



Conference on World Mission and Evangelism

Moving in the Spirit: Called to Transforming Discipleship

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CWME Director's Report

From Athens to Arusha: Jooseop Keum, Director of CWME

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Thanks be to the Triune God for calling us to assemble for the World Mission Conference here in Arusha, Tanzania! Praise to the Lord for the ceaseless journey of ecumenical missionary conferences over the last 108 years! Welcome to Arusha, welcome to the 14th World Mission Conference since Edinburgh 1910!

First, I wish to extend my profound gratitude to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, as well as the churches in this country, for their invitation to hold the first Conference on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) in Africa since the integration between the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches in New Delhi in 1961. The last World Mission Conference hosted in Africa was in 1958 at Achimota, Ghana. It was indeed a historic conference which inspired the integration of the church and mission councils, but with extremely limited participation from the hosting continent, the African people.

Today, we are gathering here in Arusha at the heart of the African independence and reconciliation movements. The history of Christian mission has been characterized by conceptions of geographical expansion from a Christian centre to the un-reached territories and peoples, to the ends of the earth. But today we are facing a radically changing ecclesial landscape described as “world Christianity” where the majority of Christians are living in the global South and East. We celebrate that today the largest Christian population is living in Africa and the most powerful dynamism in mission is emerging from this continent – God’s wondrous work that could not have been imagined 60 years ago in Achimota.

Therefore, the Arusha World Mission Conference offers extraordinary opportunities to promote African inputs and leadership in world mission, and to show to best advantage the rich Christian diversity, collegiality and fraternity of Africa with the spirit of the ecumenical movement. Indeed, one of the aims of this CWME has been that it be planned and experienced as an African conference. This will mean that the conference will source the rich gifts of one of the most vibrant regions of World Christianity in terms of its spirituality and cultural life. The conference will promote the contribution of the African context to current perspectives and understandings of mission and to the shaping of mission theology and practice in the future. We will affirm through the Arusha conference that Africa is not a mission field any longer in a colonial sense. Rather, as our ancestors dared to declare as early as in Mexico City in 1963, mission is “from everywhere to everywhere” and the African churches and Christians are leading this multi-directional movement.

Dear sisters and brothers, “Are we ready to learn from Africa what God’s mission is today?” “Are we ready to be led by Africa forward, together towards life?”

This director’s report will provide the highlights of the CWME work from Athens 2005 to Arusha 2018. I will also try to reflect on the theme of the conference from a pragmatic perspective of CWME.

Athens 2005 - Healing and Reconciliation

In May 2005, the Conference on World Mission and Evangelism met near Athens, Greece, for the first time in a majority Orthodox context and, for the first time, with representatives from the Roman Catholic Church and from evangelical and Pentecostal churches as delegates with full participation. The theme was “Come, Holy Spirit, heal and reconcile: Called in Christ to be reconciling and healing communities.” This allowed for a more humble approach to mission, reminding ourselves of the priority of God’s, the Holy Spirit’s mission in the world, as the only one able to really bring healing and reconciliation in the full sense of the term. Within that overall dynamic of the presence of God in the world, the churches have a specific calling, which is to be ambassadors of reconciliation, and in particular to build, renew, multiply spaces where humans can experience something of God’s healing and reconciling grace.

In Athens, we prayed “Come Holy Spirit” and tried to grasp the meaning of the pneumatological dimension of mission. The new WCC mission document, *Together Towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes* (ITL, 2012), develops a whole missiology in the dynamic of the Spirit and shows how this leads to a spirituality of transformation. The WCC 10th assembly in Busan, South Korea called for a common pilgrimage of justice and peace, and now Arusha convincingly builds on all this with the theme of “Moving in the Spirit.”

Edinburgh 2010 –

Convergence between Ecumenical and Evangelical Understandings of Mission

In the changing landscape of mission today, it is questionable whether the dichotomy of ecumenical and evangelical perspectives is still relevant to envisioning the future of world Christianity. One could also ask the question whether it is rather a hindrance to ‘re-formulating’ the future of mission. In fact, it is imperative to articulate a new approach to re-vitalize mission through convergence and cooperation between the ecumenical and evangelical understandings of mission. It is vital to seek a way of overcoming the missiological confrontations of the last century and to attempt to develop a new synergy between the two approaches.

One of the most significant missiological developments in the early years of the 21st century is an increasing exchange and mutual respect between the ecumenical and evangelical movements of mission. The Edinburgh Centenary Conference in 2010 has enlarged the fellowship and led to reconciliation among different mission streams. It has increased confidence among the partners involved, allowed for sharing of leadership and provided space for each other. Its final aim was relational, reaching in the long-term a form of *koinonia* in mission. CWME intentionally remained in a more supporting role of Edinburgh 2010 to nurture the fellowship. CWME was open in Edinburgh for constant updates, modifications and reformulations of its own positions on mission and evangelism, in the search for a new consensus on the matter.

An analysis of the ‘Common Call’ produced at the Edinburgh conference shows that positions defended for decades by CWME have now become somewhat common ground: *missio Dei*, empowerment and humility, creation as scope of mission, holistic content of gospel, mission from everywhere to everywhere, unity and mission. There has also been a particular emphasis on pneumatology, where one can discern the influence of Pentecostal traditions. Indeed Edinburgh 2010 was a moment of celebration, healing and convergence of the missionary movement.

Recommendations for Conduct

“Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World: Recommendations for Conduct”: recommendations regarding respectful actions on the part of missionaries, evangelists and other witnesses when sharing the Christian faith were issued, following a five-year series of consultations among the WCC, the World Evangelical Association (WEA) and the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue (PCID) of the Roman Catholic Church in 2011. The three bodies include a combined membership of some two billion people representing nearly 90 per cent of world Christianity. The document represents a formal agreement on “the essence of Christian mission” while also demonstrating that diverse Christian bodies “are able to work together and to speak together.” It was an unimaginable achievement that the three major global Christian bodies reached a consensus on ethical principles when mission engages in conversion of other

faiths. In the text, the Trinitarian understanding of mission, the kingdom of God and inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue are emphasised. The CWME evangelism desk has played a key role in the drafting process; its collaboration with WEA has continued on the TTL chapter on evangelism.

Manila 2012 - Together Towards Life (TTL)

With more than 200 participants from around the globe, the CWME Pre-Assembly Event was held in Manila, the Philippines. Its aim was to seek renewed thinking on mission and evangelism, developing a draft of the new WCC statement on mission and evangelism. Participants analysed a draft of the statement on mission and evangelism to be presented at the WCC 10th Assembly in Busan, Korea in 2013. "This new document offers us an opportunity to challenge the global church to move out further into the deep end of mission and evangelism to engage the life-denying realities that are enslaving people," said Roderick Hewitt. "The church has a mission to recognise and empower the marginalized as subjects of mission and not as objects only. Those on the boundaries are the frontiers in mission who can provide a vantage point for a new mission thinking that generates creative alternatives," said Olav Fykse Tveit, WCC general secretary in his opening address.

Since the integration between the International Missionary Council (IMC) and WCC in 1961, the WCC mission statement issued in 1982, "Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation" had been the World Council's only official "position statement" on mission. After the 9th WCC Assembly in Porto Alegre, Brazil in 2006, the CWME had been working on a new statement, which went through a number of revisions, including a major one after the Manila event. Subsequently the document was unanimously approved by the Central Committee in Crete, Greece in September 2012 and adopted by the Busan assembly in 2013 as the new WCC position statement. Having received credit from both the WCC central committee and the assembly, TTL is one of the most significant missiological texts in the history of WCC.

Steve Bevans evaluated, "As far as I know, no other WCC document has thought so thoroughly or consistently about the implications of mission when reflected upon through the lens of God's ever-present, all-pervasive, always illusive Holy Spirit." "The significance of the statement lies in its concept of 'mission from the margins', which emphasises the universality of working for all God's people, as well as the creation, despite divisions." said Agnes Abuom, moderator of the WCC central committee. Konrad Raiser affirmed, "TTL is one of the most creative ecumenical texts produced in the early years of the 21st century."

I would like to highlight the following new paradigms and missiologically significant elements of the new WCC's mission affirmation:

First, the new ecumenical affirmation focuses on the mission of the Holy Spirit (*missio Spiritus*) as its theological framework within the Trinitarian understanding of mission (*missio Dei*). This with the intention to embrace dynamism, transformation and diversity as the main concepts of mission in changing landscapes today.

Second, the statement concludes that the goal of mission is affirming Life in all its fullness. As God's mission is life-giving mission, it attempts constantly to discern how we can together participate in *missio Spiritus* through our common witness.

Third, "mission from the margins" is considered as the statement's defining and creative perspective. It involves a radical reversal of perspective—from the false notion that mission is done by the rich and powerful for those who are poor and powerless to the recognition that it is among the poor and powerless where God is really acting, and where Christians are called to join in God's work. People at the margins are thus the primary agents of God's mission of affirming life in its fullness.

Fourth, creation and spirituality are at the heart of mission. In this statement God's mission is understood beyond anthropocentric goals. God's mission is not only for the salvation of humanity but embraces the earth and the whole creation. Spirituality is a key element that reconnects humanity with God, creation and

neighbours, inspiring mission as transformation, thus emphasising the cosmic dimension of mission and unity.

Fifth, the new affirmation is an ecumenical conviction. It articulates diverse understandings of mission of different traditions and contexts and comprehensively addresses them through ecumenical convergence. The new landscapes of world Christianity are highlighted with the concepts of mission from the margins, issues of migration and economic globalisation.

Lastly, the new statement strongly affirms a renewed commitment to evangelism in humility and respect. Sharing the good news of Jesus Christ is a major concern of mission. In every generation and every context, it is life-saving news to the whole world. The text examines how to communicate the gospel in an individualized, secularized and materialised contemporary world.

Through the work on the new mission statement, CWME has continued its ceaseless journey into another chapter of ecumenical understanding and practice of mission to discern together what God's mission is today and tomorrow!

Busan 2013 – Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace

The mission plenary was one of the major plenaries on the programme at the Busan assembly, after two consecutive assemblies of not having a plenary on mission (Porto Alegre, 2006, Harare, 1998). Three ecumenical conversations took place on mission and evangelism for deepening discussions on the new way of thinking and practising mission. Several workshops were organised in collaboration with key mission partners. The new mission statement was presented and warmly received by the assembly. The concept of Together Towards Life has theologically inspired the unity document and the beginning of the pilgrimage of justice and peace. The new WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) was successfully appointed by the Central Committee and embarked in a new journey as a multi-lateral table for the churches and their mission agencies for ecumenical co-operation and reflection on mission with a special mandate to organise the Conference on World Mission and Evangelism in 2018.

Mission from the Margins

It was widely recognised that one of the most creative parts of the new mission statement is the chapter on “mission from the margins.” It has successfully reversed the traditional concept of “mission to the margins” and highlighted the role of the marginalised as subjects of mission. The entire chapter was contributed, and drafted by participants in the former WCC project “Just and Inclusive Communities (JIC).” From Porto Alegre to Busan, there has been very close collaboration with the JIC project and CWME in various levels and areas. On the basis of this experience, the CMWE commission meeting in the Cook Islands in March 2013 suggested a more structured cooperation with JIC in the post-Busan pragmatic structure of WCC, particularly on the issues of Migration and Multicultural Ministry, Indigenous Peoples (IPs) and Ecumenical Disability Advocacy Network (EDAN). Therefore since 2014, the project of “Mission from the Margins” has been successfully integrated in CWME.

Missional Formation

Following the approval of the TTL by Central Committee in 2012, CWME has been working on promoting the use of the document in missional formation – in the formal academic context, in the training of missionaries, and at local congregational level. A consultation held at Kochi, India in 2013 produced a practical guide. The Pietermaritzburg consultation, in South Africa in 2014 charted the direction for this missional formation process. Since then, in a variety of contexts around the world, educators have been making use of TTL in the pedagogical process. The third consultation was held at Matanzas in 2016 and provided an opportunity for critical reflection on the work that has been done and, in particular, gathered the insights and resources needed to create a guide book to equip those responsible for mission education and formation to use TTL to its best advantage.

Ecumenical Missiology - 2016

As part of its work on missional formation, CWME has been instrumental in the preparation of a textbook centred on TTL – Kenneth R. Ross, Jooseop Keum, Kyriaki Avtzi and Roderick R. Hewitt eds.,

Ecumenical Missiology: Changing Landscapes and New Conceptions of Mission (Oxford: Regnum and Geneva: WCC, 2016). This book begins with reflections on the 1910 Edinburgh Missionary Conference and ends with *Together Towards Life*. These last three words embody and capture the identity and vocation of ecumenical missiology. The book maps the ecumenical journey of the church's missional engagement in the world and what is involved in its calling to bear witness to Christ. The content is organized into three sections: (1) it Explores the issues that have shaped the understanding of mission across the 20th century. It draws this resource from the vast body of global ecumenical mission documents from the IMC and later CWME; (2) it Examines the key issues with which ecumenical missiology has been concerned across the century and examines them on a thematic basis; (3) it Critiques the themes raised in *TTL*, and provides a methodology for critical engagement with the text.

Sharing Good News - 2017

A tool for renewal, *Sharing Good News* edited by Gerrit Noort, Kyriaki Avtzi and Stefan Paas is a comprehensive and timely contribution to the field of evangelism that takes full measure of the distinct challenges and opportunities that face Christians in the contemporary world. The CWME evangelism desk has carefully and systematically developed this resource through a multi-year consultative process and harvested the outcome in this book. The volume includes a systematic, ecumenical framework for understanding evangelism in the present context. It also contributes to the particular challenges raised by secularization, migration, interreligious and cross-cultural encounter and provides theological work on the meaning of evangelism in relation to mission, ecclesiology, and spirituality. There are also eight case studies that illustrate best practices and new paradigms in evangelism. For students, professors, clergy and practitioners, it offers important keys to revitalizing Christian evangelism in the lives and discipleship of Christians.

International Review of Mission (IRM)

IRM is one of the major fruits of the Edinburgh 1910 World Missionary Conference and known as “the mother of all periodicals in the field of Christian mission studies” (Brian Stanley). It has been my honour to serve as the 13th editor on behalf of the Commission for the last ten years. When I took up this role in IRM, I was overwhelmed by the rich, over a century old history, the pioneering contributions to the establishment of missiology and the “big names” of predecessors who were ecumenical giants too. Till today, whenever I feel stuck in my thoughts, I revisit the editorials of J.H. Oldham, William Paton, Lesslie Newbigin, Philip Potter, Emilio Castro, Eugene Stockwell, Christopher Duraisingh, Anna Langerak, Jacques Matthey... Particularly, when I was working on a new mission statement, the dialogue with my predecessors was a source of inspiration and encouragement. I have realised that none of them had an easier task than I but they constantly wrestled to find answers to the question, “What is God’s mission today?” I hope I have kept safe this remarkable journey of IRM for the last 107 years. Ten years ago, IRM was in a crisis for survival in the age of digital publication. It was a wise decision to collaborate with Wiley-Blackwell (W-B) for a better quality and service for authors and readers. With all the unfailing support of WCC Publications and W-B, I am proud to report that IRM is ranked 23rd out of the 381 registered journals on theology and religious studies in SCOPUS. It is on the top position in missiology. My deepest thanks go to all of you, who have contributed to and read IRM!

CWME Commission

CWME means both Commission and Conference on World Mission and Evangelism. The CWME commission intends to offer spaces to churches and people or movements engaged in mission and evangelism for sharing reflections, experiences, questions and discoveries on content and methods of Christian witness today. The main priority is to empower churches and mission bodies to be in common mission and to do it in Christ's way. CWME fosters conferences, consultations, study processes, publications and visits, correspondence or other forms of contacts to discern together what is God's mission today and how we can participate in it. The work reported on just earlier is the major outcome of collegial work done by the commission, working groups and staff. There are 42 commissioners and advisors representing WCC member churches, affiliated mission bodies and the wider constituency – the Roman Catholic Church, Pentecostals and evangelicals. They all serve the commission which meets every two years. Between the commission meetings, the officers, the executive group and the working groups meet regularly and work together.

Mission in the Ecumenical Movement

What can be the role of mission at this juncture in the history of the ecumenical movement? This year WCC is celebrating its 70th anniversary. It is also the 60th anniversary since the historic decision in Achimota to integrate the two councils, IMC and WCC. In his director's report in the Bangkok (1972/73) conference, Phillip Potter emphasised that "We have learned from the beginning of the ecumenical movement, the issues of unity and mission are inextricably bound together." He reminded that the integration was mainly led by the younger churches with a call for the whole church to embrace its missionary tasks.

The missionary movement has both inspired and given birth to the modern ecumenical movement during the last century as the churches have sought to respond to the challenges of history and to be witnesses to the good news of Jesus Christ for the world through visible unity. However, we are facing a sharp challenge to define the vision and relevance of the ecumenical movement within the changing ecclesial and global landscapes of today.

In Manila I had shared a reflection that there are three vantage points with regard to the distinctive role of mission within the wider ecumenical movement. First, mission can play a prophetic role in bringing together unity and justice discourses in the ecumenical movement. Mission provides a holistic approach that helps to affirm the integrity of the ecumenical movement because of the way in which it connects people and contexts.

Secondly, mission can play a creative role in the midst of the dilemma between movement and institution by bringing new visions of movement. It is inevitable that we develop institutions as a means of trying to secure the integrity of the movement. However, over time the institution can lose the vision for the movement and fall into the temptation to only serve its self-interest. In such a situation mission can provide the bridge between movements and institutions through missiological imagination and action.

Thirdly, mission has a distinctive role between the church and development agencies within the WCC. Our forebears had an ambitious plan to challenge and transform churches to become missionary congregations, recognising the role of the church as the primary agent of mission. In spite of this ambitious project we must ask, 'Where is the location of mission in the WCC today?'

Mission is all about the face-to-face encounter of people. It is about the stories of God's people responding to the calling to be common witnesses to hope in Jesus Christ. Mission has an important role in reclaiming the human face, the powerful stories and testimonies of God's people, an experience that we have all enjoyed throughout our time together towards life. The human stories of all God's people contributing to God's mission in the power of God's Spirit can serve as a much needed continuous challenge to the church and the ecumenical movement. Therefore, it is highly important to continuously commit ourselves to the ecumenical movement and put the mission agenda at the heart of the church.

Arusha 2018 - Transforming Discipleship

How can we describe the time and context in which we are living today? Metropolitan Geevarghese Mor Coorilos claims: "There are 'new King Herods,' a new imperial age and numerous 'little empires' being formed in the orbit of the 'mega-empire' and working in hegemonic ways. In India, for example, an unholy alliance of religious fundamentalism, caste mentality and the ideology of neo-liberalism is creating a fascist empire." Division, fundamentalism, violence and discrimination are all on the increase everywhere in the world. In our socio-political cultures the darker side of human nature is overwhelming and without any shame. Greed of power, money, violence and claims of jealousy are competing to search for victims. The top leadership of the "global empires" and "little empires" are openly creating the politics of fear based on discriminating and bullying the other, particularly the weak, the minorities, the stranger and the poor. We are gathered here in Arusha to respond to these challenges with the quality of ecumenical fellowship, the quality of transforming discipleship.

Rediscovery of Faith at the Margins

The incarnation of Jesus took place among the people at the margins. At the time of the birth of Jesus, people who gathered around him were people outside of the power structures. The birth of Jesus was astonishing, threatening news for those decision makers. They never expected that God would be revealed among the ordinary people. God chose the 'margin' to inaugurate His Kingdom. God was and is encountered among the powerless and in unexpected locations and not only among the privileged and powerful. Therefore, no one can understand the good news of Jesus Christ without incarnating it in the context of the margins. Discussing mission only in a meeting room, or table ecumenism is never enough.

TTL suggests the concept of "mission from the margins" as a new direction of mission: "Mission from the margins seeks to counteract injustices in life, church, and mission. It seeks to be an alternative missional movement against the perception that mission can only be done by the powerful to the powerless, by the rich to the poor, or by the privileged to the marginalized. Such approaches can contribute to oppression and marginalization..." Living on the margins, however, can provide its own lessons. People on the margins have agency, and can often see what, from the centre, is out of view. People on the margins, living in vulnerable positions, often know what exclusionary forces are threatening their survival and can best discern the urgency of their struggles; people in positions of privilege have much to learn from the daily struggles of people living in marginal conditions.

I believe this is the beginning of the renewal of authentic discipleship. Discipleship without being among the people at the margins is not a discipleship of Christ. The Christendom model of Christianity and mission which has existed as a form of state religion has been associated for a long time with power. It is impossible to imagine how we could carry out the mission of the church without institutions and resources. However, whatever the means might be, there is no other way than kenosis. The way of Jesus is the only way to empower the church, mission and the ecumenical movement.

We work with the empowerment of the Holy Spirit and rely on God and people rather than institutional support and protection. Although we do not have "gold and silver", we have joy and commitment to the gospel and passion for justice. I believe that bringing this dynamism to the heart of ecumenical mission thinking and action is the first step of rejuvenating our movement.

Power of Love to Defeat Politics of Fear

One of the key themes of the pneumatological approach in mission is the Spirit's mission of hospitality together with charisma, dynamism, healing, diversity and transformation. A fruit of mission spirituality is love and shalom - 'go in peace'. God's shalom calls for a radical hospitality overcoming hostility (Ubuntu). God's shalom introduces the mission of a transforming hospitality of justice. According to Sung Jae Kim, Justice is not only a standard that rejects the evil of hostility and hatred towards refugees and migrants, but it is also the power to transform hatred and hostility into hospitality. God's hospitality is unconditional and eschatological. It is not God's mission merely to extend an invitation to the guests and treat them nicely. Rather, this is a matter of ontological mission, of being together as one family in God's shalom (Ujamaa) - a missional vision of unity (Umoja).

In a world context of the rise of racism and extremism, one of the key goals of the Arusha conference should be to reflect on how we understand and give expression to the "power of God's love" defeating the culture of hatred and the politics of fear. "Are we presenting God's love as good only for another world because some of us do not want to risk losing the benefits and privileges that various forms of structurally embedded injustice bestow on us?" If so, "Are we not limiting the power of God's love by seeking to witness in ways that are safe and comfortable, limiting it to the realm of the purely personal, granted to or accessed on certain terms and conditions, and limiting it as one that numbs and soothes rather than as one that heals and transforms?"

We do believe that the power of God's love is superior to the powers of death. We affirm that the power of the Risen Lord subjugates the powers of death, even as the rest of the world embraces or remains indifferent to the powers of death in God's beloved world. How then can we witness to God's love in

ways that our witness nurtures, protects and enhances life, while confronting and transforming the denial of God's gift of life?

The Ecumenical Affirmation (EA) defines missionary discipleship, "The self-emptying of the servant who lived among the people, sharing in their hopes and sufferings, giving his life on the cross for all humanity - this was Christ's way of proclaiming the good news, and as disciples we are summoned to follow the same way." Therefore, kenotic leadership is a concrete expression of our discipleship. Jesus defeated the Pharisees, the Sadducees, King Herod and even the Roman empire by the power of love on the Cross, not on top of the tower of the temple or the royal throne. 'Mission is the overflow of the infinite love of the Triune God.'

It is time to question ourselves as missionaries: 'Are we true disciples of the gospel?' "What does this question mean for being Christians in today's world?" In my view, this question is more important than any other missiological discourse in today's context. It is not a matter of numbers or resources. It is the quality of discipleship that will prove decisive. It is time for the issues of authentic discipleship to be given priority attention in ecumenical mission understanding, given today's context where faith in power and money is threatening the credibility of the gospel. Do we believe that the power of love can transform a world of hatred and injustice? "The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love." (Galatians 5:6)

Hope as Agent of Change

In chapter 13 of the Book of Acts, there is a shift of the centre of gravity in mission from Jerusalem to Antioch. The Christians in Antioch elected five leaders for their mission and ministry. One of them, together with Paul and Barnabas, was Simeon from Niger. A new-born religious community in Antioch, now taking the name 'Christian', elected a black African slave as their leader. The election of a slave as leader of the community was such a shock that it stirred up the whole society, and ultimately the entire Greco-Roman world! There was neither discrimination nor exclusion from the good news of salvation. In this way, the disciples powerfully witnessed to the values of the gospel of the kingdom of God. Indeed, the gospel was a sign of hope and transformation to those people who were living in a hopeless situation.

We believe that the gospel has a power to transform the world: personality, value, class, system and society. The gospel of the kingdom of God challenges the world that keeps nurturing hopelessness. The world was not able to silence the small group of disciples in Antioch. We, as the servants of God, have a mission to share the Good News with all humanity and creation which are longing for hope.

According to the Gospel of John, the Jewish leaders tried to kill Him for the first time after Jesus had healed the person who had been waiting for thirty eight years beside the pool of Bethesda. They said, 'He has broken the Sabbath' (John 5:1-18). The system of Bethesda, which allows the one who can run first to take everything (healing), must be broken. The structure which prohibits the suffering people to take hands and walk together into "the stirring water of life" has to be changed. The Bethesda, named as "the house of grace" but which has no grace at all, has to be demolished even on the day of Sabbath. From there, Jesus Christ builds up the Cross, a new temple, the community of hope among us on our road to Emmaus and to Arusha.

People will know by the instinct of their hearts who we are and what theology we are talking about. People know by the instinct of their hearts whether we really believe in the vision of the new heaven and earth. The Holy Spirit is creating many new hopes with people at the margins. Our mission is to reveal this hope from the margins to the world as the church of Antioch did. Therefore, our mission as disciples is proclaiming the hope of, "God's kingdom is coming, and already among us"! In the midst of agonies, despair and cries of life, it is our mission as transforming disciples to seek alternative values, ways of life and communities to reveal the kingdom of God on earth by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Our Calling

We are here to convene the 14th World Mission Conference on the theme of "Moving in the Spirit: Called to Transforming Discipleship". Before we try to address to the people outside this Ngunudoto campus, or

dare to the world, it is all about our calling first as a community of mission. "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (Galatians 5:25). As we discern together the signs of the times it is evident that despite the chaos of human disunity in which we live and witness today, there are many signs of the Holy Spirit giving life and creating hope here in Africa.

The world is broken. Therefore, it is imperative for the ecumenical movement to boldly witness the unity in the Triune God and to live it out for the unity of humanity. The world is yearning for a Christian discipleship which reconciles the broken and troubled world. In order to do so, unity of the church and mission is not an optional agenda. In order that the church can be the light of the world, the role of Christian disciples is crucial. People see the vision of God's kingdom through us. Therefore, we ought to rediscover the simplicity, inclusivity, joy, kenosis, empathy and "prophetic imagination" of our discipleship. There is no other way than the one our Lord Jesus Christ walked before us.

We are called to be humble leaders of this mission and take upon us this costly discipleship. Witnessing to faith, love and hope in Christ for the divided churches, suffering people, and a fragmented world! That is the reason why we are called to Arusha by the Spirit of mission, the Spirit of transformation.

We are called to be disciples who are ourselves transforming, and as such we are privileged to join in the mission of the Triune God, working together towards life, living out the values of the kingdom of God, and engaging in mission from the margins. In a world in which injustice seems almost insuperable, where hatred and racism seem to thrive, where suffering is so widespread and terrifying, our discipleship is costly. "The mission of God is always a transforming mission."

Thank you! Asante!