



Annual Review **2009**



World Council
of Churches



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 (GKI) [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

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.

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]
Protestant Church in Sabah [Malaysia]
Protestant Church in South-East Sulawesi (GEPsultra) [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

Baptist Convention of Haiti
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 Berlin-Brandenburg-Silesian Oberlausitz
- Evangelical Church in Baden
- Evangelical Church in Central Germany
- Evangelical Church in Hesse & Nassau
- Evangelical Church in Rhineland
- Evangelical Church in Württemberg
- 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 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-Western 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]

To learn more about the WCC member churches go to:
oikoumene.org

NORTH AMERICA

African Methodist Episcopal Church [USA]
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church [USA]
American Baptist Churches in the USA
Anglican Church of Canada
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

International 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
Ma'ohi 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 with one another and activities together are an expression of their common faith in Jesus Christ and their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The WCC is the broadest and most inclusive among many organized expressions of the modern ecumenical movement, which seeks visible church unity. The fellowship includes most of the world's Orthodox churches, the Old Catholic and Mar Thoma churches, churches of the historic denominational traditions such as the Anglican, Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist and Reformed, many united and uniting churches as well as churches such as the Mennonite, Friends, Congregational and Disciples.

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 seeking visible unity in one faith and one eucharistic fellowship; promoting a common witness in work for mission and evangelism; engaging in Christian service by meeting human need through WCC partner agencies; breaking down barriers between people; and upholding justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

The WCC was officially formed in 1948 by representatives of 147 churches gathered at its First Assembly in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

Today the WCC focuses its work in 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 threefold 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 while addressing threats to the human community and encouraging churches to take greater care of creation through protection of the earth and its people.



The call to work for unity

In October 2009 the Faith and Order Plenary Commission was held in Kolympari, Crete, Greece. The main theme of the gathering was summarized in the title “Called to be one church”. This is the thread that binds the World Council of Churches together today and historically. At this event both the outgoing and incoming general secretaries of the WCC were present, sharing in this call to work for unity in all of our endeavours.

I am pleased to take this opportunity to show gratitude to my predecessor, the Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia, who completed his sixth and final year in office at the end of 2009. During his ecumenical ministry, Sam Kobia contributed richly to the churches’ pursuit of unity, justice and peace.

“We intend to stay together.” This statement from the “Message” of the First Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in 1948 came in recognition of an underlying unity that exists even among separated churches. Believers who survived the Second World War were determined to rebuild community and “stay together” in order to strip away misunderstandings among Christians, and to demonstrate in word and action that they were servants of the one Lord. We in succeeding generations continue to unwrap the Triune God’s gift of unity in Jesus Christ, to wonder at fresh glimpses of this treasure, to claim it as our own and to assist in making it visible for all to see.

The year 2009 provided a different global context from 1948 and updated tools for ministry, yet it found the ecumenical movement still committed to the quest for a visible and vibrant unity in the shared life of Christians, the churches and the world.

As you will find in the pages of this annual review, the WCC has played a part in the churches' joyous response to God's bounty. We do not claim sole credit for any of the achievements chronicled in this document, for we have enjoyed significant partnerships and cooperation at every level of service. And so we give glory to God, and we express thanks to member churches, caring agencies, generous donors and all our partners in dialogue, ministry, proclamation and advocacy.

This past year also saw my election as WCC general secretary. From that day, I began to see from a wholly new perspective aspects of the Council and its relationships with which I have been involved in the past – at the meeting of the Faith and Order Plenary Commission in Crete, in deliberations of the Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum in the Middle East, during the planning and implementation of religious representatives' participation in the COP15 conference on climate change at Copenhagen. The challenges facing us today are formidable, yet we have great potential for meeting them if we engage them together. Unity is a gift from God – and it has been given to us for a purpose.

In 2009 and now in early 2010, I have detected many intimations of unity in our world. Ecumenical Accompaniers in Israel and Palestine demonstrated the love of God for all through their physical presence among those threatened by hatred and oppression. Church members in parts of Africa offered care to those caught up in the HIV and AIDS pandemic. As the world's leaders gathered in Copenhagen, the bells of thousands of churches around the globe rang out our common concern for God's creation in a time of climate change. And when an earthquake hit Haiti early in 2010, the churches in the region and around the world responded and continue to respond.

In all this we find examples of visible unity – and audible unity – lived out to the glory of One God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And we look forward with excitement to what the coming years may bring, including the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation at Kingston, Jamaica in 2011 and the WCC's Tenth Assembly at Busan, Korea in 2013. Such experiences and expectations are reason enough to commit ourselves to staying together, praying together, acting together – and loving one another, as Christ loves us. ■

Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit
General Secretary, World Council of Churches
April, 2010





2009 Highlights

Migration and social justice

While migration has always been a fact of life, it raises new economic, political, cultural and ecclesial concerns in today's globalized world. The WCC project on migration and social justice seeks to engage and challenge the churches in their work with migrants including refugees, internally displaced people and victims of trafficking. As the connections between xenophobia and racism are particularly strong, it emphasizes understanding new migration phenomena in a framework of transformative justice, which grew out of the WCC's work on overcoming racism.

Bringing together ecumenical partners to analyze the situation collectively in their regions and to develop advocacy strategies on both migration and racism allows for the development of a global advocacy strategy, and the Global Ecumenical Network for Migration (GEM) to advocate more effectively with inter-governmental bodies addressing migration and racism.

Conscientious objection status supported

The World Council of Churches Central Committee cited a recent WCC study showing "that in many places churches face challenges of conscientious objection", which allows those whose con-

science prohibits them from military service to engage in alternate means of service.

During its meetings in August and September 2009 the Central Committee voiced its support for the right of conscientious objection through the release of a minute on the right of conscientious objection to military service. The document calls on member churches to "uphold the right of refusal to bear and use arms" wherever possible and encourages them to speak to their governments and military organizations about the issue and to pray for peace.

WCC called for investigation of Gaza war crimes

In 2009, the WCC asked the United Nations to make sure that recommendations of a key report about war crimes committed during the conflict between Israeli and Palestinian armed forces in Gaza earlier in the year were properly followed up.

UN secretary general Ban Ki-moon was asked to take steps in order to see that both Israel and Hamas "unconditionally concede the need for complete and credible investigations into their actions during the war".

In a letter to the UN secretary general, the WCC cited "growing anxiety" amongst members of the international community that at the UN Security Council "there could be a resolution that dilutes the intent and scope of the Goldstone report". The "Goldstone

report", produced by a UN fact-finding mission on the Gaza conflict, found evidence of both parties committing actions which amount to war crimes, and possibly crimes against humanity, during the three-week-long armed conflict.



Kobia and WCC delegation meet North Korean president Kim Jong-nam

In an October 2009 meeting in Pyongyang with then WCC general secretary Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia and a WCC delegation, North Korean president Kim Jong-nam said that a significant impetus to solving the nuclear weapons stand-off in the region would be for North Korea and the U.S. to meet "face-to-face with each other".

Kim, the president of the Presidium of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) Supreme People's Assembly, said the region needs to be denuclearized, while alluding to a certain unfairness within the Six Party Talks, saying that the members of the talks are "all nuclear powers or enjoy nuclear protection by the United States"

with the sole exception of North Korea.

Kobia told Kim that from the perspective of the WCC and its member churches, “we as Christians will continue to work for peace, as Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace and a peacemaker in the world”, and that all in the WCC “look forward to the day when the Koreans will be reunified and families will be reunited”.

Central Committee members are leaders

Several WCC Central Committee members were appointed to various roles within their churches and civil society during 2009. Rev. Dr Sharon Watkins, general minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) was appointed to US President Obama’s Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

Bishop Hilarion Alfeyev, an Oxford educated cleric who served as the Moscow Patriarchate’s representative to European organizations in Brussels, was appointed head of the Russian Orthodox Church’s Department of External Church Relations and elevated to the rank of Metropolitan of Volokolamsk. Rev. Dr Moiserale Prince Dibeela was appointed moderator of the Council for World Mission Trustee Body.

Living Letters continued in 2009

The Council of Christian Churches in Angola (CICA) and the Christian Council of Mozambique (CCM) hosted a WCC Living Letters team in August 2009. The teams are part of the WCC Living Letters visits which are being conducted in advance of the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation. The ecumenical teams are visiting various church communities around the world, paying solidarity visits to churches, ecumenical organizations and civil society organizations.

Other teams visited the Middle East, Latin America and India during 2009. While visiting Angola and Mozambique the team explored the common historical traits of colonial rule, liberation, civil war and reconstruction. In both countries churches are engaged in reconciliation efforts and overcoming violence. The Living Letters visits are also



part of the WCC initiative Decade to Overcome Violence.

WCC bids farewell to Kobia

With prayers, singing, gifts and speeches of thanks, the WCC Central Committee offered its farewell to outgoing general secretary Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia on Sunday, 30 August 2009.

The moderator of the Central Committee, Rev. Dr Walter Altmann, expressed gratitude to Kobia for “all the services rendered with diligence and compassion.” He also highlighted how deeply meaningful the extensive pastoral visits undertaken by Kobia were to the churches. The Central Committee vice-moderator Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima spoke about Kobia’s many charismas, highlighting amongst them serenity and kindness. He also conveyed words of appreciation from the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew I.

In his response and words of thanks, Kobia expressed gratitude for what he said was the “tremendous privilege” to serve the ecumenical movement over four decades. For Kobia, leaving the position of WCC general secretary is by no means the end of his continuing ecumenical journey, he said.

WCC Tenth Assembly to be in Korea

The Tenth Assembly of the WCC will be held in Busan, Republic of Korea in 2013. Rev. Dr Park Jong-wha of the

Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea said that celebrating the assembly in Korea means churches can witness firsthand to peace and justice on the divided peninsula. “The churches (in Korea) are divided, and we yearn to come together,” Park said, adding that churches in North Korea would be invited to the assembly.

The National Council of Churches in Korea (NCKK) had issued the invitation to Busan on behalf of all NCKK member churches, including four WCC members (Anglican Church of Korea, Korean Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church of Korea and Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea).

A total of four member communions had extended invitations to the WCC to hold its next assembly in their country. Three of the four invitations came from Orthodox churches: Damascus, Syria, Rhodes, Greece and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The fact that so many Orthodox member churches extended an invitation was unprecedented and did not go unnoticed by the Central Committee members who stated their appreciation.

Advocating at the UN

Church representatives from around the world gathered in New York City from 15 to 20 November 2009, to press three issues within the agenda of the United Nations: people being displaced by climate change, indigenous people’s rights and Colombia’s protracted inter-



nal conflict.

The United Nations Advocacy Week (UNAW) is organized annually by the WCC United Nations Liaison Office in New York. In 2009 it brought together over 80 people from more than 40 countries working on advocacy issues in churches, national councils of churches, specialized agencies, regional ecumenical organizations and regional advocacy networks.

“The UNAW is a call to ecumenical advocacy in the global arena,” said Rev. Christopher Ferguson, director of the WCC UN Liaison Office in New York. “The Advocacy Week is a crucial moment for the churches to come together to speak to these burning issues.”

WCC general secretary elected

Norwegian theologian and pastor Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, 48, was elected 7th general secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC) Thursday 27 August 2009, during the Central Committee meeting. Tveit will be the youngest general secretary since Willem A. Visser ‘t Hooft, who led the WCC while it was in process of formation and following its founding assembly 61 years ago.

“This task I really feel is the call of God. I feel that we have a lot to do together”, said Tveit in his acceptance speech before the Central Committee. He stressed the spirit of unity that dominated the whole process and expressed hope that it will continue to reign in the common journey. Tveit encouraged the committee members to continue praying for him: “Please do not stop!”

Orthodox prepare for IEPC

Two Orthodox peace consultations were held in 2009 in advance of the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation (IEPC), May 2011 in Jamaica.

The first consultation took place in Bucharest, Romania in June and was co-organized by the Institute for Theology and Peace (Germany), the WCC, the Institute for Peace Studies in Eastern Christianity (USA) and the Patriarchate of the Romanian Orthodox churches. Representatives from 12 Eastern and Oriental Orthodox churches participat-

ed in the consultation which was titled “Peace Ethics in Orthodoxy.”

The second consultation was the “Inter-Orthodox Preparatory Consultation Towards the IEPC” and stressed the theme of “Craftsmen of peace and justice”. The consultation was held 15-22 September in Laros, Greece.

Hosted on behalf of His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, by H.E. Metropolitan Paisios of Leros, Kalymnos and Astypalaia, in the Dodecanese islands, Greece, the meeting brought together 25 participants from nearly all Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox churches, hierarchs, priests, members of monastic communities, university professors, lay persons and WCC staff. The consultation was moderated by H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima (Ecumenical Patriarchate), vice-moderator of the WCC central committee.





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

The visible unity of the church remains a central goal of the ecumenical movement. Through the WCC, churches and other ecumenical partners find a platform to pray, reflect, plan and move together toward visible unity. This programme focuses on encouraging relationships with and among WCC member churches, Christian world communions, conciliar bodies and other ecumenical agencies in order to support ecumenical initiatives at regional, national and local levels.



Tackling ecumenical challenges in Asia today

A desire to strengthen the fellowship of WCC and Christian Conference of Asia member churches, and to support regular contact in striving for unity and common witness and service in the Asian context, brought some 60 representatives of thirty-six Asian churches together in mid-2009.

“If we are to look at the challenges facing the ecumenical movement in Asia today, we should begin by looking at some of the achievements,” the Rev. Professor James Haire, a minister of the Uniting Church in Australia and of the Evangelical Christian Church in Halmahera, Indonesia, said in his keynote address.

He affirmed that Christianity in Asia need not be, in any way, derivative from forms of Christianity developed elsewhere, but should be seen as a pace-setter, while some other issues tend to emerge.

The gathering, which was hosted by the Communion of Churches in Indonesia (PGI), in Cipayung, Indonesia, was the first-ever meeting of Asian ecumenical officers. It gave participants the opportunity to share stories and other information about the churches they represent, while also focusing on the particular struggles of churches in situations of conflict and difficulty.

Doug Chial, an executive staff member of the WCC, noted that the value of the experience was a “renewed and deeper contact with each other, especially for those responsible for church relations – a moment in which we prayed and reflected together on how we might more meaningfully express our oneness in Christ in the face of today’s challenges.”

In his opening sermon, Dr Soritua Nababan, WCC president from Asia, said that “if love motivates and moves us, we together will then be able to discover and to recognize our neighbours as our equals.”

Referring to the challenges of the 21st century, he reflected that “particularly in a pluralistic society, this love will enable Christians and congregations to enter into a real relationship with people of other faiths and customs – into real dialogue and cooperation in facing common challenges of life in the society.”

“The main obstacle for many Christians with small numbers in a society to enter into dialogue with a large number of people adhering to other faiths is fear. And it is exactly in the midst of this ‘fearful’ situation [that the] search for unity in love is so urgent and needed, that our churches should not waste time and energy in not being involved in the process.”

Peace as an ecumenical challenge in the Asian context was also key to the three-day discussions.

“The contemporary reality of Asia is one of deep violence,” said Rev. Professor Haire, noting that the “combination of high technology and seemingly medieval tribal conflict has become the pattern of our times, and this, at times stimulated from the West, legitimizes a culture of violence by invoking God arbitrarily to suit a particular agenda for aggression. As a result, insecurity, fear and anxiety characterize the lives of many people.”



But, he believed, “against this rather gloomy picture of the Asian region, positive signs must also be noted. There is a yearning among young people for true manifestations of peace and of peaceful communities. Truth can be communicated without aggression. Therefore, the ecumenical movement in Asia, in and of itself, as it brings the churches together, is central to the expression of an Asian theology of peace for all.” ■



Winning essays on prospects for ecumenism: “gifts of inspiration and leadership”

Ideas on “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 programme to commemorate the WCC’s 60th anniversary, celebrated in 2008, but was also used by the Continuation Committee on Ecumenism in the 21st Century. The committee, which started in 2007 to gather ideas on ways for the ecumenical movement to embrace new horizons, received additional input from the six young theologians and prize-winning essay writers at its meeting in Belém, Brazil.

More than 50 young theologians from 36 churches in 24 countries submitted papers. The selected essayists had the opportunity to discuss their ideas at an international consultation on Ecumenism in the 21st Century which took place in January and February 2009 in Belém.

One of the winners, Rev. Chad Rimmer, an ordained minister in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, was pastor of the International Church of Copenhagen. His essay Towards an Ecumenical Theology of the Wilderness attempted to place ecumenism in the context of a post-modern world in which attention to function takes precedence over concern for form. In an essay reflecting on his experience of the Belem conference, “Ecumenism in Amazonia: the WCC and Ecumenism in the 21st Century”, Rimmer wrote that “here, in this place, leaders of the ecumenical movement did not just think and write about the contemporary challenges to the oikoumene, the whole inhabited earth, which would have been enough according to their WCC charter. But more than that, we had a shared experience of the contemporary challenges that our economy (oikonomia) and ecology (oikologia) present to the whole inhabited world (oikoumene).”

He reflected that “perhaps this is what made this meeting of the WCC’s Continuation Committee so alive, and the document that we produced so powerful. In the end, I did not just present my paper to an ecumenical conference hosted by the World Council of Churches.” ■

Joint Consultative Commission's mid-term review points to signs of growing ecumenical collaboration

The third meeting of the Joint Consultative Commission (JCC) between Christian World Communions (CWCs) and the WCC focused on a mid-term review of the work accomplished so far in this growing ecumenical partnership. The 14-member commission affirmed the joint collaboration between the CWCs and WCC within the one ecumenical movement. Existing cooperation included work on an intra-Christian consultation on Christian self-understanding in relation to Islam, the continuing discussion about an "expanded assembly of the WCC" by the Assembly Discernment Committee, the Global Christian Forum, the Continuation Committee on Ecumenism in the 21st Century and a report from the Forum on Bilateral Dialogues.

A new area of conversation taken up at this meeting explored the possibilities for concrete cooperation on ecumenical peace initiatives, specifically in light of the May 2011 International Ecumenical Peace Convocation. A reflection prepared by Bishop Brian Farrell, secretary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity in the Vatican, was affirmed by the full membership of the JCC when he noted, "we have learned that the WCC and the CWCs need each other... perhaps we have reached a new platform: conciliar and confessional ecumenism humbly acknowledging each other and ready to sustain each other".

In considering the work of the JCC over these past years, the Rev. Dr Ishmael Noko, general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, stated, "we have come a long way in affirming Christian unity as both a common gift and a common task. The prayers we have been offering are being realized."



A fresh approach to equality of relationships between women and men in society

In 2010, the WCC invited people to join them for 40 days on a journey both deeply painful but also one filled with the expectation of making a difference. Cries of Anguish: Stories of Hope – a Lenten series on the struggle to overcome violence against women – told stories from places as diverse as Colombia, India, the Democratic Republic of Congo and New Zealand.

"These stories are shocking. But what also shines through is the resilience of these women. Against incredible odds, communities are finding ways to build solidarity and act compassionately," Dr Fulata Mbano Moyo, WCC programme executive for Women in Church and Society, explained.

The Lenten series, done in partnership with the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF) and the World Young Women's Christian Association (World YWCA) addressed the global nature of the problem. "We want to show that this is a global problem, affecting all cultures and every part of society. Endemic levels of violence are a major theological challenge and a significant issue for young people. We cannot pretend this problem doesn't exist," WSCF general secretary Rev. Michael Wallace said.

The cost of violence is borne not only by the women who are victims, but by their families and the perpetrators themselves. An earlier 2008 workshop – "In Partnership for Gender Justice: Towards Transformative Masculinities" – on the role that churches have to play in helping men become better partners – a new way of being male – started the work that continues in the lead-up to the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation in 2011.

The report from the Blantyre, Malawi workshop, stated unequivocally: "Churches have been complicit in gender disparity, discrimination and violence because they have failed to engage patriarchy critically. Patriarchy, as a system of male domination, has pervaded all spheres of life from culture to social organization, political and economic systems, institutions, theories and structures. This reality has resulted in the oppression of women and also large numbers of men in all spheres of life." It also recognized the shift from an exclusive look at



Voices of youth in ecumenical dialogue strong

At the beginning of 2010, at a meeting in Ethiopia, Echos – Commission on youth in the ecumenical movement – “reaffirmed its commitment to the development of the youth ecumenical movement within the WCC, within the churches and organizations outside of the WCC whose members serve in our commission, and within the broader ecumenical community”.

Echos was born from the drive for more significant inclusion of youth in the ecumenical dialogue, following the 2006 WCC Assembly in Porto Alegre, Brazil, when delegates affirmed the creation of a new body to communicate with and coordinate the involvement of youth in the life of the WCC. The commission, comprising a group of 25 youth (defined as those age 30 and under), were drawn from a wide range of churches and other ecumenical youth organizations. “Echos” is the Greek word for “sound”, signifying its desire to send the waves of its voices rippling into the future of ecumenism.

Since its first meeting in May 2007, the group has continued to build, with four working groups having been established: collaboration with the WCC, networking with the wider ecumenical movement, ecumenical formation and communications. Its plans included having a presence at various ecumenical gatherings, such as the 2010 Edinburgh conference on world mission, as well as developing an internal database that will help to match the gifts of youth around the world with the needs of the WCC. In addition, youth have been placed on WCC “Living Letters” delegations to areas struggling with violence, and are serving as members of various WCC commissions and committees.

“It’s not the time to advocate for space any more, but to solidify that space,” said Diana Fernandes dos Santos of Brazil, who serves as moderator of Echos. “Young people are all the time knocking at the doors. Now they are here. We need the WCC to say very clearly what we can do to help and how we can contribute and serve.”

Meanwhile, the Joint Working Group between the Roman Catholic Church and the WCC during its annual meeting in Spain, in October 2009, highlighted “the need to give a space of leadership and responsibility to young people in the ecumenical movement”.

women’s empowerment towards a discourse on partnership between women and men.

The aim of the ongoing work is to “hold a conversation between men and women in the context of the call for men to be partners with women in the fight against gender disparity, discrimination and violence.”

“Violence against women is a global violation of women’s rights and it is the duty of churches and all of us to take immediate steps to end it. Violence is a means of controlling women,” stated Natalie Fisher, deputy general secretary of the World YWCA. She urged the churches to take a lead on this issue: “We cannot be silent about the abuse and suffering. Silence is akin to condoning, and we must gather our collective voices to say it is no longer tolerated.”

Dr Manoj Kurian, WCC programme executive for Health and Healing, noted the compelling evidence that violence against women, girls and boys has a negative impact on the public health of society as a whole. These challenges expose serious flaws in the equality of relationships between women and men in society.

“Sexual and gender-based violence shreds the very fabric of society” said Kurian. “While it undermines the physical and psychological health of people, it also questions the integrity of our life and faith. We have no illusions that these problems will be easily solved. Our aim with the [Lenten] study is to encourage our churches and communities to examine these often unspoken and unrecognized acts of violence, so as to address the root causes. It is only by acknowledging the pain and the ongoing hurt that we can begin to seek justice, truth and ultimately the healing and reconciliation of individuals and communities.”

An Indian user of the study resources, Raj Patta, said: “Truly this campaign is making a difference in our Lenten journey. May God grant us strength to end violence against women in all parts of the world.” ■



Unity, Mission, Evangelism and Spirituality

Core to the work of the WCC is the calling of churches to work together for more faithful mission in the world and for the deepening of the spiritual dimensions of their lives in an integrated way. This programme accomplishes these goals through various ecumenical instruments such as the Faith and Order Commission, the Commission of World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) and the Ecumenical Disabilities Advocates Network (EDAN).



Faith and Order Commission meets

Because unity is finally a gift of God, “it demands a profound sense of humility and not any prideful insistence”. With this call to the “never-ending search” for unity of the church, which “is also an ever-unfolding journey”, the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I opened the 7-14 October meeting of the Faith and Order Plenary Commission at the Orthodox Academy, in Kolympari, Crete, Greece.

The meeting ended with participants noting that there was an emerging coherence between the three current studies on Nature and Mission of the Church, Sources of Authority and Moral Discernment in the Churches. A tendency to give more space to an “ecclesiology from below” based on the concrete experience of “being church in a particular context”, rather than describing the church theoretically “from above”, was encouraged.

Reporting from their group work, the Faith & Order commissioners reaffirmed the central importance of The Nature and Mission of the Church, the attempt to formulate an understanding of the church that may be widely accepted by the churches. This 2005 document has been distributed to all the commission’s member churches, and Faith and Order is still gathering responses. For most of the commissioners, more work is needed before this document can become a “convergence document”.

Among the comments that received most attention was Metropolitan Geevarghese Mor Coorilos’s suggestion to look at the reality of the church not only “from above”, but also “from below”, taking into account the daily experience of “being church” in particular contexts, citing the example of his Dalit church in Kerala, India.

As deliberations moved forward, the connection between this reflection on “the church” and the other studies became clearer. When it comes to making decisions, particularly in the area of Moral Discernment, the church is informed by its Sources of Authority.

Among these sources, Faith and Order concentrated its attention on how “Fathers and Mothers of the Church” can be perceived ecumenically. The study Sources of Authority: Tradition and Traditions will open new perspectives both for churches familiar with patristic studies and for churches that are now rediscovering the teaching of our predecessors in faith.

By looking at case studies in the divisive area of Moral Discernment in the Churches, many group participants identified other sources of authority that churches were in fact also referring to, such as the sciences, as well as contextual understandings of the role that the church should play in society. It is hoped that a better understanding of how decisions are made will create an atmosphere in which dialogue is more likely than division.

The meeting was closed by prayer, during which the Rev. Dr Susan Durber invited the participants to look at Jesus as a guest, a stranger visiting us. “In some of our contexts, and in different ways, the church now seems more to be in the ‘guest’ than the ‘host’ position”, she observed. “Hospitality is not simply the generous gift of the wealthy and powerful, it is also the skill and grace of the weaker ones,” she said. ■



Changing lives – evangelism in the 21st century

Meeting with ex-prisoners and engaging with people still in jail is all in a day's work for John Baxter-Brown, the evangelism consultant working within the WCC's unity, mission, evangelism and spirituality programme.

Baxter-Brown's face lights up when he recounts the story of one person in particular – a man he recently met, who had served 25 years in prison for murder. The story of a man named Daniel is one he cherishes, as he researches and explores how churches and Christian agencies practice the ministry of evangelism across the world.

“It took him a long time to become a Christian,” he recounts. “Years, in fact, but his repentance was very deep, and he is so honest about his painful struggle.

“But it equipped him to lead a life, not simply free from crime, but a positive, constructive life (...) he has earned the respect and admiration of many who meet him. Daniel is an example of how Jesus can change lives, taking broken people and making them whole.”

Baxter-Brown explains that the aim of the project is to “further reflect on the grassroots practice of evangelism for the WCC, churches and agencies to better understand and appreciate, and replicate this vital and exciting ministry,” bringing the WCC's specific ecumenical perspective and experience to a new mission statement of the WCC in view of the next assembly.

The contemporary missionary movement has been one of the major streams fostering ecumenism since the world mission conference in Edinburgh in 1910. When the International Missionary Council, one of the outcomes of Edinburgh, merged with the World Council of Churches in 1961, its programmatic work and responsibility was entrusted to the WCC. It led to a three-fold structure, which includes a Conference on World Mission and Evangelism, a Commission on World Mission and Evangelism and a staff group working on matters related to the Commission. Key to the work and in the run-up to the Edinburgh 1910 centennial is the relation between mission and unity, or between the church and mission; the theology of evangelism in a world of religious plurality; the search for a spirituality of mission as healing and transformation; and the reflection on Christian identity in a world of religious plurality.

WCC sees the mission challenges for the churches as finding a balance between a clear witness to the gospel, the respect for people's dignity and solidarity with those who suffer from exclusion, injustice or sickness, to name only a few. This includes evangelism, the search for inclusive communities, various forms of healing ministries, as well as covenanting for justice. In the WCC's perspective, mission must be “in Christ's way” and strive for authentic reconciliation and peace, counting on the presence and power of God's healing Spirit, in particular in situations of religious plurality.

Baxter-Brown quotes Daniel who told him about his pen-pal friendship with a woman from Canada while he was in prison, and the incredible insight it brought him, even as he recognized the irony. “He said ‘I could walk around prison. She could not get out of her wheelchair. I was free. She was happy.’” ■



Mission is at heart of church

Approaching the centenary of Edinburgh 1910, representatives of two WCC Commissions met on 3-7 March 2009 in Berekfürdő, Hungary. The Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) and the Commission on Faith and Order (F&O) both have their roots in the World Missionary Conference of 1910 and are working together to mark Edinburgh 2010. The respective working groups on ecclesiology of both Commissions recognized one another's work, in view of the fact that mission lies at the very heart of the church. They shared insights and looked toward supporting one another in future activities.

"We need your solidarity" - accompanying Dalits in their journey to liberation

Some seven years ago, two young people from Puthukkooraipetti village in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu died agonizing deaths as a crowd looked on. Allegedly forced to drink poison because they had inter-married, their bodies were later set alight.

Their tragic story is one of several accounts heard by participants during a four-day global ecumenical conference on justice for Dalits held in Bangkok, Thailand, in March 2009 to address this caste-based discrimination – a 3,500 year old scourge that affects hundreds of millions of people worldwide. In India alone, this form of discrimination affects some 160 million people who were once labeled and treated as "untouchable" and "polluted or polluting" according to Brahmanic ritual traditions, now call themselves Dalits, meaning "oppressed" or "crushed".

Although the Indian Constitution bans "discrimination by caste" and the practice of "untouchability", with two special laws in place to punish perpetrators of caste discrimination, "much remains to be desired from these constitutional guarantees and legislations," said Rev. Vincent Manoharan of the National Campaign for Dalit Rights, an independent human rights watchdog. In practice, Dalits for instance cannot intermarry, even with people considered to belong to the "lowest castes", as they are simply not even included in the bottom tier of the caste system.

The two young people, S. Murugesan (25) and D. Kannagi (22), paid a terrible price because of this form of discrimination. Murugesan was a Dalit and Kannagi was a Vanniyar of low caste.

Many believe that caste-based discrimination is so deeply entrenched that churches and human rights groups in India and other caste-affected countries say that they can hardly solve the problem on their own. The message from the 95 participants was clear: "We need your solidarity."

In a statement titled the "Bangkok Declaration and Call," conference participants, who included leaders and representatives of churches and organizations worldwide, called upon the international com-



Edinburgh 2010 – world churches mark 100 years of landmark mission event

Throughout 2009 preparations for Edinburgh 2010 – a multi-denominational and international project that commemorates the 1910 World Missionary Conference – continued. The conference, being held in Edinburgh, Scotland in June 2010, will provide new perspectives on mission for the 21st century. The centennial is considered a joint celebration of what God has done in the growth of the church over the past 100 years; repentance for all that has gone wrong in mission; and a re-commitment to a new shared vision for the present and future of God's mission in the world.

Rev. Jacques Matthey, a Swiss pastor and director of the WCC programme on unity, mission, evangelism and spirituality, said “the specificity of the common 2010 Edinburgh conference lay in the wide spectrum of churches, denominations and mission traditions united around the project.” This spectrum includes Orthodox, Anglican, Lutheran, Reformed, Methodist, Baptist, Seventh Day Adventist, Roman Catholic, Evangelical, Pentecostal and Independent traditions. “The 2010 Edinburgh conference will be the most representative of the diversity of world Christianity today,” added Matthey.



munity “to offer a platform to those representing Dalit communities” at the April 2009 UN Durban Review Conference, and urged “all participating governments to accept the inclusion of caste-based discrimination in those discussions.” Adding to the call have been responses from many countries around the world, including Brazil, Canada, Finland, Namibia, Norway and the US.

Through the Bangkok Declaration, participants at the conference (which created a partnership network that include the Lutheran World Federation, the Christian Conference of Asia and many specialized ministries and churches) committed themselves to making Dalit liberation a central mission objective.

One of the participants, Rev. Dr Lesley Anderson, chair of the Caribbean Conference of Churches (CCC), pledged to take up the concern with his Roman Catholic counterpart in the CCC, and committed himself to spreading the word within the churches globally.

Another participant, Ashraf Tannous of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, expressed his commitment this way: “With Jesus’ love in my heart, I’ll carry and beat the drums for justice and freedom for the Dalits, the Africans and other oppressed peoples, including my own, because, as Christians, we have to carry each other’s burden with courage and without fear.”

Paraphrasing Martin Luther King, Metropolitan Geevarghese Mor Coorilos of the Malankara Syrian Orthodox Church in India said, “Injustice somewhere is injustice everywhere.”

“It is up to us all to determine the outcome of the conference, but we should be guided by the principle of solidarity and accompaniment rather than mere compassion and charity for the Dalits,” said the Rev. Dr Deenabandhu Manchala, who heads the WCC just and inclusive communities programme and who is a Dalit himself.

Prof. Maake Masango of the University of Pretoria in South Africa agreed. “Advocacy does not mean taking over the lives of people for whom we are advocating. It is instead helping empower them. So we have to join and journey with them in solidarity.”

While participants at the Bangkok conference recognized progress in addressing caste-based discrimination by UN bodies such as the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and the International Labour Organization, their hopes were dashed a month later, when no mention was made of the plight of hundreds of millions of people affected by caste-based discrimination, during the Durban Review Conference held in Geneva in April. In September though, Ms. Navi Pillay, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, called for a global movement against caste discrimination similar to the one calling for an end to apartheid. ■

Public Witness: Addressing Power, Affirming Peace

Environmental disasters and climate change, the lack of food security, economic injustice, poverty, exclusion and many forms of violence are all part of our world today. Through this programme the WCC provides a common witness reflecting the churches' concerns on the international level by challenging the economic, social, political and cultural powers that exist, while offering a prophetic voice for justice, peace and security.



In peace and hope they walk with the vulnerable and oppressed

“We could clearly see several bulldozed properties and the demolished school, next to the mosque, which was still standing.” So reads a report from Ecumenical Accompaniers who witnessed the destruction wrought by Israeli bulldozers to the village of Khirbet Tana in Area C of the West Bank.

“We all stood quietly, one went to sit with the women. We weren’t sure what to say or do. After 20 minutes or so, men began to remove the metal sheets that had been the walls of the demolished structure and take them over to a new site on the other side of the track – building had begun.”

The report from January 2010 is one of scores filed over the years by participants in the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI).

In August 2009, then general secretary of the WCC Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia said in a report to the Central Committee, “occupation along with the concomitant humiliation of a whole people for over six decades constitutes not just economic and political crimes but, like anti-Semitism, it is a sin against God.”

Meanwhile, the uncertainty for many Palestinians living in West Bank, East Jerusalem (and Gaza) prevails. The West Bank separation wall continues to expand. In addition to home demolitions and evictions, Palestinian home-owners in Jerusalem are also threatened by the occupation of Israeli settlers, who vandalize private Palestinian property by cutting down trees and setting fire to fields and homes. The failure of the Israeli authorities to adequately enforce the law on violent settlers remains a concern for humanitarian groups working in the territory.

Throughout 2009, EAPPI, using their eyewitness reports, documented numerous attacks on and evictions of Palestinian families, such as the assault by Israeli settlers on the Ghawi family – a homeless family from East Jerusalem. The demolition of the house of the Shahaada family, also from East Jerusalem, was the fourth time they had seen their home destroyed. The Al-Kurd family home in Sheikh Jarrah was invaded when 40 Israeli settlers took over part of their home, throwing furniture and personal items belonging to them onto the street as the Israeli police looked on. In Khirbet Tana alone in one morning, Israeli forces demolished 16 homes, making 100 people, including 34 children, homeless.

“Ending the occupation is better for Israel. If you care deeply about Israel, you’ll care about its soul, and its soul is being eaten away by the Occupation,” reflects Gila Svirsky, a veteran Israeli peace campaigner.

More than 600 Ecumenical Accompaniers from around the world have participated in the programme since its inception in 2002, working in various capacities with local churches, Palestinian and Israeli NGOs, as well as Palestinian communities. The aim of the programme is to bring internationals to the West Bank to experience life under occupation for a period of three months, to provide



African nuclear treaty is a step toward a safer world, with church support

For the first time, the majority of the world's countries have banned nuclear weapons from their national territory. The change happened in 2009 when an all-Africa treaty entered into force in July. International civil society organizations including the WCC played a catalytic role in this development.

Burundi and other African states such as Malawi, Mozambique and Ethiopia, which had ratified the treaty, acted at a time when major powers were and continue to struggle to break out of a decade of deadlock in disarmament and non-proliferation.

"We in Africa know the value of disarmament," Burundi's first vice-president Yves Sahunyavu told WCC delegates in March 2009. Although Burundi was not directly threatened by nuclear weapons, it had been engaged in a long recovery process after decades of armed conflict.

The WCC Central Committee, while saluting Africa's new nuclear-free status in a September 2009 statement, urged Russia and the United States "to join China, Britain and France in ratifying the treaty protocols that give Africa added protection" from nuclear attacks.

a protective presence to vulnerable communities, monitor and report human rights abuses and support Palestinians and Israelis working for peace.

In June 2009, the Primate of All Ireland and Archbishop of Armagh, the Most Rev. Alan E.T. Harper, publicly endorsed the work of the EAPPI. In a letter dated June 2, he wrote that he wishes to "salute the brave and important work of the Ecumenical Accompaniers on the ground." The Most Rev. Alan Harper is the eighth Anglican bishop and the first in Ireland to have endorsed the programme since Ecumenical Accompaniers from Ireland and the UK who have returned from Israel-Palestine have asked individual UK and Irish Anglican bishops to do so.

"They have everything, we have nothing." The words are recounted by Leif, one of the Ecumenical Accompaniers, who quotes an elder in the village of Khamlet Sakariya, which was visited by the Ecumenical Accompaniers. He writes: "It is a small village, about 125 people, wedged between four Israeli settlements.

"There is a school in the village, it is threatened by demolition. It is too small and more rooms are needed. The villagers started to build, but were stopped by the Israeli authorities. We stand outside the school and look across the valley to one settlement, barely 200 meters away. We can see a big school there, newly built, and a swimming pool. The village leader with us heaves a sigh and says again, "They have everything. We have nothing". ■





A decade-long focus on overcoming violence

In early 2010, three WCC advisory groups met in Ethiopia to recognize the culmination of the Decade to Overcome Violence (DOV), the role of the church in building just peace and the forthcoming International Ecumenical Peace Convocation (IEPC) scheduled for May 2011 in Jamaica.

The meetings were hosted by the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. The group received greetings from the church's patriarch Abune Paulos, who is a president of the WCC. Speaking to the fact that the DOV had an Africa focus in 2010, the patriarch said, "We shall every time discover guidance from God to correct the inequalities of our social order, and redeem our countrymen, contemporaries, our neighbours from the hereditary poverty and suffering."

The WCC advisory groups included the WCC Commission on Youth in the Ecumenical Movement (Echos), the DOV Reference Group and the IEPC Planning Committee. The group members came from Asia, Europe, the Pacific, the Caribbean and the Americas.

A prayerful call of faith, hope and love from the heart of Palestinian suffering

As 2009 drew to a close, Palestinian Christians, representing a diverse group of churches and church-related organizations, issued a call for an end to the occupation of Palestine by Israel. It was a call of faith, hope and love, and one born from the pain of suffering. In response to the question, "Why now", the statement read: "Today we have reached a dead end in the tragedy of the Palestinian people."

Known as "The Kairos Document", the 10-point call, which was issued in Bethlehem on 11 December, echoed a similar one from the mid-1980s, when South African churches entreated the world to end the repressive regime of apartheid. The 2009 call put questions to the international community, political leaders in the region and the churches worldwide about their contribution to the Palestinian people's pursuit of freedom and justice.

Yet, even in the midst of what they described as "our catastrophe", the authors of the document portrayed it as "a moment of truth", issued in the belief that as in the mid-1980s in South Africa, this call would serve to galvanize churches and the wider public in a concerted effort to claim justice for the Palestinian people. "Come and see [so we can make known to you] the truth of our reality."

Expressing their pain, the signatories to the call, who included Patriarch Emeritus Michel Sabbah from the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, and Archbishop Theodosios Atallah Hanna of Sebastia from the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem, decried the emptiness of the promises and pronouncements about peace in the region. "They say: 'Peace, peace' when there is no peace." (Jer. 6:14). "These days, everyone is speaking about peace in the Middle East and the peace process. So far, however, these are simply words."

The document again reminded the world about the separation wall erected on Palestinian territory, the blockade of Gaza, how Israeli settlements ravage their land, the humiliation at military checkpoints, the restrictions of religious liberty and controlled access to holy places, the plight of refugees awaiting their right of return, prisoners languishing in Israeli prisons and Israel's blatant disregard of international law, as well as the paralysis of the international community in the face of this tragedy. While "the decision-makers content themselves with managing the crisis rather than committing themselves to the serious task of finding a way to resolve it, the hearts of the faithful are filled with pain and with questioning."

The call was issued during an event hosted by the International Centre of Bethlehem (Dar Al Nadwa) that brought more than 80 people from around the world together. A message sent by Archbishop Desmond Tutu from South Africa read: "Despite your suffering under the illegal occupation, you are coming together to say, quite tremendously, that your faith, hope and love compel you to keep on knowing that the God of the Bible is on your side and will bring you the freedom and the justice you long for".

Speaking for the All Africa Conference of Churches, Melaku Kifle highlighted the fact that the lessons learned from the cruel circumstances of Palestinian Christians have informed their ability to



“clarify their faith and vocation better ... (and) in the midst of suffering and pain ... to bear the strength of love rather than of revenge”.

Rabbi Brian Walt of the Jewish Fast for Gaza described how he was “struck by the balance in the document between

the spiritual commitment to non-violent, faith-based resistance to the injustice inflicted on the Palestinian people alongside a profound openness to the humanity of the oppressor.”

Offering a response from a Dalit perspective in India, Peniel Jesudason Rufus Rajkumar, a lecturer at United Theological College, Bangalore, defined his sense of being a co-sufferer as a Dalit, and described how it prompted the Dalits to “enter into affirmative solidarity.” Striking a note which others also underscored, he acknowledged the “resilience which you have creatively envisioned to sustain a holistic vision of total liberation – even for your oppressors”.

Prof. Dr Samuel Pagan from Dar al-Kalima College in Bethlehem, speaking from a Puerto Rican angle, regarded the Kairos document with gratitude because the document “includes the aspirations, dreams and hopes of the peace with justice for the people in Palestine, Israel, Latin America and the rest of the world”. It is, he affirmed, a “firm message of hope, a solid statement of faith, and a serious prophetic word of encouragement, vision, dignity and future.”

Dr Barakat Fawzi, Bethlehem University, lamented how political leaders, in Palestine, Israel and in the international community, had failed to create a just peace despite the many opportunities. The absence of political will is obvious. This is why it is important that religious leaders with ideas and a commitment to peace step in and accentuate the search for peace, he said. This is not a matter of choice, but a religious duty and obligation. Religious values can well be the foundation for undoing the assaults on human dignity now coming out of the occupation.

Former World Council of Churches general secretary, Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia who ended his term in 2009, said that the endorsement by the Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem of the “Kairos Palestine Document” added integrity, authority and force to the message of the document. “They have, in fact, signified their support in entirety to the cry of their children by invoking God’s blessings on them and wishing the Kairos initiative more power to maintain and enhance their efforts towards actualizing the message of the Kairos.”

The Kairos Palestine Document is considered an instrument and its launch, the beginning of a new phase of work within the context of public witness, addressing power and affirming peace. ■

From a small seed of climate campaigning, a global ecumenical movement grows

Tuvalu is a series of South Pacific atolls that stand barely a meter above sea level and are threatened by rising sea levels. It is one example of the effects of climate change that are being experienced dramatically in some countries and regions of the world, and nowhere more so than in the Pacific, Africa, the Caribbean and South East Asia – a situation that has prompted the WCC's urgent public call to develop the comprehensive policies urgently needed to reverse the impact of climate change on the poor and the earth.



Tutu and bell-ringing for climate justice

A wave of ringing bells embraced the globe in December 2009, when churches sent a strong message to world leaders gathered at the UN climate summit in Copenhagen – there is only one world and in order to preserve it, bold action needs to be taken now.

“We have only one world, this world. If we destroy it, we have nothing else,” said Archbishop Desmond Tutu, speaking at a press conference after an ecumenical celebration for climate justice in the Copenhagen Cathedral on 13 December. Tutu was in Copenhagen at the invitation of the WCC.

Climate change effects are being felt most “by those who did not cause it, the poor and the vulnerable,” Tutu said, speaking before a crowd at Copenhagen's City Hall Square. This is the “injustice of climate change,” that poor countries are the ones “that have to pay for something they didn't cause.”

Recognizing that when creation is threatened, churches and Christians are called to speak out and act as an expression of their commitment to life, justice and love, the WCC continues to stress climate change as a matter of justice, as “those who are and will increasingly be affected are the impoverished and vulnerable communities of the global South”. The WCC maintains that a fair climate deal would include “the recognition of the historic responsibility for the CO₂ [carbon dioxide] emissions of industrialized countries, a measurable commitment to have a maximum of 350 ppm [parts per million] of CO₂ in the atmosphere, and concrete ways of adaptation, mitigation, technology transfer and funding.”

In December 2009, the work of the WCC on climate change increased in advance of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of Parties (COP) held in Copenhagen, Denmark. A statement submitted to the high level segment of the COP, included reminders of the churches and international church organizations' firm conviction that there is an undeniable historical responsibility on the part of the industrialized countries for the climate change crisis the world is facing. The leaders noted that “this is a matter of justice and a call to moral responsibility”, underlining the importance of legally-binding commitments to addressing this crisis, that recognize a common and differentiated responsibility. Furthermore, the statement called: “Do not be afraid, act now!”

Rev. Tofiga Falani, a member of the WCC Central Committee and president of the Congregational Christian Church of Tuvalu, was one of thousands of people who made the journey to Copenhagen. Travelling over two days from the South Pacific atolls of Tuvalu via Fiji, New Zealand, the United States and United Kingdom, Rev. Tofiga Falani, said his was one small voice from a place you can't even see on the world map.

“We want to survive!” he said of the 12,000 people on Tuvalu and others on small islands in the South Pacific, which according to climate scientists are at the forefront of the climate change issue.

“We know the problem,” Joy Kennedy, a member of the World Council of Churches (WCC) Working Group on Climate Change and the United Church of Canada, said at a faith-based side-event organized by the WCC and Caritas Internationalis, during COP 15. “The church needs to move from a theology of dominance,” she added, “and for the sake of climate justice we need to find ways to replace greed with an economy of enough.”

And although the Copenhagen Accord failed to “reach the expectations of the ecumenical movement and the larger civil society”, the WCC executive committee, during a meeting in Bossey, Switzerland, in February 2010, encouraged the ecumenical movement “to strengthen further their commitment and to foster their cooperation with regard to climate change, especially in the process towards and at COP 16 in Mexico”. ■



Church leaders call for an inter-Korean confederation prior to reunification

Nearly 140 leaders from the world's churches, North and South Koreans among them, issued a call for the formation of an inter-Korean confederation even before complete reunification of Korea can take place. Agreement was reached at the close of a three-day meeting, sponsored by the WCC and the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), in Tsuen Wan, Hong Kong in October 2009. During the meeting, Christian leaders expressed unrelenting hope for peace and reconciliation among Koreans, despite the stark realities of the ongoing division of the Korean peninsula.

The call for a confederation came in a communiqué developed by the group at the end of their international consultation on Korean reunification. The "Tsuen Wan Communiqué" said the confederation option would involve progressive steps such as peaceful co-existence and the furthering of economic cooperation between the two Koreas.

The "confederation system would respect both governments", said the Rev. Kang Yong Sop, chairman of the Korea Christian Federation of North Korea.

"North and South Korea must first recognize each other's systems and engage in cooperation in any field possible, and institutionalize the results," said Suh Bo Hyug, a member of the National Council of Churches in Korea's reconciliation and reunification committee: "Only then will they move closer to reunification."

Church leaders from 30 different countries, including four church leaders from North Korea and a delegation of 50 South Koreans, attended the consultation. In addition to calling for an inter-Korean confederation, the church leaders also encouraged the international community to allow North and South Korea to enter into direct negotiations to ease tensions between the two countries.

They called for all sanctions against North Korea imposed by the United Nations Security Council to be lifted, for immediate bilateral talks between the United States and North Korea, and for North and South Korea to implement fully the 15 June 2000 North-South Joint Declaration and the 4 October 2007 Declaration, both of which spelled out a number of goals and steps toward reunification.

In a brief but powerful foretaste of Korean reunification, two Korean pastors – one from the north, one from the south – bridged more than 60 years of separation in jointly presiding over a celebration of the eucharist during a worship service commemorating more than 25 years of work toward bringing peace and reconciliation to the divided Korean peninsula. The "Tozanso Process", which brings together Christians from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the north and the Republic of Korea in the south, as well as representatives of partner churches from other nations, was initiated by the World Council of Churches (WCC) in 1984. The service was part of an international consultation organized by the WCC and the Christian Conference of Asia, called to celebrate 25 years of churches and ecumenical bodies from around the globe working to pave the way for further cooperation on the issue of Korean reunification. ■



Justice, Diakonia and Responsibility for Creation

At the heart of the WCC's work is an ecumenical commitment to justice and enabling people to transform their own lives by meeting immediate human need, enabling churches to work together to address the structural roots of injustice and helping them to identify and combat threats to creation. This programme works to hold together in new and creative ways these different forms of ecumenical engagement with justice, diakonia and responsibility for God's creation.



Justice not greed

As the world's economy imploded, 2009 saw the WCC call on world governments to address the current economic financial crisis, to uphold their commitments to the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals particularly goal number eight calling for development cooperation, and to seek ways of linking finance and real economy in the context of the United Nations.

Having first articulated its concerns about finance and economics in 1984 when it issued a call for a new international order based on ethical principles and social justice, the WCC convened a meeting of the Advisory Group on Economic Matters (AGEM) in May 2009. The group was tasked with discerning what is at stake in the current financial architecture, propose a process that could lead to a new financial architecture and outline the theological and ethical basis for such a new economic architecture.

In a strongly worded statement in October that emerged out of the work of the AGEM, the WCC Central Committee posed a challenge to churches not to "retreat from their prophetic role, "observing that churches "have also been complicit" in "this speculative financial system and its embedded greed". It noted that "the global financial system has enriched some people but has harmed many more, creating poverty, unemployment, hunger and death [and is] widening the gap between rich and poor".

Closely linked to the call for "a new ethos and culture, which reflects the values of solidarity, common good and inclusion", is another call by WCC on eco-justice and ecological debt. The statement which included hard economic calculations as well as biblical, spiritual, cultural and social dimensions of indebtedness, said "Christians have a deep moral obligation to promote ecological justice by addressing our debts to peoples most affected by ecological destruction and to the earth itself".

The WCC president from Latin America, Dr Ofelia Ortega of Cuba, said this is a spiritual issue, not just a moral one. "The Bible is an ecological treatise" from beginning to end, Ortega said. She described care for creation as an "axis" that runs through the Word of God. "Our pastoral work in our churches must be radically ecological," she said.

"From a Christian perspective there is no system so sacred that it could not be changed," says Dr Rogate Mshana, then-WCC executive for Poverty, Wealth and Ecology.

"Nobody has a blue-print for a new model of a global financial system. But as the current system is not the result of some blue-print but of an accumulative step-by-step process along time, so we need to press for transformative reforms at different levels; civil society organizations and churches around the world have a lot to contribute in this regard", said Mshana.

In early 2009 church and civil society activists called for a long-overdue radical reform of global finances during the World Social Forum in Belém, Brazil. The forum is the biggest global gathering of the "alter-globalization" movement, which seeks to resist exploitative economic globalization, instead promoting alternative, value-based



forms of social and economic organization. Gathering 130,000 social activists from more than 140 countries over six days at the gateway of the Amazon region, the forum also highlighted the environmental crisis and the voices of indigenous peoples.

The quest for viable alternatives to the current global financial system was one of the main issues discussed at the event. “Meaningful alternatives to current global finances need to fulfill two fundamental requisites,” says Martin Gück, from Kairos Europe, a network of



Global financial crisis

The current global financial crisis must be more than just an occasion for “short term financial bail out actions.” It must be viewed as an opportunity to seek “long term transformation based on sound ethical and moral principles.” As a result, a “new financial architecture” should be developed “under the aegis of the United Nations where broad participation of all countries and the civil society could take place.”

This is, in a nutshell, the proposal made by the World Council of Churches general secretary Samuel Kobia in a 27 March letter to UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown ahead of the G20 summit which took place on 2 April in London. At the time Brown held the rotating presidency of the G20, an informal grouping of nations that includes the group of eight the most developed countries (the “G8”) and a number of emerging economic powers.

Setting the financial crisis in a broader context, the WCC general secretary stated that “churches believe that fighting global poverty, the food crisis and climate change should be given the same attention” as salvaging institutions from the financial meltdown.

church-related justice movements. Gück was also a speaker at the WCC-sponsored panel in Belém.

Some 20 civil society organizations and networks concerned with economic justice issues were able to agree on a number of concrete proposals to reform the current global financial system. “We call for the United Nations, reformed and democratized, to be put at the centre of the reform of the financial system,” says Marta Ruiz of the European Network on Debt and Development (Eurodad), who acted as spokesperson for the financial crisis caucus in Belém.

The list of key proposals included mechanisms to control international capital flows, an international monetary system based on regional reserve currencies, citizens’ control of banks and financial institutions, progressive taxation schemes both at national and international levels, prohibition of speculative funds and non-regulated markets, eradication of speculation on primary products including food and elimination of tax havens.

“Behind the financial crisis is the ecological one,” says Bertille Darragon, a French ecological activist. “We need to abandon the model of unlimited economic growth and start thinking in terms of ‘de-growth’ *décroissance* - that is, to decrease the consumption of resources and energy, beginning with the very rich but including the middle classes both in the North and the South.” ■

Every story needs a listener – the journey from victim to survivor to victor

For a week during the summer in 2009, 29 participants from 20 countries around the world took part in a healing journey of at times deeply painful discovery, but also one of hope. They gathered in a circle, finding solace in being in a safe space, and listened to each other’s stories. Brought together to share in the “Healing of Memories and Reconciling Communities” seminar, the week-long course took them on a path of listening to the pain of the journey of the human family from different contexts, dealing with healing, and in a sense, becoming each other’s healers.

Part of a wider effort to strengthen ecumenical networks in dealing



Water for life and creation

In 2009 the Ecumenical Water Network (EWN) and the Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI) organized a meeting in Lima, Peru, called “Water for Life and Creation”. The water network strives to promote the preservation, responsible management and equitable distribution of water for all, based on the understanding that water is a gift of God and a fundamental human right. It also aims to facilitate an exchange of information and provide materials for churches, other Christian organizations, partners and individuals about the global water crisis and community-based solutions and initiatives.

The three-day conference in November, focused on the need for water management to always be endorsed by communities, which should organize to protect their right to water. Participants made field visits to Lima’s urban periphery to observe the vitality and strength of community organizations that have taken responsibility for promoting change and transforming their communities. At the close of the consultation, participants established a mechanism to promote continuity and monitoring of the individual and institutional commitments made at the conference.

Healing and holiness – Christian perspectives on stem cell research

The rapidly developing field of stem cell research creates immense amounts of money in private and public grants, but it also poses deep ethical questions regarding health justice and the dignity of human life. In November 2009, some 40 scientists, ethicists and theologians at a WCC sponsored international consultation in Greece addressed key ethical and social issues related to this field of research.

Dr Fabian Salazar Guerrero from Latin America challenged his listeners: “The problems discussed in this consultation have world dimensions. But those in the poorest regions of the world are excluded from discussions. This exclusion kills in a long agony.” Concerns for disparity in research spending matched a deep sense of responsibility. From a Jewish perspective, Prof. Aviad Raz put it this way: “We are forced to rethink humility, self-awareness, and accountability in the wider context of sustainable economy, the environment, equity and disparities, and social justice. We are all in this boat together.”

with reconciliation, the seminar was organized by the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey for its summer programme. It also falls under the umbrella of the health and healing project of the WCC, which supports the churches’ work in the field of health and healing, with an emphasis on responding to HIV and AIDS, mental health, and the promotion of reconciliation and the “healing of memories”.

With the help of ecumenical research institutes with experience in this area, the project is paving the way towards work on the “Healing of Memories and Reconciling Communities” to promote a culture of healing and reconciliation.

The seminar was led by the founder of the Institute of Healing of Memories, Fr. Michael Lapsley, an Anglican priest, who is a pioneer in bringing about healing and reconciliation the world over. His own story is a deeply painful one of being a victim when he was targeted by the apartheid regime after the uprising and massacre of young people in Soweto in the 1970s. He paid a brutal price for working as a chaplain for the African National Congress – first exiled by the regime from South Africa, he then lost his hands and an eye to a letter bomb, which also shattered his eardrums. In spite of good medical attention and care, the first four months after the assassination attempt left him feeling utterly helpless. However, in an outpouring of concern, thousands of people from around the world prayed for him and sent him goodwill messages. It was the first step in a journey from being a victim first, to becoming a survivor and coping, before finally completing the journey to becoming a victor, by taking back power.

“Individuals, communities and nations need to deal with the past to minimize the poisonous, venomous feelings connected to painful memories, so that they can take the liberating path from victim to survivor to victor,” said Fr. Lapsley.

Unfortunately, often in times of oppression, the moral order is inverted. “You are tortured because you are a bad man or you are abused because you are a bad woman. Unfortunately, many people who are victims, start believing that they are to blame, inferior and deserve the persecution that is perpetrated on them,” he explains. “And many oppressed peoples do not have access to a safe space and the opportunity for healing.”

It was to address what he describes as a “silent suffering majority” that he started the institute. The people he refers to are the tens of thousands of South Africans who did not benefit from telling their stories during the seminal Truth and Reconciliation Commission that saw 23,000 people telling stories of gross human rights violations (torture, murder attempted murder, severe maltreatment.) But only 7,700 perpetrators sought amnesty, and of those, only ten percent were granted a reprieve. “For hundreds of thousands of people there is no reconciliation, no forgiveness, nobody to reconcile with or to forgive. The poison, bitterness and deep hurt remained,” Fr. Lapsley says. The institute has since helped tens of thousands of individuals and hundreds of communities across continents, assisting them in the journey from victim to survivor to victor. It is now working with the WCC to further train and strengthen its member churches’ capacity, as well as that of the wider ecumenical fellowship in finding “healing of memories”. ■

Education and Ecumenical Formation

Ecumenical formation at community and academic levels is vital for the renewal of the ecumenical movement. The Ecumenical Institute at Bossey provides ecumenical formation and supports churches, ecumenical bodies and theological institutions through developing capacity, contextualized curricula and educational methodologies. The Ecumenical Institute at Bossey is an international centre for encounter, dialogue and formation. Founded in 1946, the Institute brings together people from diverse churches, cultures and regional backgrounds for ecumenical learning, academic study and personal exchange.



Deconstructing ecumenism

Serving eight congregations spread over a distance of 110 km is something that Rev. Georgina Mukupa from Zambia takes in her stride. The United Church of Zambia pastor smiles broadly when she talks about juggling all the responsibilities that come with her calling, while at the same time grappling with the big theological questions that arise when you are a graduate student in a Master of Theology in Ecumenical Studies programme.

Mukupa says that being part of the student body at the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey is part of her “spiritual journey”, and that from the beginning, she felt that being here, with different people, from different backgrounds and different faiths, is about “the spirit of ecumenism”.

“Bossey is my great experience”, says Wararat Chaisuk, a Presbyterian from Thailand and enrolled in the Master of Advanced Ecumenical Studies course. “Here we can share experiences about our faith and I have made new friends from around the world” referring to her roommate from Romania. “We can live together. I can have discussions with a Dominican Sister from the Philippines and Lutheran sister from Tanzania. Even our visit to the Lutheran Church in Geneva is such a new experience.”

Part of the mission of the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey is to shape ecumenical thought through inter-cultural and inter-confessional encounter, and through common worship and life in community. Ecumenical formation, as well as faith nurturing at community and academic levels, are considered vital for the renewal of the ecumenical movement and provide living proof of the value of the programme.

Kateryna Kuks, who is from the Republic of Belarus, and is a candidate in the Master of Theology in Ecumenical Studies, says that “the exposure visits” that she is experiencing at Bossey “are really very good”. Although she appreciates the opportunity to learn about ecumenism in general, she is more interested, coming as she does from the Russian Orthodox faith, in the World Council of Churches’ view of ecumenism. But her real interest is in the system of theological education. “I feel I have a ‘theological’ responsibility”, she says even as she acknowledges the many barriers that still exist for her as a woman.

Academically attached to the University of Geneva through the autonomous Faculty of Protestant Theology since 1952, the institute has seen women graduate, although their numbers are still low. Considered a laboratory for the ecumenical movement, Bossey creates spaces for the exploration of challenging issues facing the churches, such as the role of women in “training the leadership in the church”.



Philip A. Potter Library

The library of the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva was renamed the Philip A. Potter Library in November in honour of the third general secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC).

In a ceremony which gathered some 70-80 guests spanning four generations of the ecumenical movement, general secretary Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia said the decision to honour a “giant of the ecumenical movement” was taken at the September 2008 WCC Executive Committee meeting in Lübeck, Germany.

Potter became general secretary of the WCC in 1972 and retired from that position in 1984. At the WCC’s Ninth Assembly in Porto Alegre, Brazil in 2006, Potter was the only person among the several thousand in attendance who could make the claim of having attended every WCC assembly since the first assembly in 1948.

He served as the spokesman for youth at the WCC assemblies in 1948 and 1954, was the chair of the World Student Christian Federation from 1960 to 1968 and director of the WCC division of world mission and evangelism from 1967 to 1972.

“I always wanted to know more about God”, reflects Ukrainian Iryna Havryshkevych, whose faith tradition is Greek-Catholic. Her quest for knowledge first saw her achieve a Masters degree in Economics and Business, and then brought her here, to Bossey to graduate in the Master of Advanced Ecumenical Studies. She explains that from the age of 16, she wanted to study theology, but “never dared.” She pauses, and then explains that as she cannot be ordained in her church, “people always ask ‘what will you do, who will you be?’ But you cannot believe in an occupation”, adding that right now, for her, the more important question is “what is my faith?”

“There is so much sharing, so many discussions that are so much deeper than those [with friends] back home,” adds Koni Patrick, who is a member of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria. Living and studying at Bossey is “making it all come alive”, says this Master of Theology in Ecumenical Studies student. Smiling, she reflects that she is thinking of applying her knowledge in making a difference when she graduates and returns home. “I am thinking of working with and for women,” she says. She calls her pursuits “peace work”, referring to the ongoing inter-faith clashes that have marred peace efforts in the north of her country. As a theologian, she believes that “women have a role to play”. ■





Living and studying side by side is a transformative experience for young religious leaders

“Formation is about much more than the accumulation of knowledge. ‘Lived ecumenism’: intentionally sharing life. Cultures separate people more than doctrines of faith.”

So reflected Darryn Hewson, a pastor from Vashon United Methodist Church in the US, on Day 2 of his blog, Building an Interfaith Community. One of 30 students, Hewson had embarked on a journey that would see him living and studying side by side with 29 other students at Bossey, Switzerland, during a four-week summer course in 2009. With ten students each representing the three Abrahamic faiths, the course, co-organised by the Ecumenical Institute, the WCC programme on inter-religious dialogue and cooperation, the Inter-knowing Foundation (Muslim) and the Racines et Sources Foundation (Jewish), posed the question: “What can we, as people of faith, do to respond and to overcome the pressing challenges of our time and build together a mutually accountable society based on respect and cooperation?”

“I think that whenever you experience something outside of your routine it changes you,” wrote Hewson many weeks later, explaining that if that “something” was “profound, it changes you even more.”

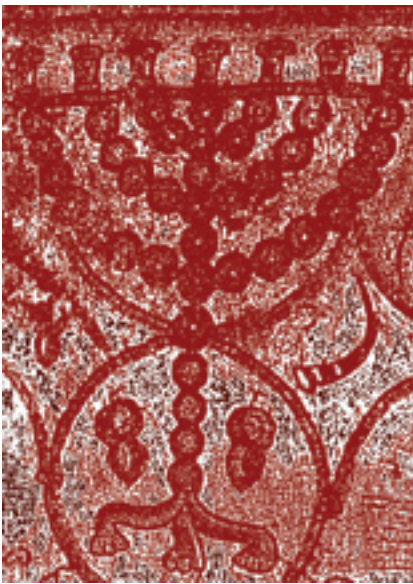
The 30 young people, between the ages of 25 and 35, spent the month engaging with religious leaders and speakers from the Christian, Islamic and Judaic faith traditions. As part of their immersion in an inter-faith environment, daily morning prayers were prepared alternately by the Christian, Jewish and Muslim participants. The group also attended services in a church, synagogue and mosque in Geneva.

Lubna Alzaroo, a student in English literature at the University of Bethlehem, said that the course had highlighted for her the reality of religious pluralism in today’s world, and helped her understand its value. “There are many truths, and my truth can be different from another person’s truth, but it’s alright,” she said. “It’s okay if people are different, because that’s what society is based upon – people’s diversity and differences.”

Alzaroo was one of the ten Muslims in the group, hailing from countries as diverse as Romania, Indonesia and the Philippines. Another participant, Sarah Abdullah, lives in a town of 600 people in South Carolina, USA, where she and her mother are the only Muslims.

“It’s a predominantly Christian culture,” she said. “I think inter-faith dialogue is important for this area, because when I first moved there, people were shocked and couldn’t work out who I was and where I came from.” For Abdullah, the course had prepared her to engage with the people in her community when she returns home. “I learned a lot of things about Christianity that I didn’t know, even though I’ve spent most of my life living in a Christian country,” she said. “It’s broadened my horizons – it’s helped me think about the world beyond the States. Now that I have a better understanding of Christianity, I can relate better with the Christians around me.”

Jessica Sacks, who grew up in an Orthodox Jewish home in the UK,



Theological education

In one of the most far-reaching theological curriculum reforms worldwide, the Senate of Serampore College in Madurai, India has developed a curriculum based on three pillars: contextual education, interdisciplinary dialogue and social relevance.

The new curriculum takes up major impulses and concerns of the World Council of Churches (WCC) project on Ecumenical Theological Education (ETE), such as an approach to theological education taking into account contextual, interdisciplinary aspects and the perspective of the marginalized. A gradual process of implementation of the new curriculum in theological colleges was started in June 2009.

At the forefront of this new curriculum is the Senate of Serampore College, which dates back to 1827 and is the oldest ecumenical organization in India. Since 1975 it has provided a national structure for theological education. With the affiliation of theological education institutions in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal, the college developed into an international ecumenical body. Over the past 50 years, its membership has increased from 18 to more than 50 theological colleges.

but later moved to Israel and is now living in Jerusalem, explained that her reality was a street that was home to both Jewish Israelis and at least one Palestinian Israeli family. “I come from a place where you can’t afford not to engage in interfaith dialogue; a place where I live in very close proximity to people whose language is different and who read the place we live in completely differently,” she said. “I have wanted to knock on their door,” she said, “but am still not sure whether it’s possible, or what they would think.”

As a student at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem she was a member of a group of Muslim and Jewish female students who met regularly to learn about each other’s faiths. The impact may have been small, but it was an important starting point, she said. “For us that was significant, and we formed friendships. Change will come through us each working in our own communities to try and open them up a little more.”

“Religion is so often seen as a barrier to peace, but peace is a central theme across the religions and a good basis for discussions about interfaith community-building,” said Rabbi Delphine Horvilleur, one of only a few female rabbis in France and a guest speaker during the course.

“It’s disturbing in interfaith dialogue that there is a tendency to move towards this idea of absolute sameness – an attempt to synchronize all the positions,” she said. “To create the idea that there is absolute no difference between the religions can be a big threat.”

But she said there was also a danger at the other end of the spectrum: “The other most common threat is the idea that there is only one truth, or that ‘my truth is truer than your truth’.” Charting a middle road between these two extremes was the key to constructive dialogue, she said.

Five weeks after he had joined the other students at Bossey, Hewson ended his journey as part of the Building an Inter-faith Community course with a final entry to his blog:

SUNDAY, AUGUST 9, 2009

... I don't think you can realize until after you have returned to the routine how you have been effected and affected by the other. I am home now from five weeks of extraordinary experience and I am excited to see for myself how I have been changed. I left with an open mind and I return with perhaps an even more open one (though not in the way I might have expected). ... After a month I feel known at least by the people who wanted to know me and I feel like in some ways I shared more of myself in those four weeks than I have had the chance to share in years with a church. ... I am inspired by the relationships that I formed and I am changed I believe for the better because of those relationships and this experience.

Posted by Pastor Darryn Hewson ■



Inter-Religious Dialogue and Cooperation

The first decade of the 21st century has seen an increase in the importance of the role of religion in bridging cultural differences. The key role religion can play in conflict resolution, seeking justice and peace-building has never been more evident than it is today. This programme promotes contact between Christians and neighbours of other faiths primarily through multi-lateral and bi-lateral encounters and dialogue aimed at building trust, meeting common challenges and addressing conflict and divisive issues through cooperation.



Church leaders in Iraq unite to strengthen and uphold Christian presence

In February 2010, almost exactly a year to the day after a meeting in Dar Sayedat Al Jabal, Fatka, Lebanon, by church leaders from all over Iraq to discuss the situation of its Christian community, representatives of the 14 churches in the country founded the Council of Christian Church Leaders of Iraq. The formation of the council of church leaders – an event that took place in Baghdad – came at a time when sectarian violence, including many deadly attacks on Christian citizens and churches, has forced members of religious minorities to flee their homes.

Since the US-led invasion in 2003 alone, thousands of people – mostly civilians – have been killed, with millions of people displaced internally or forced to flee as refugees. Dozens of churches and mosques have been bombed and more than half of the Christian population has fled the country. Again in February 2010, a spate of violent attacks targeted the Christian community in the northern city of Mosul.

The February 2009 meeting in Lebanon, co-organized by the WCC, saw Iraqi church leaders pledge “to work together on establishing an ecumenical forum for all Iraqi church leaders that allows them to speak with a common voice to religious and political authorities inside and outside of Iraq”. The pledge also included strengthening “existing relations with Muslims” and establishing new channels for dialogue and cooperation “in order to promote a constructive and peaceful co-existence based on mutual respect and good citizenship.”

Participants in the meeting, said that “Christians have belonged to Iraq since the nation’s birth” and that they were not “merely a minority, but an essential part of Iraqi society and deeply rooted in its history and civilization.”

The discussion included addressing the common challenges facing Iraqis, and particularly Christians, as well as the issue of safety and security and forced migration, given that “as authentic children of this land”, they have the right to live freely in it and enjoy equal rights and responsibilities along with all other citizens.

Highlighting the role of Iraqi Christians in building educational



Honest dialogue: the basis for inter-faith encounters

The WCC highlighted honesty in dialogue as the basis of meaningful interfaith encounters during the World Conference on Dialogue involving Muslim, Christian and Jewish participants in September 2009. The conference “Initiative of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques on dialogue and its impact on disseminating human values” was organized by the general secretariat of the Muslim World League in Geneva, between 30 September and 1 October.

Then WCC general secretary Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia, who spoke at the opening of the conference, said that honest dialogue means that “both convergences and genuine differences must be recognized. Because we are different, we each have something unique to contribute, and every contribution matters.” Rev. Dr. Olav Fykse Tveit, who took office as WCC’s general secretary in January 2010, affirmed during one of the panel discussions that “it is time for dialogue, ‘honest dialogue’, about our attitudes to our neighbour, about our common responsibility toward the earth and toward the coming generations”.

and social institutions that contribute to national reconciliation, the church leaders emphasized peace building and stability, based on respect of diversity and equal citizenship with all Iraqis beyond their religious or ethnic adherence. They also called on Iraqi Christians not to leave the country, even as violent attacks against Christians continued, but to stay in their homeland and participate actively in its rebuilding and its development.

“The solution to current conditions lies not in emptying Iraq of its human resources,” they agreed, calling on the churches in the West to “focus efforts on bringing back security and stability inside Iraq for all Iraqis.”

The new council includes all patriarchs, archbishops, bishops and heads of churches in Iraq from the 14 Christian communities registered in Iraq since 1982, belonging to the Catholic, Eastern and Oriental Orthodox as well as Protestant traditions.

In a letter to the Council, the WCC general secretary expressed the solidarity of churches all over the world with the Iraqi Christians. “We commit ourselves as a fellowship of churches from around the world to accompany you in the arduous tasks that face the Iraqi churches in the rebuilding of your nation.” ■



Women and religious pluralism

The Christian-Muslim women's network held its third meeting in Geneva in December 2009 to discuss case studies of women's contribution to peacemaking in different multi-religious contexts. From locations as varied as Senegal and Indonesia the case studies reflected reconciliation work in a post-conflict Moluccas Islands to friendship groups between immigrant and local Swedish women in Gothenburg, Sweden. The methods practiced in different contexts are included in a forthcoming book about "Methodologies Practiced by Women in Interreligious Dialogue" to be published on the Internet. The book, which is a collection of the case studies, reflects the story of building this network between WCC and the Institute for Interreligious Dialogue in Tehran. Also included are observations and reflections done by the group about key elements in the process of dialogue and peacemaking such as space, solidarity, empowerment, hospitality, friendship and belonging together. The Church of Sweden has also contributed to the establishing and development of this network.

"Theologies of the other" – establishing inter-religious trust and respect

Listening to allegations from around the world about unethical practices of conversion by some Christian groups, a think tank of scholars from five major religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism) undertook a three-year-long study of this question. The work of the "Thinking Together" group, which concluded in 2009, will be published in 2010.

At the heart of the work lay the recognition that "it is about walking in the other's shoes," said Dr Shanta Premawardhana, who coordinated the project for WCC's programme Interreligious Dialogue and Cooperation. "If 'Thinking Together' has taught us anything, it is that Christians, together with other religious leaders, need to realize that our theologies must be subjected to the testing, sharpening and refining that comes from interaction with other religious scholars," he said.

This effort was supplemented by another: developing of a code of conduct on conversion, done in partnership with the Vatican and the World Evangelical Alliance. This work started formally in 2006, with a multi-faith hearing entitled "Conversion – Assessing the Reality," which affirmed that "while everyone has a right to invite others to an understanding of their faith, it should not be exercised by violating other's rights and religious sensibilities..." This was followed by a consultation of Christians from many traditions in 2007, entitled "Towards an Ethical Approach to Conversion." Presently titled "Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World: Recommendations for a Code of Conduct" the document, rather than presuming to be universally relevant, encourages churches in their national and local contexts to write their own codes of conduct using not only the document for their guidance but also the process of ecumenically engaging Protestant, Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Evangelical, Pentecostal churches.

The general secretary of the Council of Churches of Malaysia and co-moderator of the WCC's Faith and Order commission, Rev. Dr Hermen Shastri, proposed that the fundamental ethos of the code of conduct be an attitude of respect for the right of the faithful of any religion to their beliefs. "Religious preachers need to be told that no religion has a monopoly on the truth, that there are many ways to find salvation."

According to WEA executive council member John Langlois, the code of conduct should express "repentance for past wrongdoings so as to make clear that the mentality of superiority in regard to other religions has been overcome."

The work of the "Thinking Together" group of scholars, and the work on establishing a code of conduct on conversion are a part of a larger work of Religious Pluralism and Christian Self-Understanding, which seeks to deepen the theological understanding of the churches on engaging other religious communities in dialogue and cooperation.

During early March 2010, the Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, general secretary of the WCC, and Rev. Dr Geoff Tunnicliffe, international director of the World Evangelical Alliance, met to discuss common

Inter-Religious Dialogue and Cooperation

Religious symbols and idioms are sometimes used to promote political interests, causing tensions and conflicts within communities where people of different religions have to live together. Faith communities are at times caught in the middle of such conflicts. In today's increasingly pluralistic and interdependent societies, religious intolerance can cause even more tension with devastating consequences.

With nearly forty years of systematic exploration of inter-religious dialogue, the WCC continues to engage in and encourage building relationships of trust and respect between Christians and other faith communities. Genuine dialogue implies the recognition of and respect for differences. At the same time, it seeks to discover and appreciate common values of Christianity and other faiths – a principle that underpins the World Council of Churches' vision of the role that religion can play in resolving conflicts, seeking justice and peace-building.

In the spirit of the "wholeness of life", these engagements are an expression of a shared vision of justice and peace, which is grounded in all faith traditions, and despite differences, share a longing for unity in faith, witness and service to the world. Inter-religious cooperation, human dignity, sustainable values and just relationships lie at heart of a desire that emphasizes those aspects in all religions that promote harmony among communities, helping people live their individual faith with integrity while living together in mutual respect and mutual acceptance of each other's faiths.

interests and concerns around Christian unity. The discussion also focused on collaboration, such as mission and evangelism and the ongoing work on a code of conduct on conversion.

"We affirmed that all Christians have a common call to be one, and that we want to be sensitive to one another's concerns," Tveit said of the meeting.

Tunncliffe said: "This important meeting was helpful in building bridges of understanding in regards to evangelism, religious liberty and caring for the vulnerable. We look forward to ongoing conversations with the WCC."

The WCC programme on interreligious dialogue and cooperation also works to explore cutting-edge issues in today's religiously plural societies, seeks to strengthen inter-religious trust and respect through bilateral and multilateral dialogues, engages in regional and cross-cultural encounters on topics like religion and violence, perceptions of "the other" and the search for identity in pluralistic societies. ■

WCC Financial Overview 2009

FINANCIAL RESULTS

(Swiss francs 000's)

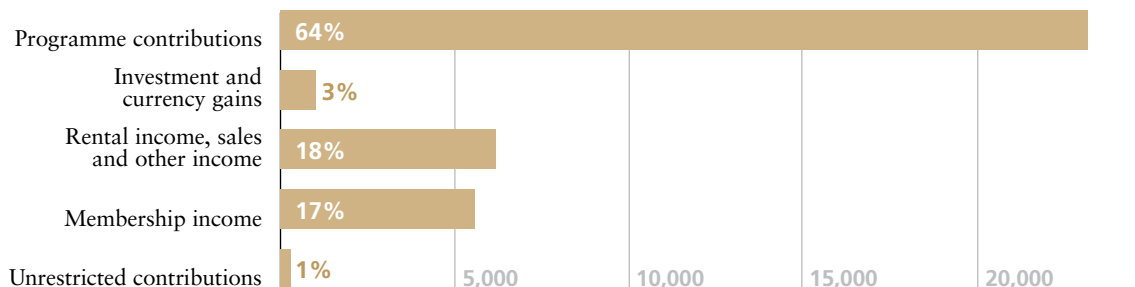
Total income increased by CHF 0.5 million compared with 2008, because of the improvement in investment and currency gains compared with the losses suffered in 2008. Membership and programme contribution income declined by almost 10% as a result both of reductions in contributions and the impact of the strong Swiss franc exchange rate.

The financial results for the year were satisfactory, meeting the budgeted target for an increase of CHF 0.1 million in unrestricted and designated funds. Total funds and reserves were reduced by CHF 0.3 million. The WCC reports CHF 39.5 million in funds and reserves at 31 December 2009 (2008: CHF 39.8 million).

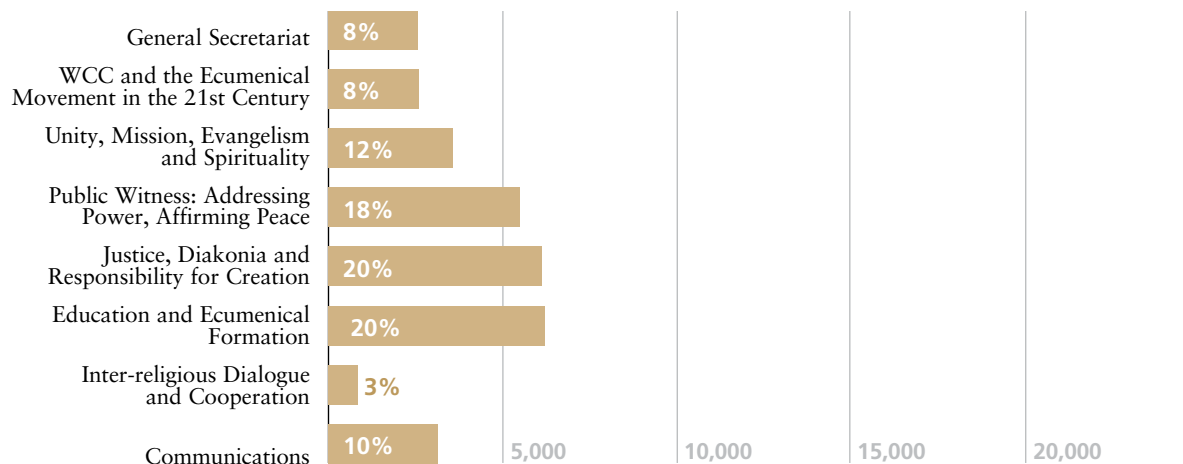
	Unrestricted and designated funds 2009	Restricted funds 2009	Total funds 2009	Total funds 2008
INCOME				
Membership and other unrestricted income	5,887	—	5,887	6,398
Programme contributions	—	23,179	23,179	25,807
Investment and currency gains/(losses)	190	822	1,012	(2,906)
Rental income, sales and other income	4,237	1,947	6,184	6,443
Unrestricted income distribution	(5,887)	5,887	—	—
Total income	4,427	31,835	36,262	35,742
EXPENDITURE				
Direct programme costs: grants	24	3,523	3,547	5,786
Operating and other programme costs	3,907	10,787	14,694	15,540
Salaries	4,654	13,798	18,452	17,935
Redistribution of costs	(4,278)	4,278	—	—
Total costs	4,307	32,386	36,693	39,261
Transfers between funds	(58)	58	—	—
Transfers (to)/from funds and current liabilities	53	63	116	(657)
Net increase/(decrease) in funds for the year	115	(430)	(315)	(4,176)

Note: The results for 2009 are unaudited. Prior year comparatives are audited consolidated results. Audited consolidated results for 2009 will be presented in the WCC Financial Report 2009.

SOURCES OF INCOME 2009 (Swiss francs 000's)



EXPENDITURE BY PROGRAMME 2009 (Swiss francs 000's)



WCC Income and Contributors 2009

INCOME TRENDS

(Swiss francs 000's)

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Membership	6,401	6,510	6,426	6,593	6,614	6,106	5,589
Programmes	27,151	27,712	26,649	24,509	24,623	23,713	21,892
Multilateral sharing	6,259	4,909	4,977	3,509	2,639	1,434	575
Assembly	435	627	3,004	1,953	115	104	97
ACT Development	—	—	200	523	767	848	913
Other income	6,965	5,950	7,995	7,547	6,270	3,537	7,196
Total	47,211	45,708	49,251	44,634	41,028	35,742	36,262

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTORS 2009

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 2009.

ACT International
 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 World Service
 CIDA-Canadian International Development Agency
 Council for World Mission
 DanChurchAid
 Diakonisches Werk der EKD
 EED-Church Development Service
 Ellis Trust
 Episcopal Church in the USA
 Evang.-Ref. Kirchgemeinde Tablat-St Gallen
 Evangelical Church in Germany
 Evangelical Church in Hessen and Nassau
 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
 Femmes Protestantes en Suisse
 Finn Church Aid
 Fondation pour l'aide au Protestantisme Réformé
 Foundation for Theological Education in Southeast Asia
 HEKS-EPER
 ICCO-Interchurch Organization for Development Cooperation
 Kerk in Actie
 Korean Methodist Church
 Lutheran World Federation

Methodist Church of Great Britain
 Mission Covenant Church of Sweden
 Nathan Söderblom Memorial Fund
 NCC Australia - Act for Peace
 Norwegian Church Aid
 Peace Watch Switzerland
 People's Health Movement
 Presbyterian Church (USA)
 Presbyterian Church in Canada
 Presbyterian Church of Korea
 Protestant Church in the Netherlands
 Reformed Church in America
 Reformed Church of Aargau
 Reformed Church of Bern-Jura-Solothurn
 Reformed Church of France
 Religious Society of Friends
 Stichting Rotterdam
 United Church of Canada
 United Church of Christ
 United Methodist Church
 United Nations Development Programme
 Uniting Church in Australia
 World Health Organization
 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

WCC Governing Bodies and Staff Leadership 2009

PRESIDENTS

His Beatitude Archbishop Anastasios of Tirana, Durres and All Albania
Orthodox Autocephalous Church of Albania

Mr. John Taroanui Doom
Maohi Protestant Church (Tahiti)

Rev. Prof. Dr Simon Dossou
Protestant Methodist Church in Benin

Dr. Soritua Nababan
Protestant Christian Batak Church (Indonesia)

Rev. Dr. Ofelia Ortega
Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba

His Holiness Abune Paulos
Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church

Rev. Dr Bernice Powell Jackson
United Church of Christ (USA)

Dame Mary Tanner
Church of England

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Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil

Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima
Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople

Rev. Dr Margaretha M. Hendriks-Ririmasse
Protestant Church in the Moluccas

Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia* (*Ex-officio*)
WCC General Secretary
Methodist Church in Kenya

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

WCC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Methodist Church of Southern Africa

Dr. Agnes Abuom
Anglican Church of Kenya

Pastor Antonio Pedro Malungo
Evangelical Reformed Church of Angola

Ms. Iyabo Oyekola
Church of the Lord (Aladura) Worldwide

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Church of Pakistan

Rev. Dr Margaretha M. Hendriks-Ririmasse
Vice-moderator

Protestant Church in the Moluccas

Ms. Hae-Sun Jun
Korean Methodist Church

CARIBBEAN

Ms. Nerissa Celestine
Church in the Province of the West Indies

EUROPE

Ms. Margareta Grape
Church of Sweden

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Russian Orthodox Church

Bishop Dr Martin Schindehütte
Evangelical Church in Germany

Rev. Graham G. McGeoch
Church of Scotland

Archbishop Dr Nifon of Targoviste
Romanian Orthodox Church

H.E. Metropolitan Vasilios of Constantia-Ammochostos
Church of Cyprus

Ms. Outi Vasko
Orthodox Church of Finland

LATIN AMERICA

Rev. Dr Walter Altmann
Moderator
Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil

MIDDLE EAST

Metropolitan Bishop of Damiette
Coptic Orthodox Church

NORTH AMERICA

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United Church of Canada

Rev. Dr Larry Pickens
United Methodist Church (USA)

Rev. Dr Tyrone Pitts
Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc. (USA)

Archbishop Vicken Aykazian
Armenian Apostolic Church (Holy See of Etchmiadzin) (USA)

PACIFIC

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Protestant Church in the Netherlands

Dr. Aruna Gnanadason
Executive Director for Planning and Integration
Church of South India

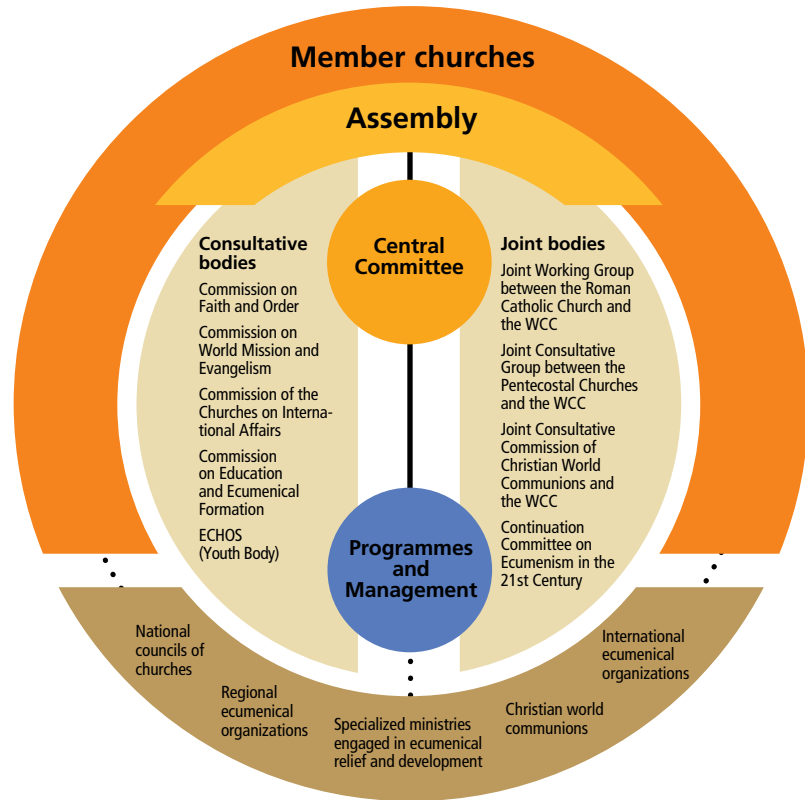
Mr. Jean-Nicolas Bazin
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Mennonite Church (USA)

Ms. Catherine Christ-Taha
Assistant to the General Secretary

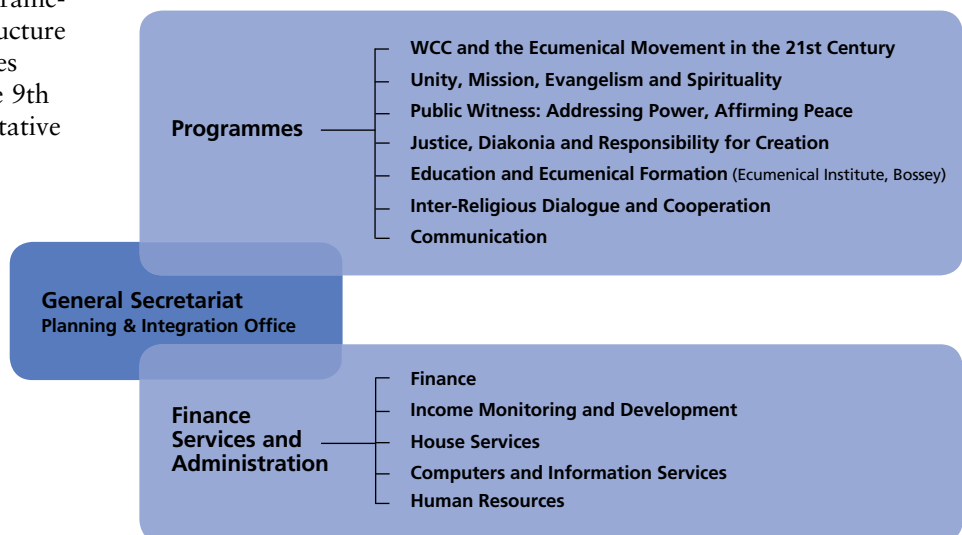
WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

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.





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