

Essay contest to mark the 60th anniversary of the WCC

Theme: “Making a difference together – Prospects for Ecumenism in the 21st Century”

Students of theology and younger theologians (up to 35-years-old) are invited by the World Council of Churches (WCC) to participate in an essay contest to mark the 60th anniversary of the worldwide fellowship of 347 WCC member churches. Founded in 1948 the WCC has been the churches’ primary instrument to promote the search for Christian unity and to foster common witness and service for 60 years. Because of the tremendous progress made in the last century through the WCC and other ecumenical organizations, some have called the 20th Century “the ecumenical century”.

The WCC would like to receive essays reflecting different church traditions, contexts and perspectives on the following two questions:

What are the prospects for ecumenism in the 21st Century? What difference can Christian churches make together?

Additional questions to stimulate the author’s approach to the essay could include:

- How do changes in the global ecclesial landscape impact the search for visible unity of the church in a new century?
- How can the common witness and commitment to service of the church contribute to a more just world and the healing of broken relationships?
- What new initiatives are required from churches and their ecumenical organizations to respond to the rapidly changing social, political, cultural and religious context in which we live?
- What is the meaning of mission and evangelism in a world of increasing religious plurality?

Submissions will be reviewed by an international panel. All qualifying submissions will be posted on the WCC website. Up to 12 papers will be published by WCC Publications. The authors of six selected submissions will be invited to participate with leading theologians and church figures in a seminar addressing ecumenism in the 21st Century to be held in late 2008 at the Bossey Ecumenical Institute near Geneva (Switzerland). Travel and accommodation costs of the invited authors will be covered by WCC.

The essay should be written in English, between 5,000 and 6,000 words including notes, and will be considered for their contribution to the discussion on ecumenism in the 21st Century and not their English-language proficiency.

The essay should not have been published before or be under consideration for publication elsewhere. Authors should submit two typed copies of their essay and wherever possible an electronic copy. A summary abstract of not more than 100 words and a brief description of the author (name, titles, church affiliation, present position, biographical information, publication credits and contact details) should accompany the essay. **The closing date to receive essays is 28 February 2008.**

See the WCC website for related background documents (www.oikoumene.org/contest):

- WCC Constitution and Rules
- Common Understanding and Vision Statement
- Reconfiguration of the Ecumenical Movement (Antelias)
- Ecumenism in the 21st Century (Chavannes de Bogis)
- Called to be the One Church
- Mapping the Oikoumene

Please send submission to:

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Ready to print submissions may be sent to 60th@wcc-coe.org