



World Council
of Churches



Introducing the World Council of Churches

*“ . . . that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me
and I am in you, may they also be in us,
so that the world may believe that you have sent me.”*

John 17: 21 (NRSV)

Together for Justice, Reconciliation, and Unity

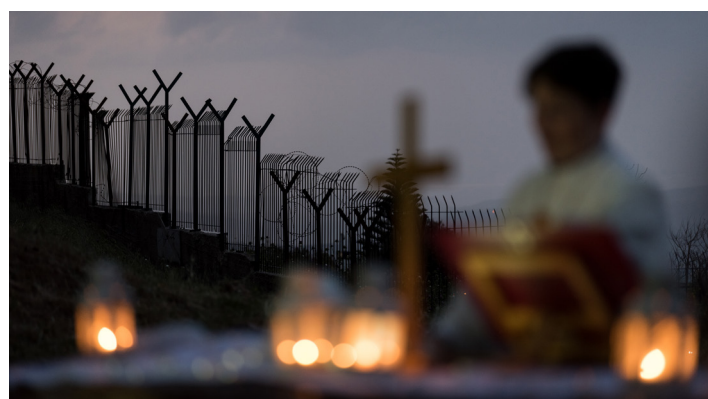
The World Council of Churches is a global fellowship of more than 350 churches in 120 countries representing more than half a billion Christians. The WCC and its member churches work and act together for justice, reconciliation, and unity, seeking a deeper understanding of one another, developing a wider dialogue, and building communities rooted in justice and peace.

Unity and Mission

At the heart of the work of the WCC is the faith claim that the Church of Jesus Christ is not “many churches” but “One Church,” which inspires its pursuit of visible Christian unity among churches.

The WCC is “a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the scriptures and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.” The WCC works together with the Roman Catholic Church, other churches that are not members of the WCC, and ecumenical partners and reaches out to other faiths through inter-religious dialogue and cooperation.

The WCC’s vision has, for more than a century, inspired churches to act together in mission and evangelism and to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ that is made visible through upholding the dignity of people and all of creation and being in solidarity with people who suffer poverty, injustice, exclusion, sickness, or violence.



Justice and Reconciliation

Amid the crises facing the world, including conflicts and wars, forced displacement, racism, the climate emergency, religious persecution, discrimination against women and girls, and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the WCC, with its member churches as well as with people of all faiths:

- raises a prophetic voice, promotes advocacy, offers accompaniment, and enters into dialogue with people of faith as well as governments and decision-makers
- promotes peacebuilding, mediation, and social cohesion and accompanies churches in situations of conflict around the world
- upholds an economy that offers life for all
- works to empower women, people with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, and youth
- supports those working for health in the face of disease and pandemics such as COVID-19 and AIDS

Empowering Youth and Promoting Intergenerational Justice

The WCC seeks to empower youth, aiming to achieve the full participation of young people in all its activities. Through the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, near Geneva, the WCC offers opportunities for ecumenical formation and graduate study courses for students from around the world. The programme on Ecumenical Theological Education provides support to theological networks world-wide.



About the World Council of Churches

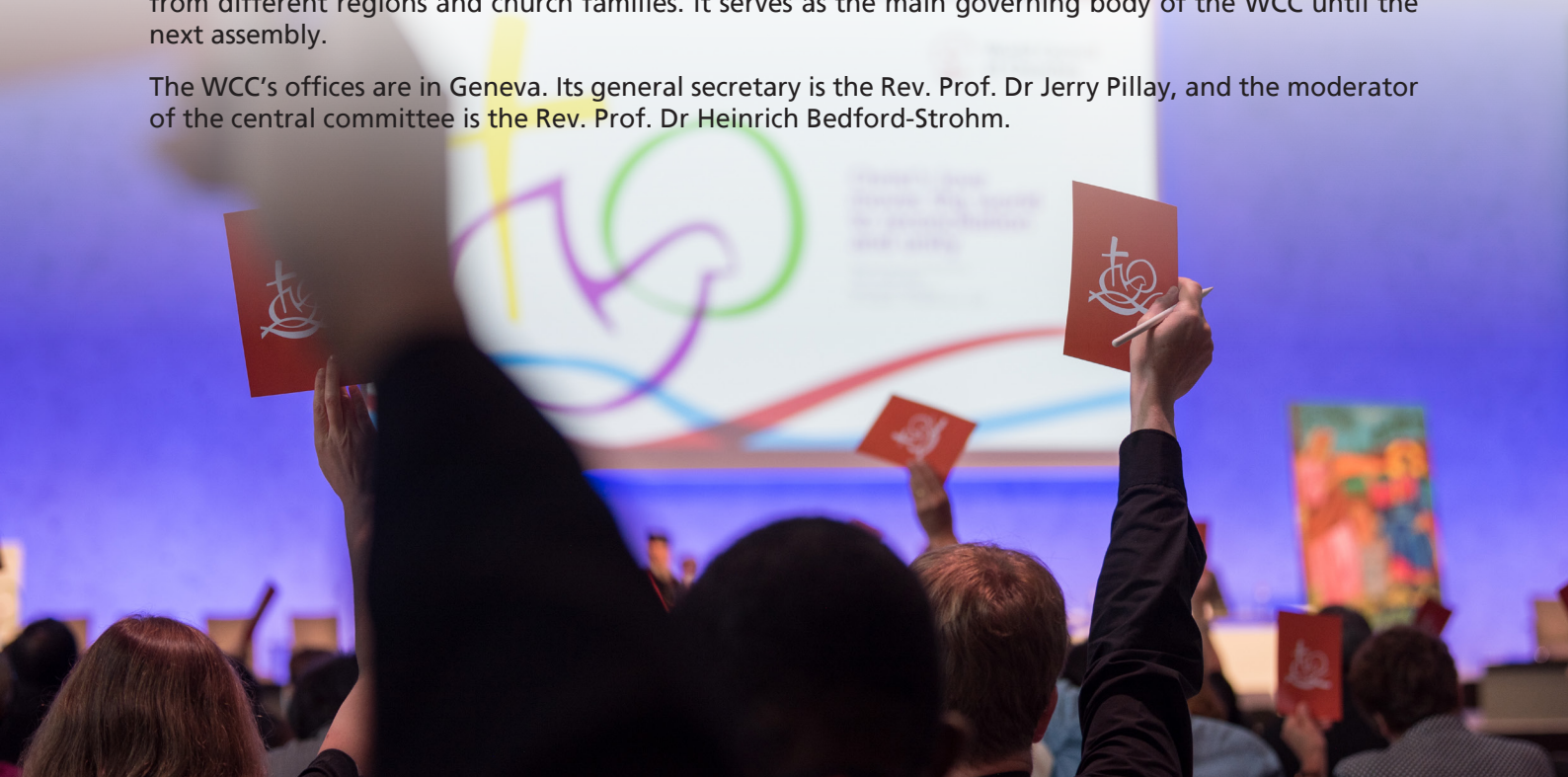
Although its roots go back to 1910 and before, the World Council of Churches was formally inaugurated in 1948 at its first assembly in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. The WCC was founded to create visible Christian unity and promote justice and peace in the world.

The WCC gathers churches from many Christian traditions and regions: Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Europe, Latin America, North America, the Middle East, and the Pacific.

Once every eight years, the entire fellowship of member churches and the wider ecumenical community gather at an assembly to pray together, set the direction for the WCC, and speak together on critical issues facing the world. The most recent assembly – the 11th Assembly – took place in Karlsruhe, Germany, in 2022, under the theme “Christ’s love moves the world to reconciliation and unity.”

The assembly elects a central committee of 150 members from among the delegates and eight presidents from different regions and church families. It serves as the main governing body of the WCC until the next assembly.

The WCC’s offices are in Geneva. Its general secretary is the Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay, and the moderator of the central committee is the Rev. Prof. Dr Heinrich Bedford-Strohm.



An Invitation to Journey Together

We also invite all people of faith and goodwill to trust, with us, that a different world, a world respectful of the living earth, a world in which everyone has daily bread and life in abundance, a decolonized world, a more loving, harmonious, just, and peaceful world, is possible. In a world weighed down with so much pain, anguish, and fear, we believe that the love we have seen in Christ brings the liberating possibilities of joy, justice for all, and peace with the earth. Moved by the Holy Spirit, compelled by a vision of unity, we journey on together, resolved to practise Christ’s love, following his steps as his disciples, and carrying a torch for love in the world, trusting in the promise that Christ’s love moves the world to reconciliation and unity.

– From the Unity Statement of the 11th Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Karlsruhe, Germany, 2022





A Call to Act Together

We long for a wider movement, the reconciliation and unity of all humanity, and indeed of the entire cosmos. This would be a unity in which God establishes justice, an equal place for all, through which creation may be renewed and strengthened. We rely on Christ's love as we act and advocate for climate justice. We join our voices with the Amsterdam assembly (1948) that "war is contrary to the will of God," and the Nairobi assembly (1975) that "racism is a sin against God."

– From the Message of the 11th Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Karlsruhe, Germany, 2022

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