



World Council of Churches

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Geneva, December 20, 2017

Frère Alois, prieur de Taizé
F-71250 Taizé
France

Dear Frère Alois

It is my great honour and joy to share with you on behalf of the World Council of Churches a message to all those gathered in Basel for the 40th European Meeting of Young Adults organised by the Taizé Community.

Throughout the centuries, Basel has been an importance centre for Christianity, hosting a Council of the Church Catholic and as a centre of the Protestant Reformation.

As this year draws to a close, we look back with gratitude how in 2017, for the first time in five centuries, Christians of all traditions have been able to commemorate the Reformation together.

We have together offered repentance for the divisions of the past and affirmed what we have in common in Jesus Christ. This was a powerful symbol of our mutual accountability in Christ.

For this, we give thanks to God, and to all those, young and old, who have been pioneers on this path from conflict to communion, and we give thanks especially for the witness to unity of the Taizé Community.

We remember your message in Martin Luther's town of Wittenberg, Frère Alois, that the gospel carries a message of universal fraternity and the dream of many young people of Christians being united so order not to obscure this message by their divisions.

Anniversaries are opportunities to take stock of the past and to look forward to the future in hope and joy.

Our witness together during the Reformation anniversary in 2017 is one that has enormous potential for strengthening hope.

In Basel you celebrate the 40th gathering of young adults organised by the Taizé Community.

At the same time, this European meeting in Basel is the first to take place in three countries: Switzerland, Germany and France.

It is a reminder of the need to transcend our borders and divisions, to build bridges and not walls.

We need the participation, commitment and ideas of young people today as 70 years ago. We invite you to continue with us in our Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace. In 2018, the World Council

of Churches celebrates its 70th anniversary, under the motto “Walking Together, Serving Justice and Peace.”

We look forward to continuing to walk together with you, seeking to make visible the unity we have in Christ, as we seek to contribute to transformation toward just peace.

May the Joy of Jesus Christ that is in us be an instrument of God’s healing to all of creation.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Olav Fykse Tveit". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit
General Secretary