unity. This unity strengthens the witness of the church.

The WCC encourages relationships with and among WCC member churches, Christian world communions, other churches and ecumenical agencies to support ecumenical initiatives at local, national and regional levels. The insights and vision of youth and women are emphasized, particularly as the WCC engages churches and partners in intensive reflection and application of new approaches and vision for ecumenism in the 21st century.



Young leaders bring new energy to ecumenism – WCC interns

“You have the entire world in one single place”, states Henrik Hansson of the Church of Sweden, describing what drew him to work for one year with the WCC in Geneva as an intern. “I thought of this as a way to experience how worldwide the church is.”

For the three young people who worked within the WCC during 2008, it was definitely an “eye-opening” experience, as Ginger Porter of the Congregational Christian Church, American Samoa, reflects. “It was something brand new to me – the WCC, the ecumenical movement.”

The WCC internship programme is one way youth contribute their ideas and gain experience in the worldwide ecumenical movement. Their active participation in programme areas like the Decade to Overcome Violence, youth, communication and member relations gives them an opportunity to work and learn in an international, multiconfessional setting. “I recommend it for everybody,” says Antsa Rakotoarisoa, from the Anglican Church in Madagascar. “During one year you can learn much about the churches, ecumenism and Jesus Christ.”

The involvement of young people also gives the WCC valuable ideas and energy. As Martin Robra, director of the programme on the WCC and the Ecumenical Movement in the 21st Century states, “This is not token youth participation; this is strong engagement and full contribution to the work of the WCC.”

“Youth have always had a role in this whole movement, since the beginning,” emphasizes Porter. “It was a youth movement that spurred the ecumenical movement, and I think it has always been a nudge, not necessarily a powerful one at certain points...but it has always been there and it will always be there.”

Following the WCC’s Ninth Assembly in Brazil, young people are increasingly involved throughout WCC activities. In addition to the internship programme they act as stewards for major WCC meetings. A new youth commission, ECHOS, also enables young people to develop their visions of the ecumenical movement and strengthen their role in the decision-making mechanisms of the WCC.

“I think the WCC has a lot to offer youth,” says Porter. “I think the churches in the world open up a lot of opportunities for youth. It is a matter of actually implementing them and actually giving the youth the opportunity to rise again and to do things.”

If there is one recurring characteristic young people bring, it’s the sense of action. “I think youth are more ‘let’s take some action’ rather than just taking time, ‘let’s discuss this,’” says Porter.

Or, as Hansson puts it, “Most young people are quite pragmatic and we haven’t gained so much status and power – we don’t have so much to lose and so we are more action oriented.” Hanson says that being action oriented is also connected to “thinking outside the box” and not feeling so bound by institutional memories. “You can’t live on old merits” he states, and this gives an opportunity for a “fresh start” for the ecumenical movement in the 21st century. ■

Helping men become better partners

Meeting in Malawi in September, 35 men and women from Africa, Asia and the Caribbean emphasized the call for men to be partners with women in the fight against gender inequality and violence. Noting that patriarchy in all spheres of society has been the dominant influence in shaping men and oppressing women, the workshop challenged churches to address critically and theologically patriarchal attitudes and structures that have contributed to “gender disparity, discrimination and violence.” The workshop marks a shift from an exclusive look at women’s empowerment towards a discourse on partnership between women and men.

Essay winners provide new prospects for ecumenism

Ideas for “bringing unity down to earth”, “communicative action” and a “theology of the wilderness” were among the winning entries submitted for an essay contest on Prospects for Ecumenism in the 21st Century. The winners, two women and four men, come from Africa, Asia, Europe and North America. The essay contest was part of the commemoration of the WCC’s 60th anniversary. More than 50 young theologians from 36 churches in 24 countries submitted papers. The essays have been published online and in print, and the winners discussed their ideas at an international consultation on Ecumenism in the 21st Century in January 2009 in Belém, Brazil. Participants in the contest gave “hope, inspiration and leadership” to the ecumenical movement, WCC general secretary Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia wrote in a letter announcing the six winners: “This is the best birthday gift the WCC could receive.”

Lighting “new fire” in North America

Over 40 young adults from some 17 different church communions in North America gathered in advance of the National Council of Churches USA General Assembly in a three-day ecumenical formation event entitled New Fire. The vibrant ecumenical dialogue, shared prayer and worship has marked the start of a new and exciting direction for young adult ecumenism throughout the region – not least through a new website, www.FaithConnectsUs.org, and Facebook page that promotes ecumenical awareness, education and relationships.



Nurturing the growing fellowship of churches – new member churches

Two church communions from opposite sides of the globe were welcomed into full fellowship of the WCC by the central committee in February 2008, increasing the membership of the WCC to 349.

But membership of the WCC is not just about numbers. It is about expanding and strengthening the sense of fellowship among Christians worldwide. Each member contributes to, and receives inspiration from, the vast and diverse expressions of faith and witness to Jesus Christ.

The newest members of the WCC are the Independent Presbyterian Church in Brazil and the Lao Evangelical Church. Under the WCC’s new membership guidelines, both churches were received for an interim period at the September 2006 central committee meeting, allowing for a time of interaction and further evaluation.

The Lao Evangelical Church is the first WCC member from Laos, a nation of some 6 million people. Growing out of mission work from the late 19th century, it was formally established in 1956 and today has approximately 100,000 members in 300 congregations. It is the largest denomination in the country officially recognized by the government.

“Ecumenism is not new to us,” says the church’s president, Mr Khamphone Kounthapanya. In addition to being members of the Christian Conference of Asia, the church works with the other officially recognized churches in Laos, the Catholic Church and the Seventh Day Adventists. “We have no problems. We always come together,” he states, and continues pragmatically, “If we fight, the government is going to close down all of us.”

The Independent Presbyterian Church in Brazil has about 95,000 members and 500 congregations. It formally organized in 1903, developing a variety of mission projects, social work and education programmes over the next century. It is the sixth WCC member church from Brazil, which hosted the WCC’s Ninth Assembly in 2006.

Their membership has been long in development. “As a matter of fact, our church participated in all WCC assemblies since New Delhi (1961), always as an observer,” says Rev. Assir Pereira, president of the church. But “only in our last Assembly was the decision taken, almost unanimously, to request full membership with the Council.”

Pereira reflects that while some were frustrated over such a long delay in joining the WCC, it was crucially important to bring the whole church together in the decision. “Today I understand that a sensitizing process was needed, a gradual growing up of our church, before we could achieve it. And it is important that the decision was made with such broad support, without a split, with the awareness that the moment was ripe to make this commitment to contribute to the ecumenical movement through the World Council of Churches.”

Through involvement in WCC programmes, visits to member churches, participation in governing body meetings, reflection and prayer and actions of solidarity in times of crisis, the WCC member churches live out Jesus’ prayer of unity, “so that the world may believe”. ■

Unity, Mission, Evangelism and Spirituality

The WCC calls on its member churches to strive to reach visible unity, working together for more faithful mission in the world and a deepening of the spiritual dimensions of their lives.

In concert with the WCC Faith and Order Commission, Commission of World Mission and Evangelism, Ecumenical Disabilities Network, other partners and networks involved in overcoming various forms of discrimination and exclusion, the WCC engages a wide range of Christians in exploring the realities of our faith and witness together.



Celebrating a century of prayer for Christian unity

After 100 years of prayers for Christian unity, there are still unprecedented opportunities. From new local initiatives and special global events, to a venture into cyberspace, the 2008 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity lived out its theme, “Pray without ceasing,” as new energy and recommitment were gathered for its next century.

In Rome, WCC general secretary Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia joined Pope Benedict XVI in praying for Christian unity at a vespers service presided over by the Pope – a tangible sign of the spirit of cooperation between the WCC and the Vatican that has marked the 40 years of joint production of the liturgical materials for the Week. There was also a celebration in Geneva organized by the WCC and local churches with testimonies of ecumenical involvement in different parts of the world.

While bringing greetings in Rome from the WCC fellowship of churches, Kobia underlined the importance of “a church that is one and united in its witness” in a world marked by violence and disunity.

New and rising leaders in the churches and the ecumenical movement also contributed energy for unity. For the first time, the major global Christian student and youth organizations, including the WCC youth desk, issued a joint call to prayer and action to encourage young people worldwide to come together and express Christian unity at local and national levels. A page on the social networking website “Facebook” connected young people around the world in sharing plans and prayers for the week.

Towards the end of the week, in a letter to church leaders, the youth organizations reaffirmed the need “to focus on that which unites us and work together in a spirit of openness and respect”. They said their organizations “affirm the importance of this expression of unity and celebrate that young people have always been pioneers of the movement for ecumenism”. The letter expresses the hope that people around the world will continue to build on the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity through “concrete actions”.

Such concrete actions are often the fruit of local celebrations. For worshippers in Yealand, a small village in the northwest of England, their first celebration of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity had a significant impact.

Catherine King Ambler, clerk of the local Quaker meeting, acknowledged that despite several attempts it had been difficult for the Church of England, Catholic and Quaker communities to come together in a joint service. The 100th anniversary of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, though, provided an opportunity that “enabled some deeper spiritual contact with each other”. The three churches conducted a prayer pilgrimage, drawing on the theme and prayers in the materials produced by the WCC and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. It “felt much more sincere and participatory”, reflects Ambler. The activities of the week have led to a longer-term joint project.

“The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity really facilitated a good opportunity for getting to know each other,” says Ambler. “Barriers have been broken down.” ■



Going the second mile in unity

The 8th consultation of United and Uniting Churches convened by Faith and Order was held in Johannesburg, South Africa, at the end of 2008. It brought together 25 uniting churches from 20 countries together with observers from the Roman Catholic Church and the Organization of African Instituted Churches. The conference was hosted by the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa and the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa. Their experiences in seeking unity, reconciliation and justice in the context of apartheid were a poignant lesson and guide for future efforts. The consultation acknowledged that a “changing landscape asks for new approaches and a renewed commitment to unity” and asked each of us, “What could keep us, in our different contexts, from going further, yet another mile on the road to full visible unity?”

Exploring mission now and in the future

Direct exposure to the reality of Dalit and Adivasi communities, along with theological discussion on the Indian church, its mission thinking and practice, profoundly impacted the discussions of the WCC Commission of World Mission and Evangelism (CWME), which met in Bangalore, India, in October. Decisions influenced WCC planning for the centennial mission conference in 2010 at Edinburgh and proposals for a mission event in 2012 in advance of the WCC’s 10th Assembly in 2013. The commission held several joint sessions with ECHOS, the WCC Youth Commission, which was meeting at the same time, and CWME was invigorated by the exchanges, initiatives and suggestions from the young ecumenists.

Re-visioning justice from the margins

Theologians, academics, pastors and community leaders representing the Dalit community, indigenous peoples, people living with disabilities and people struggling with racism met together in a WCC consultation in August aimed at re-visioning justice for the 21st century. The participants of the consultation, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in partnership with Koinonia Ecumenical Presence and Service, brought their own direct experiences of injustice in churches and communities across the globe and were further challenged by the violent realities faced by Afro-Brazilian young people. As the participants concluded, “God is just, Christ who was sent by God is just and the church which is called to follow the way of Christ should be just.”

Exploring ancient theological roots in new ways

“Just as all Christians are brought together in the one body of Christ, so too are the Indigenous Christians who are crying out for their rightful place in the mainstream churches,” says Evelyn Parkin of Australia.

Parkin was one of more than 30 participants from 16 countries representing indigenous communities in a WCC consultation on the “Ecclesial and Social Vision of Indigenous Peoples” held in October in the Philippines. While the WCC has long advocated for the rights and inclusion of indigenous peoples, particularly through the United Nations, the consultation was an important step in fully recognizing and including their theological insights among the worldwide fellowship of churches.

“Someone once said that the church is like a bird flying with one wing that continuously flies in circles. The bird needs to have both wings to balance,” says Parkin. “For me the church is a bit like this – until Indigenous Christians are accepted and become a part of the church, it too, is left in an imbalanced order.”

The consultation explored commonalities and differences among indigenous theologians and noted those that particularly contributed to a wider Christian perspective, such as “stewardship”, in which indigenous theologians can help “to rethink the way we live in the world.” As the report noted, “our value of community in the journey of Christian pilgrimage can show the church a renewed sense of hope for its ecclesiological understandings. Sharing, community and love of one’s neighbour are areas where our indigenous values can inform the Christian theological task.”

Hosted by the National Council of Churches in the Philippines, the consultation was called in response to the WCC’s Ninth Assembly recommendation for theological input from an indigenous perspective to strengthen the life and witness of the WCC.

Juan Jacobo Tancara from Chile reflected that in his context of Pentecostal indigenous churches, “ecumenism is still very rare and the revalorization of indigenous spirituality sounds, at least in the discourse, dangerous.”

As Parkin stated, it impacted her “knowing that I belong to the much bigger picture of Indigenous Christians across the globe I see the Spirit moving across the waters drawing all into the one voice for the Indigenous peoples’ struggles.”

For Tancara, the consultation was personally significant as he “had never been in an international meeting like this before.” And, he hopes that “the diversity of ideas and the shared will of a fairer healthier land, a strong awareness of the destructive process where extreme capitalism is taking us, and the shared ideas that are presented in the document” will promote common understanding and joint action among indigenous peoples and the wider Christian community. ■



Public Witness: Addressing Power, Affirming Peace

Environmental disasters and climate change, food insecurity, economic injustice, poverty, exclusion and violence are part of our world today. The WCC voices the churches' concerns on the international level by challenging the economic, social, political and cultural powers that exist while offering a prophetic witness for justice, peace and security.

Accompaniment continues in Israel-Palestine

Ecumenical accompaniers live and stand with Muslim and Christian Palestinians and Israeli Jews in daily activities and non-violent protest against the occupation. In 2008, 111 people served as accompaniers, bringing the total number of accompaniers over the six-year programme to 498 individuals carrying out 598 periods of service. The EAPPI is a collaboration of the Heads of Churches in Jerusalem, the WCC, the sending churches and agencies in 17 countries. In 2008, accompaniers from Hungary participated for the first time, and a new Arabic language newsletter was issued, joining the regular English updates that help raise awareness of the stark realities in this disputed land.

United Nations advocacy week

Advocacy for justice, peace, the abolition of poverty and the preservation of the ecology becomes more effective when churches and their partners combine forces to interpret the gospel's demands for the present day. In November, 120 people representing a variety of confessional traditions and diverse nationalities spent six days participating in the WCC's fourth annual United Nations Advocacy Week (UNAW) in New York. It was an opportunity for strategic planning and dialogue with representatives of the UN and related networks of activists.

The UNAW provides an evolving model of ecumenical collaboration and a significant moment for expressing concerns and addressing questions of power, inequality and structural injustice throughout the world. As the global financial crisis of 2008 turned the media's focus to stock exchanges, banks and centres of government, advocates of the poor and dispossessed took this opportunity to remind international leaders that for the poor this was not a threat to privileged lifestyles but literally a matter of life and death.

Dr Robert C. Orr, the UN's assistant secretary-general for strategic planning and policy coordination, spoke at one of UNAW's discussion sessions. "In times of crisis," he observed, "people tend to look inward and seek to protect their own families and communities. You need to help people fight this instinct, because we can cope with this crisis only if we look outward and all work together."

Founded by the WCC's Commission of the Churches on International Affairs in 2003, the advocacy week at the UN in New York has among its stated goals the gathering of churches and ecumenical partners in a forum dedicated to common advocacy on global issues. It is also intended to deepen theological and ethical insights concerning identified priorities, build the capacity and understanding of Christians with regard to advocacy within the UN system and create opportunities for dialogue with the UN member states and related agencies.

The UNAW's advocacy areas in 2008 included human rights, migration and the continuing violence in Sri Lanka. The week's events moved through four phases: (1) setting the context for common strategic, global, ecumenical advocacy, (2) deepening common understanding of priority advocacy issues, (3) engaging as one in ecumenical advocacy and (4) setting common commitments for networking and follow-up.

The six-day programme resulted in many participants planning and undertaking regional and inter-regional projects on such problems as upholding the rights of migrant workers, the affirmation of indigenous cultures, youth and gender issues, the intersection of climate change and economic justice, as well as the search for peace amid conflicts like that in Sri Lanka. ■



Peace declaration encourages church reflection

“Peace is a gift of God. The churches’ responding to that gift reveals their vocation to be peace-builders in the *missio Dei*.” Drawing on biblical, theological and historical insights, the “Initial Statement Towards an Ecumenical Declaration on Just Peace” developed by an international drafting group has been sent to WCC member churches and other interested partners for a year of reflection and feedback. A revised draft will be presented at the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation (IEPC), May, 2011, in Jamaica, that will mark the conclusion of the Decade to Overcome Violence – and, it is hoped, the beginning of a new phase of church initiatives for peace.

Reducing the nuclear threat

When considering the dangers of nuclear weapons, the role of African countries may not come immediately to mind. Yet the continent is poised to change the nuclear landscape – for the better. In October a WCC delegation met with top government officials in Namibia which has the potential to become the world’s largest exporter of uranium. Its ratification of the Africa Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty will mean that only one more government’s ratification is needed to bring the treaty into force. The treaty is designed to help Namibia and other African states manage and protect their uranium resources. Ratification will also mean that the number of countries covered by Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zones will double, to 110, including the entire southern hemisphere. This will be a powerful witness from the Global South against the most powerful weapons in the world.

Empowering people to demand their human rights

On 28 April 2007, Jonas Burgos was having lunch alone at a restaurant in his town in the Philippines when four armed men and one woman in civilian clothes forced him into a car. The license plate of the car was eventually traced to a local army battalion. Despite strong evidence of military involvement in Jonas’ disappearance, no one was brought to justice and nothing more was heard or seen of him until almost a year later. A friend of the family working in the military showed them an army document that listed Jonas as an insurgent who had been “neutralized” – a military term for killed. Jonas, a local organic farmer, had been giving technical training to local members of a peasant movement that the Philippine government and armed forces labeled a “front” organization for the Communist Party.

Jonas’ story is one of over 900 extrajudicial killings and almost 200 enforced disappearances from 2001 to 2007 in the Philippines. Many of the victims were political activists and human rights defenders, including church leaders. Jonas’ mother, Dr Edita Burgos, and several other family members of victims were members of WCC-supported delegations to the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in 2008.

“I went with the ecumenical delegation to Geneva to give a face to the victims,” said Dr Burgos in her reflections on the trip. “I did not know what to say before the UNHRC. I am just another mother looking for her son.” But in side events, visits with missions and personal testimony, Dr Burgos and the other members laid out the chilling facts of case after case of death and disappearance. And face to face with the Philippine government delegation, Dr Burgos challenged their suggestion to “debate” the issue of enforced disappearances: “I told them what is there to debate about! Even if you accuse my son of being a communist he is still a human being who has rights.” After her words, the UN hall was silent.

The WCC has been one of many church and ecumenical groups supporting the churches in the Philippines in their outspoken and persistent pursuit of truth and justice. Pastoral and political solidarity over several years led in 2008 to facilitation of the preparation and participation of several delegations acting as part of the UNHRC’s Universal Periodic Review of the Philippines.

Through technical and material support, the WCC enables those most affected by injustice to plead their own case effectively before international forums. Mervin Sol Toquero, assistant programme secretary for the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), notes that the WCC’s offices in New York and Geneva provided the necessary support for the delegations to engage with the UNHRC, from the planning and writing stages of the extensive report, “Let the Stones Cry Out”, to organizing side events and submitting official interventions to the UN body.

The personal testimony that accompanied the delegation’s documentation made an even more powerful impact. Rev. Rex Reyes, Jr, general secretary of the NCCP and a member of the delegations to the UN, stated in reflections on the launch of the book “Let the Stones



Linking poverty, wealth and ecology

A WCC study examining the interconnections between poverty, wealth and ecology in Ecuador, Brazil and Costa Rica, proposes a “greed line” alongside the “poverty line” as a guideline for Christians. The October consultation, which included Latin American, Caribbean Protestant and Roman Catholic church representatives, also featured hearings by Indigenous People, women and youth. The discussions led participants to affirm that just peace and ecological debt are critical action points for the churches. The consultation, which is part of the AGAPE (Alternative to Economic Globalization Addressing Peoples and Earth) process, was co-organized by the WCC with the Council of Churches in Latin America and was hosted by the Ecumenical Christian Council of Guatemala.

Taking action for peace in Palestine and Israel

For a week in June, churches in 40 countries joined in prayer, seminars, concerts, lobbying efforts and other activities with a common message, “It’s time for Palestinians and Israelis to share a just peace.” The week of action joined WCC member churches with the networks of Pax Christi International and World Vision International. Many in the networks sent prayers and wishes for peace to Bethlehem to be shared in local schools and churches. Some of the messages were read in Manger Square on June 8, where local Palestinians and international friends formed a “living clock” to commemorate six decades of living as refugees and 41 years under occupation.

Cry Out” that “a major factor that contributed to the credibility” of their delegations was the inclusion and active participation of the relatives of victims.” The book itself is not only a record of injustice but is intended as a reference for other groups bringing their concerns to the United Nations.

A reduction in the rate of killings suggests that international pressure is having an effect, but it has not yet been enough. Reyes concludes from the delegations’ experiences: “It taught us that vigilance and faithfulness to truth still remain important parts of the conduct of the struggle for peace and justice. And it taught us the necessity of global response to the human rights crisis in any country.”

For Edita Burgos, her search for her son continues, yet she has hope. “I can see a growth in impact of the ecumenical delegation because of the perseverance of the team and the support of the international community,” she reflects in the concluding chapter of “Let the Stones Cry Out”. As she considers the task still ahead in bringing to justice the individuals and institutions behind the violence, she states, “That is why it is important for people to be aware. It will be the action of people combined with prayer that will dismantle these institutions.” ■

Justice, Diakonia and Responsibility for Creation

The WCC calls for an ecumenical commitment to justice. Through work with individuals and affected communities, churches and partners, the WCC assists people in transforming their own lives by meeting immediate human need, enabling churches to work together to address the structural roots of injustice and helping people and organizations at all levels to identify and combat threats to creation.



Reflecting on the Church, Prevention and AIDS

The Ecumenical HIV and AIDS Initiative in Africa (EHAIA) is leading an effort to promote “HIV-competent” churches through training and resources that build the capacity of the faith community to deal appropriately and compassionately with issues of HIV prevention, care and support. One such training, with church leaders and professionals responding to AIDS, took place in Togo in November for churches in francophone Africa. In this one of many such sub-regional and national events, participants envision a church that becomes “a laboratory from which flow...innovations and new ideas” that give hope, especially for those in Africa.

Preserving the gift of creation

“The storms and waves eat away our beaches, and as they continue they will some day eat us,” states Rev. Baranite Karate from Kiribati, one of three Pacific Island countries facing immediate threat from rising sea levels. For his community and many others already vulnerable to changes in weather patterns, climate change is not just a statistical probability but a fact with devastating consequences. In Kiribati, those living on the coast have already had to move further inland as floods are more frequent and intense. At the same time diseases and extreme heat have become more common. The prospect of being refugees is more acute as the place the people call home progressively disappears beneath rising waters.

The WCC has addressed environmental issues and climate change for nearly two decades, bringing a moral and faith-based voice to United Nations (UN) climate change forums which work at establishing agreements, commitment and urgent action to reverse the effects human activity has on climate change. The voice and experience of Pacific churches have added to the urgency of the ecumenical message. At the December UN conference on the Kyoto Protocol the WCC told delegates “much more radical steps” must be taken.

In February the WCC central committee addressed global warming and climate change by building on previous statements of the WCC to emphasize the need for immediate action by governments and for a “profound change in the relationship towards nature, economic policies, consumption, production and technological patterns.” The responsibilities lie with all of us, from our individual “ecological footprint” through “parishes, corporations and states,” the central committee said.

Following the lead of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the central committee named 1 September as a special day of prayer and action for the care and stewardship of creation. As His All Holiness, the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, wrote in his encyclical for that day, “the use of the world and the enjoyment of material goods must be eucharistic, accompanied by doxology towards God; by the same token, the abuse of the world and participation therein without reference to God is sinful both before the Creator and before humanity as creation.”

The WCC has worked on climate change and the care of creation through direct work with churches and their members. It has also utilized its networking skills and UN accreditation and recognition to bring churches, other religions and grassroots communities to speak together and directly to countries and international forums. Activities range from staff leadership of a week’s focus for Christians on Caring for Creation in August, organized by the Council for World Mission Europe, a visit to Pacific churches led by the WCC general secretary in July, and plenary statements and other advocacy during the sessions of the Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework



Ecumenical Solidarity Fund

Through the provision of grants, the Ecumenical Solidarity Fund (ESF) aims to enable churches and church-related organizations and groups to respond ecumenically and in a timely way to local, national and regional emerging priorities and solidarity needs. The ESF aims to strengthen ecumenical cooperation through grants. The ESF contributes to enhancing the visibility of global concerns in the ecumenical movement worldwide. Priority is given to those initiatives facing difficulties accessing funding elsewhere.

Regional relations strengthen solidarity

Regional WCC meetings give unique opportunities for churches and ecumenical agencies to reassess approaches and policies in light of changing social and political realities. In Paraguay, the participants of the regional meeting in Latin America in October, organized by the WCC and the Latin American Council of Churches, met with the country's president Fernando Lugo, a former Roman Catholic Bishop, and strengthened regional and global links in programmes such as theological education, youth, inter-religious dialogue and migration and worked to increase ecumenical solidarity with countries in conflict.

Convention on Climate Change. Ecumenical cooperation on the inter-related issues of climate change and water also led to the formation of the Ecumenical Water Network (EWN), whose secretariat is hosted by the WCC. Initiatives such as the EWN's "Seven Weeks of Water for Lent" encourage biblical reflection on our use of the earth's resources.

The importance of the leadership and advocacy within churches is clear. In a March visit to the WCC, UN secretary-general Ban Ki-moon told WCC staff, "Global warming will only be resolved through a global common response, and we need your help."

The WCC's efforts are grounded in the call to care for God's creation. This call does not hesitate to remind people at every level of the responsibilities they hold to care for such a gift. As the WCC told the delegates attending the high-level segment of the UN meeting on the Kyoto Protocol in December, "With a sense of wonder we look at life on planet Earth. It is a miracle and a gift! We all share the responsibility of being conscious caretakers of this home of ours." ■

Strengthening the churches' action in health care and support

A workshop held in Dar-es-Salaam aimed at increasing the involvement of faith-based organizations in the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) was organized in April by the WCC in collaboration with the Churches Health Association of Kenya, the Christian Social Services Commission in Tanzania and the GFATM. Over 100 participants from 68 organizations in 36 countries explored ways the faith-based community can access more resources from primary funders of programmes to combat the three diseases. The workshop was followed by a seminar on primary health care marking the 30th anniversary of the primary health care movement in which faith-based organizations have played a leading role.

Faith, Science, Technology

WCC has started a study process on ethical reflection concerning stem cell research. A sensitive issue in many churches and countries the reflection will ask whether there should be use of embryos for research and what respect for life means in this context. Some see this research as a medical opportunity to fight diseases; others believe we should not enter this field of research. These questions become important as governments are engaged in developing legislation related to the use of stem cells. The study process aims at developing a methodology for churches to have their own process of ethical reflection. The project started with a meeting of experts in December, where scientists shared their concerns and dilemmas and started discussions with theologians and ethicists from different ecclesial traditions. The process will be concluded in 2010 with guidelines for churches.

Through migration, understanding a church "on the move"

On Fridays, the Holy Trinity church compound in Dubai is abuzz with worshippers from early morning until after nightfall. Over 10 thousand members of more than 120 different Christian groups and congregations come here on the Emirates' weekly day of rest.

Services in more than a dozen languages, including English and Arabic, but most of them South Asian such as Urdu, Tagalog, Tamil or Malayam, fill not only the main church from 6 am to 11 pm but the 25 other halls built around a central courtyard adorned with a Canterbury cross.

A vibrant church life may not be the first thing that comes to mind when thinking about the Gulf region, which is primarily Muslim. But in a way, the 3-4 million Christians in the region, almost all of whom came in search of work from around the globe, present a microcosm of Christianity and the challenge of church unity.

Migration is a fact of life all over the world, whether people are seeking safety, freedom or a better life. And wherever it occurs, migration contributes to a more diverse religious presence in the countries concerned. Among Christians, that can also lead to tensions between the established churches in a country and the new "migrant" churches.

"Why do migrants stay in migrant churches? Why don't they go to mainline churches?" are central questions, says Sydia Nduna, WCC's programme executive for Migration and Social Justice.

A consultation in Palermo, Italy, in November addressed migration and the changing ecclesial landscape, touching on the essence of the church, as Nduna put it, "providing protection, identity, human dignity, self-esteem, human worth". This meeting was the first church consultation between mainline and migrant churches organized by the WCC in collaboration with the All Africa Conference of Churches, the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe and the Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy.

These issues of "pastoral care" have become one of the priorities of the Global Ecumenical Network on Migration, a WCC network that works closely with other church bodies to deepen understanding of migration issues such as racism, xenophobia and the effect of migration on the understanding of the church. This understanding directs the churches as they seek to have more impact on global policy.

In Dubai, where a WCC delegation led by general secretary Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia visited in April, the ecclesial and religious challenges of migration are stark. Referring to the churches built in the compounds jointly granted to several denominations, the chaplain appointed to care for the spiritual welfare of the expatriate Christians laments that they "are often built facing away from one another, when, in fact, each church could encourage the other."

In his sermon at the Anglican Holy Trinity Church in Dubai, Kobia encouraged the Christians to, in the words of the prophet Jeremiah, seek the welfare of the city where God has sent them into "exile" and reminded them of the biblical mandate "to open up our relationships so that we may move from being strangers to being neighbours".

Or, as Amélie Akué, professor at the WCC's Ecumenical Institute in Bossey, stated in Palermo, "A church of strangers and sojourners will understand itself as a church of people on the move in which the otherness is not a motive for exclusion but a source of mutual growing in recognition and respect of the diverse versions of Christianity." ■





Education and Ecumenical Formation

Ecumenical formation and faith nurture at community and academic levels are vital for the renewal and future of the ecumenical movement. While the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, outside Geneva, is at the heart of this ecumenical learning, the WCC facilitates and supports individuals, churches, ecumenical bodies and institutions around the world as they engage and deliver the studies needed for more effective ministry in their communities.

The WCC excels in bringing together people of diverse traditions, cultures and countries in spaces that not only deepen their knowledge of critical topics facing churches today, but contribute to their appreciation of each other as Christians and people of faith. In 2008 Bossey had 99 students from around the world studying in various educational and theological disciplines.

Real-life faith and study

When Angok Achuil was 11, he was recruited as a child soldier into the Sudan People's Liberation Army. Since that time he has become an Anglican and a spiritual leader. Both of these experiences have profoundly affected his graduate studies at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey.

"It has been very emotional here," he says. "It is really about issues of life and not what I think about when coming and doing theology."

In class discussions students connect academic study with real experiences. Few, however, have the raw memories Angok has. "Like when we talk about water," he says, "I know how many people have been killed because of water in our place, how many people have died because of hunger, because of drugs."

Angok's 2008 "class" at the Graduate School at the Ecumenical Institute had 19 students from 13 different countries. A quarter of the graduate students were women and about half of them came from Africa. Two master's programmes offered by the Institute have an additional 19 students, with a rising number of women (now 40%).

With students in residence at Bossey every day of the year, some of the most profound lessons come just from living and worshipping together.

"The first fascinating thing that caught my attention was during the orientation time," says master's student Emmanuel Babatunde Gbogboade from the Church of the Lord (Aladura) Worldwide in Nigeria. "They asked how we wanted to live in community.... This is a new community, how do we want to live?"

Emmanuel applies this globally now: "Peace is possible if we respect one another and the talents of one another, not to be jealous of one another. As the world, how do we want to live?"

For Emmanuel, worshipping together was also a revelation, even though his church in Nigeria is already "ecumenical in outlook". After participating in Orthodox services and sharing his own style of worship, he says, "I have a better understanding and value of how people worship their God." And he reflects, "God understands the way everyone worships."

Angok says his experiences at Bossey have changed him completely. "I will not be going back as the same person," he says. "I've discussed with many people – Orthodox, Catholic and Pentecostal. You cannot know yourself... as the only way."

His respect, though, is not limited to Christians alone. "When I go back, I will reflect a lot about what I can do, especially in my churches," Angok says. "In my diocese, if we have Muslims, we can have dialogue with Muslims, not call them terrorists like we do. It is the same among the Christians, with the denominations. We have to have something in common as a people of God." ■



Developing ecumenical theological education

The fourth Congress of the World Conference of Associations of Theological Institutions (WOCATI) was held in Greece in early June. The Congress underlined the strategic importance of ecumenical theological education for the life of the churches in the 21st century. The Congress was organized by the WCC and WOCATI, in partnership with the Evangelisches Missionswerk in Germany (EMW), the Greek Orthodox diocese of Neapolis and Stavroupolis, the department of theology of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and the Volos Academy of the diocese of Demetrias.

Expanding capacity through scholarships

Scholarships for 32 individuals and 21 groups were granted in 2008 to contribute to effective leadership formation and sustainable development of communities and churches. Training covered critical issues from health to conflict resolution, family counselling and gender awareness. A growing interest in group training deepens knowledge throughout the community. A regional youth training held in the Mekong sub-region helped to “translate sustainable development strategies into concrete local actions,” says Janejinda Pawadee from the Mekong Ecumenical Partnership Programme. The partnership plans to “implement similar training courses using local resource persons and conducted in the local languages.”

Lunchtime conversations highlight library resources

Well-attended Library Lunchtime Conversations were held at the Ecumenical Library in Geneva to discuss the future of ecumenism and the 500th anniversary of the birth of Calvin in 2009. The conversations can be heard on the WCC library and archives website. The WCC has one library on two sites, with 100,000 volumes housed in Geneva at the Ecumenical Centre and another 33,000 at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey. The Library is expanding its collection on world religions in support of interfaith work and also building its electronic resources such as access to the World Christian Database, University of Geneva resources and WCC documentation.

Practising ecumenism: it's a way of life

Sister Pina Sandu says that in her Orthodox monastery located in the mountains of Romania they practise “touristic spirituality”. With a resort built up around the monastery, “like it or not” the tourists “hear the bells, hear the services three times a day...they hear, they feel, they know that something is happening.” As a result, their curiosity leads them into the yard and the church – “small, sure steps towards something beautiful.”

Sister Pina and five other sisters – two each from Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Protestant orders – are providing a similar but subtle radical witness at Bossey for students and visitors alike. The sisters live together, coordinate the worship and prayer life at the Ecumenical Institute, and participate in classes – while embodying a sense of spirituality in daily life.

Their presence alone, in their striking habits, is noticeable to all who use the Institute for meetings and events. Visitors come from church, development groups and secular organizations like Rolex or the regional Swiss television company. All are invited to take part in the prayer life at the Institute.

But their main role over their year at Bossey is to provide pastoral support for the students. Rev. Emmanuel Twahirwa, a graduate student from the Anglican Church in Rwanda, appreciates their worship facilitation. “When you come, you find yourself lost in academic study and you may end up forgetting your spiritual life,” he says. “We have to balance the two.”

Even more, he appreciates their presence: “Sisters from different denominations, living together – it is important for us to learn from them.”

The sisters themselves were uncertain how it would work living together. Sister Sperancia Mulashani Thadeo, from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, reflected that she had met other Roman Catholic sisters but “could not imagine” how it would work living with them. “I thought perhaps they would stay in other parts,” she says ruefully. The reality she found was that it is possible to live together and the “happiest of times is sharing about our life, what we are doing and our spiritual life.”

“For us,” says Ivy Athipozhiyil, a Dominican sister from India, “ecumenical spirituality is living together.... We are sharing everything, laughing. This we offer, without knowing, to others, like the students. For them it is a sign.”

Maria Elena Romero Molina, a Missionary Dominican sister from Guatemala, states it most simply, “Ecumenism is not a concept. It is a way of life.”

Sister Pina reflects, “The motto of the life and work commission, back then, was doctrine divides, service unites.” Now, she states, “I could say doctrine divides, spirituality unites.” ■

Inter-Religious Dialogue and Cooperation

The key role religion can play in resolving conflicts, seeking justice and peace-building has never been as evident as it is today. Societies are becoming more religiously diverse and often political and ethnic tensions exacerbate religious divides. Dialogue and cooperation are increasingly critical ingredients for maintaining and strengthening respect and common values.

With more than 30 years of experience in inter-religious relations, the WCC facilitates and encourages contact between Christians and neighbours of other faiths. This is done primarily through encounters aimed at building trust, meeting common challenges and addressing conflictive and divisive issues cooperatively.



Exploring a Common Word

An open letter to Christian leaders from 138 Muslim scholars issued in October 2007 sparked a series of responses and dialogue encounters between Christians and Muslims. In January the WCC issued a commentary on the letter entitled “Learning to Explore Love Together”. The commentary encourages member churches to read and reflect on the open letter with Muslim neighbours in their respective contexts.

Encouraging inter-religious paths to peace

“Our concerns are very much the same as yours,” a senior Buddhist leader told a WCC delegation visiting Sri Lanka in October. As a member of the “Conference of Religions” – a grouping of Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims and Christians in the country – he has been an advocate for a political solution to the protracted ethnic conflict there.

Yet not all Buddhists support this approach. One of the highest ranking Buddhist leaders in Sri Lanka, Udugama Sri Buddharakkhita Mahanayaka Thero of the Asgiriya chapter, supports the government’s military intervention. He told the delegation, “It is the government’s duty to suppress and overpower the misguided [Tamil militant] groups and protect the civilians” against terrorist activities. “As religious leaders,” he said, “we will never tell the government to shy away from its duty to protect the civilians.”

In countries such as Sri Lanka, religious identity often becomes entangled with ethnic identity and religious people of all faiths can become polarized. In the programme activity “Accompanying churches in conflict situations” the WCC seeks ways to encourage religious leaders and communities to come together for dialogue and seek justice and peace together.

Such an approach is critical in places like Pakistan where Christians make up a tiny minority of a population that is 95 percent Muslim. Political, religious and economic barriers are compounded when Christian identity is linked with the western world. Events such as the US invasion of Iraq and the publishing of inflammatory cartoons in Europe resulted in violence against Christians in Pakistan. “You people sneeze in the West and we get a cold,” Bishop Munawar K. Rumalshah, from the Church of Pakistan, told a Living Letters team from the WCC.

“Living Letters” are small international ecumenical teams travelling to locations around the world where Christians strive to overcome violence. Such teams, in addition to other visiting delegations such as the one to Sri Lanka led by WCC general secretary Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia, discuss how churches can help ease political and religious tensions. The visits provide tangible solidarity to the churches. They also provide an opportunity to build new relationships while strengthening existing ones with other religious communities. They encourage working together to seek just and peaceful ways of conflict resolution and reconciliation. ■

Christian self-understanding

The ecumenical process of reflection on issues related to Christian self-understanding in relation to Islam was taken a step further in October when a unique Christian consultation was held near Geneva for WCC member churches, the Christian World Communions, the World Evangelical Alliance and the Roman Catholic Church. The consultation provided a space for churches and communions of churches to share their initiatives and theological resources for engaging with Muslims. They also identified a number of issues to be addressed in further dialogue with Muslims.

Developing a code of conduct for conversion

Tensions in countries like Sri Lanka and India where there are cases of missionaries using aggressive methods to encourage conversion have contributed to a backlash against Christians. The WCC is continuing its work with the Pontifical Council for Inter-Religious Dialogue and the World Evangelical Alliance to develop a code of conduct for conversion. The code will be a resource for churches, particularly in these countries, to assess practices and contribute to evidence in court cases.

Dialogue with Iran reactivated

The fifth in a series of dialogues co-sponsored by the WCC and the Iranian Centre for Inter-Religious Dialogue of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization was held in December in Iran. The dialogue, which started in 1995, helps facilitate understanding between WCC member churches and high-ranking Islamic clergy and scholars. For the first time representatives of Iranian churches participated. The consultation, the opening of which was broadcast on Iranian TV, discussed the coexistence of religious groups in Iran and Europe, questions of religious freedom and majority-minority relations. As the final communiqué concluded, "In each religion and culture we can discover common fundamental principles for peace and respect. Dialogue between Christians and Muslims must promote these principles and obligations towards each other in order to strengthen peaceful coexistence."



Women promote peace through religion

While WCC encouraged inter-religious dialogue in places of conflict, another form of dialogue took place in Gothenburg, Sweden during 2008. In September, 25 women from Iran, USA, Pakistan, Senegal, Palestine, Sweden and other European countries met to discuss the role of women in inter-religious dialogue. They exchanged experiences with Swedish families and local Christian-Muslim women's groups in an effort to strengthen the capacity of women for peace-making.

"The dialogue in this meeting makes us all understand the issues we face as women," stated Bibifatemeh Mousavi Nezhad, director of the Iranian Institute for Inter-Religious Dialogue (IID). "This not only affects the work we do back home, but influences the way we initiate dialogue in our own countries and communities," she said.

This journey of women working together for peace through dialogue began in 2007 in Tehran when the IID hosted the first meeting of this project. The event was co-organized with the WCC. The women involved come from diverse backgrounds. They are policy makers, journalists, educators, doctors, NGO workers, religious scholars and filmmakers. But their common perspective as women strongly influenced how the meeting addressed issues hindering peacemaking in communities and societies.

"Being women influences the way we communicate with each other," said Catherine Oberg-Sadjedi, an American with both Christian and Muslim roots. "Women do speak differently when we are alone together and we tend to approach the issues from a cultural and social aspect as well. We are able to share about the problems that concern us and initiate dialogue in a unique way."

"Dialogue in this event has made us learn from each other, educate ourselves and listen to the diverse voices," said Lily Habash, a Christian from Palestine. "This can be called a first step in peace-making, where dialogue creates a deeper understanding of how we understand the 'other'."

"Breaking the barriers through interfaith dialogue makes us realize that we can accept the 'others' and we are not the only ones with the 'truth'," Habash said.

The exchanges at this meeting enabled the group to build a network of Christian and Muslim women who can strengthen community projects and bring new methodologies for building interfaith understanding at the grassroots level. The network is now involved in three projects – an educational booklet on methodologies on inter-religious dialogue from the perspective of Christian and Muslim women, a website and documentary to share information and best practices and connect with a wider audience and women's groups, and a national effort in Iran that uses WCC resources in an effort to work with religious groups on HIV and AIDS.

However, it is perhaps at the personal level where inter-religious dialogue and encounter has its strongest effect. In such cases, women have been empowered to play a more effective role in the religious debate of their own communities.

Reflecting on her painful experience of the occupation of Palestine, Habash states, "I can tell that my country is a land of people and not stones. If there is a hope for peace, women are in a significant position to influence that process along with men." ■

WCC Financial Overview 2008

FINANCIAL RESULTS 2008

(Swiss francs 000's)



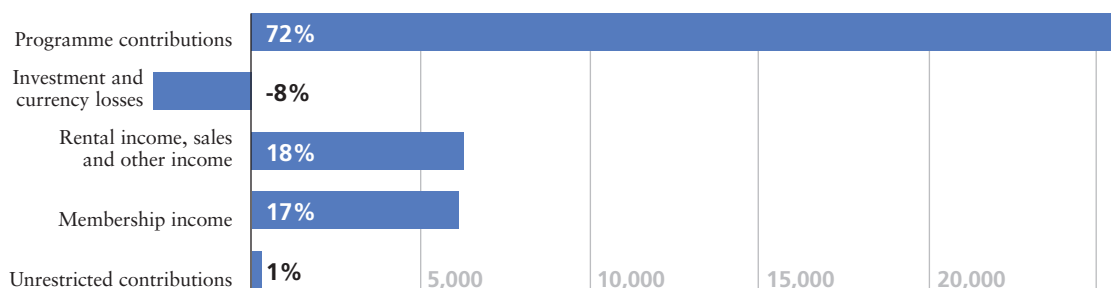
	Unrestricted and designated funds 2008	Restricted funds 2008	Total funds 2008	Total funds 2007
INCOME				
Membership and other unrestricted income	6,398	—	6,398	6,830
Programme contributions	—	25,675	25,675	27,928
Investment and currency gains/(losses)	(1,071)	(1,844)	(2,915)	(31)
Rental income, sales and other income	4,314	1,958	6,272	6,301
Unrestricted income distribution	(5,550)	5,550	—	—
Total income	4,091	31,339	35,430	41,028
EXPENDITURE				
Direct programme costs: grants	43	5,830	5,873	6,802
Operating and other programme costs	4,182	11,034	15,216	14,001
Salaries	4,380	13,510	17,890	17,159
Redistribution of costs	(4,133)	4,133	—	—
Total costs	4,472	34,507	38,979	37,962
Transfers between funds	331	(331)	—	—
Transfers (to)/from funds and current liabilities	(166)	(478)	(644)	(303)
Net increase/(decrease) in funds for the year	(216)	(3,977)	(4,193)	2,763

Note: The results for 2008 are unaudited. Prior year comparatives are audited consolidated results. Audited consolidated results for 2008 will be presented in the WCC Financial Report 2008.

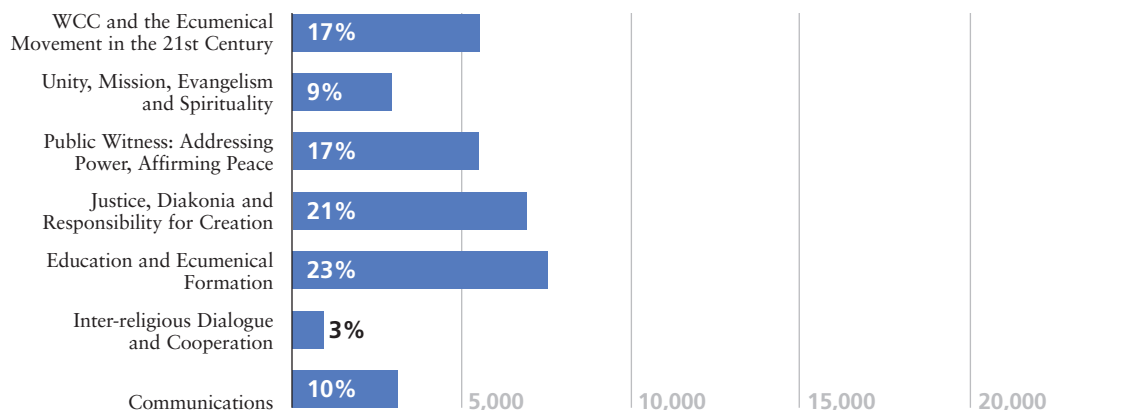
Total income was reduced by CHF 5.6 million compared with 2007, principally as a result of investment losses on the restricted endowment investments, and also because of unfavourable EUR/CHF exchange rates compared with the prior year, with impact on programme contributions received in EUR.

In 2008, WCC's total funds decreased by CHF 4.2 million, being CHF 1.4 million more than the budgeted decrease of CHF 2.8 million planned to reduce programme balances held from 2007. The decrease in restricted funds concerns an unbudgeted decrease in the endowment investment funds, which reported net unrealized losses of almost CHF 2 million in 2008. At the same time, programme funds were decreased by CHF 2 million, compared with the CHF 2.8 million budgeted.

SOURCES OF INCOME 2008 (Swiss francs 000's)



EXPENDITURE BY PROGRAMME 2008 (Swiss francs 000's)



WCC Income and Contributors 2008

INCOME TRENDS

(Swiss francs 000's)

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Membership	6,537	6,401	6,510	6,426	6,593	6,614	6,106
Programmes	28,699	27,151	27,712	26,649	24,509	24,623	23,493
Multilateral sharing	6,718	6,259	4,909	4,977	3,509	2,639	1,434
Assembly	—	435	627	3,004	1,953	115	104
ACT Development	—	—	—	200	523	767	936
Other income	2,221	6,965	5,950	7,995	7,547	6,270	3,357
Total	44,175	47,211	45,708	49,251	44,634	41,028	35,430

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTORS 2008

Main contributors

Note: The list includes all member churches, partner organizations and other bodies that contributed more than CHF 20,000 to the WCC in 2008.

ACT International
 African Methodist Episcopal Church
 American Baptist Churches in the USA
 Anglican Church of Canada
 Brot für Alle
 Catholic Committee for Cultural Collaboration
 Christian Aid
 Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the USA
 Christian Council of Sweden
 Church of England
 Church of Greece
 Church of Norway
 Church of Scotland
 Church of Sweden
 Church of the Brethren
 Church World Service
 CIDA-Canadian International Development Agency
 Conseil Suisse des Missions Évangéliques
 Council for World Mission
 DanChurchAid
 Diakonisches Werk der EKD
 EED-Church Development Service
 Episcopal Church in the USA
 Evangelische Regionalverband Starkenburg-West
 Evangelisch-reformierte Kirchengemeinde Tablat-St Gallen
 Evangelical Church in Germany
 Evangelical Church in Hessen and Nassau
 Evangelical Church in Rhineland
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark
 Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland
 Evangelical Reformed Church of Canton St Gallen
 Evangelisches Missionswerk in Deutschland
 Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches
 Fédération suisse des femmes protestantes
 Finn Church Aid
 Fondation pour l'aide au protestantisme réformé
 Foundation for Theological Education in Southeast Asia
 HEKS-EPER
 Hong Kong Christian Council
 ICCO-Interchurch Organization for Development Cooperation
 Karibu Foundation
 Kerk in Actie
 Lutheran World Federation
 Lutheran World Relief
 Macedonian Center for International Cooperation
 Mennonite Church in the Netherlands
 Methodist Church of Great Britain
 Mission Covenant Church of Sweden
 Myung Sung Presbyterian Church
 Nathan Söderblom Memorial Fund

NCC Australia - Christian World Service
 Norwegian Church Aid
 Peace Watch Switzerland
 Presbyterian Church (USA)
 Presbyterian Church in Canada
 Presbyterian Church of Korea
 Protestant Church in the Netherlands
 Reformed Church in America
 Reformed Church in Hungary
 Reformed Church of Aargau
 Reformed Church of France
 Religious Society of Friends
 Stichting Rotterdam
 United Church of Canada
 United Church of Christ
 United Methodist Church
 United Reformed Church
 Uniting Church in Australia
 Westminster Foundation for Democracy
 World Vision International

Other contributors (less than CHF 20,000)

Other member churches
 Other specialized ministries
 Other organizations
 Individuals
 Local congregations
 Local ecumenical bodies
 Other local contributions



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WCC General Secretary
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**The WCC general secretary is ex-officio the secretary of the WCC executive committee.*

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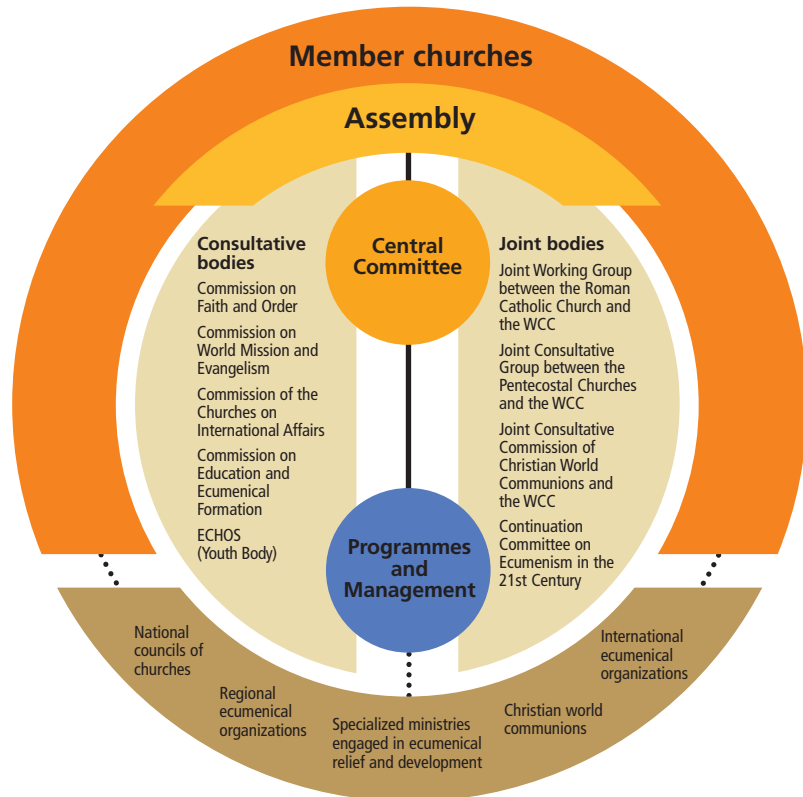
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Mennonite Church (USA)

Ms. Catherine Christ-Taha
Assistant to General Secretary

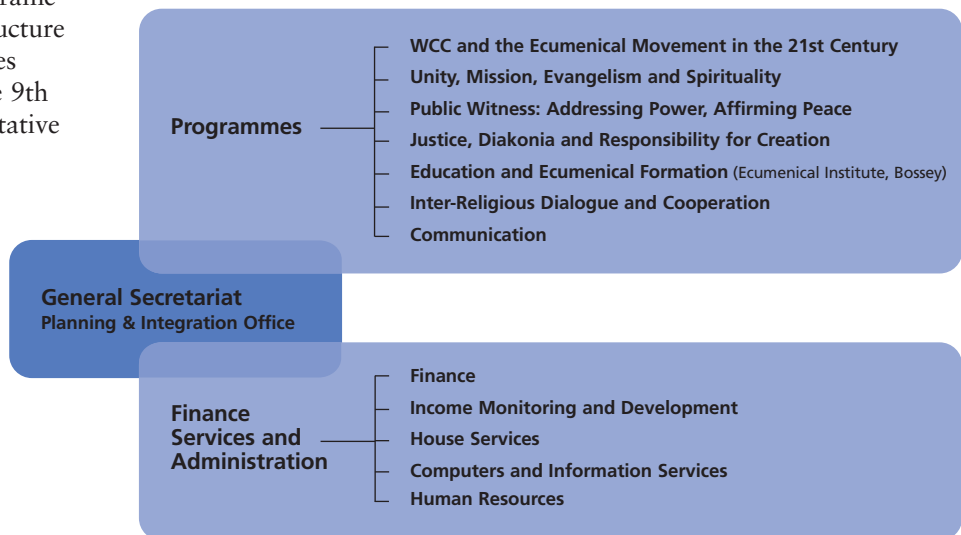
WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

The programmes and management of the World Council of Churches reflect the fellowship of its member churches, guidance and oversight of its governing bodies, and strong relationships to church and ecumenical organizations.



WCC PROGRAMME & MANAGEMENT

The WCC central committee adopted a new programme framework and organizational structure in January 2007. The changes reflect the guidance from the 9th Assembly and a wide consultative process in 2006.





World Council of Churches

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