



An Invitation to the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace with Pan African Women of Faith

“This is what the Lord Almighty said: ‘Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another...’” Zechariah 7:9 (NIV)

“We intend to move together. Challenged by our experiences in Busan, we challenge all people of good will to engage their God-given gifts in transforming actions. This Assembly calls you to join us in pilgrimage. May the churches be communities of healing and compassion, and may we see the Good News so that justice will grow and God’s deep peace rest on the world.” – Message of the World Council of Churches’ (WCC) 10th Assembly

The Occasion

In this season of swift transitions and the need to deepen our resolve to nurture our beloved communities and resist practices and policies that promote racial and gender division, the Pan African Women’s Ecumenical Empowerment Network (PAWEEN), part of the World Council of Churches (WCC) programme on Ecumenical Theological Education (ETE), and collaborating with the WCC programme on Just Community of Women and Men, met from 10-13 July 2017 at the Ecumenical Institute Bossey in Switzerland. The major goals of the seminar were to: a) inform and engage the curriculum of theological education and b) build up the community of women and men of faith by giving special concern for the theological importance of leadership and empowerment of Pan African women of faith.

About PAWEEN

PAWEEN seeks to serve as a platform of academic study, spiritual reflection and action for women of African descent in all regions of the world. PAWEEN also seeks to affirm and invite the deeper nurture of the community of men and women. PAWEEN’s mission began with a core group meeting at the Ecumenical Institute Bossey in 2015 and continued with a Pan African Women of Faith international consultation in Washington DC in 2016 co-convened by Bread for the World in Washington DC, the WCC and Howard University Dean of the Chapel office. It addressed the urgencies Pan African women of faith face relative to advocacy focused on issues of hunger and poverty. The consultation highlighted the important role Pan African women of faith have and can play by lifting their voices of advocacy and votes for the kind of leadership and policies that can systematically address these challenges.

Who Gathered

The PAWEEN seminar 2017 gathered high-profile scholars from leading theological institutions, church leaders, as well as executives of faith-based institutions and ecumenical bodies from and based in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, North America and Europe, representing the Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and several historic Black Churches, mainline Protestant and Pentecostal church traditions.



Why We Gathered

Pan African women of faith from the biblical periods have given significant leadership. The participants of the seminar, concerned with Pan African women's global ecumenical leadership, highlighted these contributions. They also addressed the problem that these contributions have been either erased or not adequately shared in the written and oral narratives of the ecumenical movement and in theological institutions.

Actions and Recommendations

PAWEEN is a part of the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace. We hold one another and the institutions we find ourselves in accountable. As part of the mandate of the Central Committee of the WCC (Trondheim 2016), we affirm the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For PAWEEN this specifically means addressing the following SDGs: No Poverty (SDG 1), Zero Hunger (SDG 2), Good Health and Well-Being (SDG 3), Quality Education, (SDG 4) Gender Equality (SDG 5) and Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10), as well as the core themes recognition, justice and development of the UN *International Decade for People of African Descent*. Therefore, theological education matters, in order to prepare leaders for advancing the agenda of justice and peace.

In our seminar we took the following actions:

- Offering of Letters
- Planning for a Publication Project
- Symbolic Action #ThursdaysInBlack

We invite churches, theological institutions and all people of good will to journey with us in action and propose the following recommendations:

- Mainstream accredited, required taught course programmes reflecting the history and experiences of Pan African women with the intention to ensure a quality education (SDG 4) on World Christianity;
- Develop theological education offers and methodologies relevant to Pan African women, including oral and artistic forms of learning;
- Provide faculty and ecumenical leadership development through intentional scholarship and academic exchange programmes, as well as cross-generational mutual mentorship for Pan African women;
- Develop intentional cross-organizational support through live-streaming of events and social media accompaniment;
- Encourage the use of social media as a working method for exchange, solidarity and partnerships;
- Build a platform of theological reflection in collaboration with All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), participate in the Theological Institute of AACC and engage in the AACC Assembly in Kigali, Rwanda 2018;

- Participate in the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism Conference and Global Ecumenical Theological Institute (GETI) 2018 in Arusha, Tanzania;
- Collaborate with the Institute for Healing of Memories; and strengthen interreligious dialogue and cooperation;
- Engage and accompany the African Union (AU) and AACC Agenda 2063 “The Africa We Want”;
- Strategize on how to use this period of the UN International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024) in view of preparing publications, sharing resources and planning visits with a focus on recognition, justice and development;
- Promote the human rights agenda with special consideration of racial justice as part of the 2017 Africa focus, and the 2018 Latin America, as well as the 2018 Caribbean focus of the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace.

Our Prayer for Justice and Peace

Gracious God,

We give You thanks for the gathering of Pan African women of faith that seeks to lift the voices and vision for and with Pan African women and girls. We thank you for the wisdom, strength and determination we learned from our ancestors and celebrate the accomplishments of Pan African women of faith. Give us a holy boldness to continue to address the wounds of our community and be agents for transformation on the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace in solidarity with the ecumenical fellowship.

Amen!

13 July 2017