

WALKING TOGETHER, SERVING JUSTICE AND PEACE
A SERVICE OF CELEBRATION OF THE
70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
AT SAINT PIERRE CATHEDRAL

1948 - 2018



Geneva, Switzerland - 17 June 2018

Welcome by the Protestant Church of Geneva

Celebrating 70 years of the WCC — that almost makes us feel young after marking the 500 years of the Reformation!

On behalf of the Protestant Church of Geneva, I have the pleasure and privilege of welcoming you to Saint Pierre Cathedral to mark this time of praise and recognition. Our church and, more generally, our city of Geneva do not perhaps always fully appreciate how fortunate we are to host the headquarters of the World Council of Churches or WCC. And that is why I am particularly grateful for the fruitful ties that have developed in recent years between the WCC and our church, as ecumenical openness is genuinely part of our Reformed identity.

These ties between our local church and the universal communion that the WCC represents are very important. That is why we did not hesitate when you suggested the possibility of commemorating together this important anniversary in a joint celebration in this cathedral, a place that has marked history and that continues to play a strong, symbolic role in the proclamation of this gospel which we share and which gives us life.

Thus, long live the WCC in this search for unity, which we wholeheartedly support. And may the Holy Spirit accompany us in this celebration and in this week's meetings at the WCC.

Welcome to each and every one of you, and to God be all the glory (*Soli Deo gloria*).

The Rev. Emmanuel Fuchs
Pastor, president of the Protestant Church of Geneva

Welcome by the WCC Vice-Moderator

What a great joy it is to gather here today in Saint Pierre Cathedral with members of the WCC Central Committee, staff and ecumenical partners to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the World Council of Churches. The WCC is grateful to the congregation of Saint Pierre for hosting us. In particular, we thank the Rev. Emmanuel Fuchs and the Rev. Emmanuel Rolland for their leadership in the preparation of this celebration.

We are glad and grateful to worship this morning together with one of our local member churches and to be generously hosted by the congregation worshipping regularly in this historic cathedral.

This celebration is one of the high points of the 70th anniversary year and a symbolic moment in our common pilgrimage of justice and peace. Activities throughout 2018 allow us to give thanks for our past, to assess carefully the signs and challenges of the present and to look with confidence to the future.

It is important that we are meeting here for, although we know ourselves to be a pilgrim people, the Council also is strengthened by being located in the international city of Geneva, which has been our headquarters for so long and the scene of many important gatherings of the WCC. More than this, we have gathered in this cathedral that symbolizes the legacy of the city in the defense of human dignity and of justice and peace, themes that continue to resonate with the ecumenical movement.

I want to thank all participants in today's service, but particularly His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, who kindly accepted our invitation to join us for the celebration of the 70th anniversary and deliver the sermon.

I also want to acknowledge the joy of having among us representatives and delegations from the churches in both North and South Korea and to celebrate with them the progress that continues to be made on the Korean Peninsula towards a lasting peace.

May we continue to fulfill Jesus' prayer that we may all be one as we pray and work for the unity of God's church and God's people.

*Bishop Dr Mary Ann Swenson
Vice-moderator, WCC central committee*

SUNDAY WORSHIP

Ecumenical Celebration on the Occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the World Council of Churches

Saint Pierre Cathedral, Geneva
Sunday, 17 June 2018

L: Leader

C: Congregation

Organ prelude (*Mr Vincent Thévenaz, organist of Saint Pierre Cathedral*)

(*You may stand.*)

Procession

♪ Vous qui sur la terre

(*Stanza 1: French; stanza 2: English; stanza 3: German; stanza 4: Spanish; or you may sing in the language of your choice.*)

Psalm 100 paraphrase

Genevan Psalter 1551

1. Vous qui sur la terre ha - bi - tez,
1. All peo - ple that on earth do dwell,
1. Nun jauchzt dem Her - ren, al - le Welt!
1. Oh pueb - los to - dos a - la - bad

chan - tez à plei - ne voix, chan - tez.
sing - to the Lord with cheer - ful voice;
Kommt her, zu sei - nem Dienst euch stellt,
en al - ta voz a Dios can - tad,

Ré - jou - is - sez - vous au Sei - gneur,
him - serve with fear, his praise forth - tell.
kommt mit Froh - lo - cken, säu - met nicht,
re - go - ci - ja - os en su ho - nor,

é - gay - ez - vous à son hon - neur.
Come ye be - fore him and re - jice.
kommt vor sein hei - lig An - ge - sicht.
ser - vid a - le - gres al Se - ñor.

Français:

2. Lui seul est notre souverain,
c'est lui qui nous fit de sa main:
nous le peuple qu'il mènera,
le troupeau qu'il rassemblera.

3. Dans sa maison dès aujourd'hui,
tous présentez-vous devant lui:
célébrez son nom glorieux,
exaltez-le jusques aux cieux.

4. Pour toi, Seigneur, que notre amour
se renouvelle chaque jour.
Ta bonté, ta fidélité
demeurent pour l'éternité.

Deutsch:

2. Erkennt, dass Gott ist unser Herr,
der uns erschaffen ihm zur Ehr.
Als guter Hirt ist er bereit,
zu führen uns auf seine Weid.

3. Die ihr nun wollet bei ihm sein,
kommt, geht zu seinen Toren ein
mit Loben durch der Psalmen Klang,
zu seinem Hause mit Gesang.

4. Er ist voll Güt' und Freundlichkeit,
voll Lieb und Treu zu jeder Zeit.
Sein Gnad währt immer dort und hier
und seine Wahrheit für und für.

English:

2. The Lord, ye know, is God indeed,
without our aid he did us make;
we are his folk, he doth us feed,
and for his sheep he doth us take.

3. O enter then his gates with praise.
Approach with joy his courts unto.
Praise, laud, and bless his name always,
for it is seemly so to do.

4. For why? The Lord our God is good:
his mercy is for ever sure,
his truth at all times firmly stood
and shall from age to age endure.

Español:

2. El soberano Creador
de nuestra vida_es el autor;
el pueblo suyo somos ya,
rebaño que_El pastoreará.

3. A su santuario pues entrad,
y vuestras vidas ofrendad;
al nombre augusto dad loor,
que_al mundo llena de_esplendor.

4. Incomparable_es su bondad,
y para siempre su verdad;
de bienes colma nuestro ser
su gracia no_ha de fenecer.

English: William Kethe 1560. French: Roger Chapal 1970, according to Théodore Bèze 1562
© Fédération Protestante de France, 47, Rue de Clichy, 75009 Paris.
German: according to Cornelius Becker 1602 / Hannover 1646.
Spanish © 1960 Federico J. Pagura

Greetings

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.

C: **And also with you.**

Call to worship

L: Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C: who made heaven and earth.

L: Come, let us bow down and worship,
and kneel before the Lord, our maker.

**C: For the Lord is our God, our shepherd,
we are the flock led with care.**

L: Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth;
break forth into joyous song and sing praises!

**C: For the Lord has done marvellous things;
God's steadfast love endures forever to all generations.**

(Please be seated.)

Words of welcome

(The Rev. Emmanuel Fuchs, president of the Protestant Church of Geneva)

Prayer of thanksgiving

L: Merciful God,
you have called us to gather in this place;

C: we thank you.

L: You have called us to live together in unity;

C: we thank you.

L: You have guided us, the World Council of Churches,
in walking together as a fellowship of churches for 70 years;

C: we thank you.

L: You have bestowed on us, by your grace, the gift of salvation;

C: we thank you.

L: From a deep well of gratitude,

C: help us to proclaim your great and glorious deeds.

L: In response to our sin and your salvation,

C: help us to live lives of service to you and to your creation.

L: Strengthened by the Holy Spirit and rooted in Christ's love,

**C: help us to make every effort to maintain the unity
and to build up the body of Christ.**

L: May our worship today be a witness
to the kind of unity that comes only
through Christ, our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

C: Amen.

(You may stand.)

♪ Entonnons un nouveau cantique

(Stanza 1: French; stanza 2: English; stanza 3: Spanish, or you may sing in the language of your choice.)

R. Chapal

Louis Bourgeois: Switzerland 1551

1. En - ton-nons un nou-veau can-ti - que pour cé - lé-brer le Dieu sau - veur;
1. New songs of ce - le - bra-tion ren - der to God who has great won - ders done;
1. Singt, singt dem Her-ren neu - e Lie - der, er ist's al-lein, der Wun - der tut.
1. Nue - vas can-cio-nes en-ton - a - mos pues ma - ra - vil - las hi - zo Dios.

ce qu'il a fait est ma-gni - fi - que le - vant pour nous un bras vain-queur.
Love sits en-throned in age-less splen - dor; come and a - dore the might - y One.
Seht, sei - ne Rech - te sie - get wie - der, sein heil - ger Arm gibt Kraft und Mut.
Con san - ti - dad a - brió sus bra - zos pa - ra brin-dar-nos sal - va - ción.

Le sa - lut de Dieu se ré - vè - le et tous les yeux l'ont re - con - nu;
God has made known the great sal - va - tion which all the saints with joy con - fess.
Wo sind nun al - le uns-re Lei - den? Der Herr schafft Ruh und Si - cher - heit;
A ple - na luz nos ha mos-tra - do, su ge - ne - ro - sa pro - tec - ción

de proche en proche la nou-vel - le jusqu' au bout du monde a cou - ru.
God has re-vealed to ev - ery na - tion truth and un-end-ing righ-teous-ness.
er sel - ber of - fen-bart den Hei - den sein Recht und sei - ne Herr-lich - keit.
y su jus - ti-cia ha re - ve - la - do pa - ra bien de to - da na - ción.

French: Roger Chapal © Fédération protestante de France, 47 rue de Clichy, F-75009 Paris, France.
English: Erik Routley © 1974 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL, USA.
German: 1798 Matthias Jorissen. Spanish © 2018 Gerardo Oberman, Argentina.

Français:

2. Chantez pour lui vos chants de fête;
psalmodiez! criez de joie!
Au son du cor et des trompettes,
acclamez tous le Roi des rois.
Le Seigneur vient juger la terre,
sa vérité va s'imposer.
Que tous les peuples qui espèrent
en l'apprenant soient apaisés.

Deutsch:

2. Frohlocket, jauchzet, rühmet alle,
erhebt ihn mit Lobgesang!
Sein Lob tönt im Posaunenschalle,
in Psalter- und in Harfenklang!
Auf, alle Völker, jauchzt zusammen,
Gott macht, dass jeder jauchzen kann;
sein Ruhm, sein Lob muss euch entflammen,
kommt, betet euren König an!

3. Que tous les océans mugissent;
fleuves aussi, battez des mains:
et que les montagnes bondissent
pour acclamer le Roi qui vient.
Le Seigneur va juger le monde
avec droiture et vérité,
et partout sa justice fonde
son éternelle royauté.

English:

2. Joyfully, heartily resounding,
let every instrument and voice
peal out the praise of grace abounding,
calling the whole world to rejoice.
Trumpets and organs, set in motion
such sounds as make the heavens ring;
all things that live in earth and ocean,
sound forth the song, your praises bring.

3. Rivers and seas and torrents roaring,
honour the Lord with wild acclaim;
mountains and stones, look up adoring,
and find a voice to praise God's name.
Righteous, commanding, ever glorious,
praises be sung that never cease;
just is our God, whose truth victorious
establishes the world in peace.

3. Das Weltmeer brause aller Enden,
jauchzt, Erde, Menschen, jauchzt vereint!
Die Ströme klatschen wie mit Händen;
ihr Berge, hüpf, der Herr erscheint!
Er kommt, er naht sich, dass er richte
den Erdkreis in Gerechtigkeit
und zwischen Recht und Unrecht schlichte;
des sich die Unschuld ewig freut.

Español:

2. Cantemos con la tierra toda
con alegría y con pasión,
con danzas y batiendo palmas,
rindamos alabanza a Dios.
Suenen el arpa y las guitarras,
a coro cante la creación,
trompetas, quenás y zampoñas
se unan hoy a nuestra voz.

3. Que aplauda el mar, salten los ríos,
dance la entera humanidad;
los cerros, llanos y quebradas,
felices súmense a cantar.
Dios vino a darnos su justicia,
su rectitud descubrirá
la tierra nueva que anhelamos,
tierra de encuentro y de equidad.

(Please be seated.)

Prayer of confession

L: Dear friends, let us love one another,
because love comes from God.

Whoever loves is a child of God and knows God.

C: **Jesus Christ, forgive our separation,
grant us peace and unity.**

L: There is one body and one Spirit,
just as we were called to the one hope of our calling,
one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.

C: **Jesus Christ, forgive our separation,
grant us peace and unity.**

L: The peace that Christ gives is to guide us in the decisions we make,
for it is to this peace that God has called us together into one body.

C: **Jesus Christ, forgive our separation,
grant us peace and unity.**

L: With his own body he broke down the walls of separation.
By his death on the cross Christ destroyed our divisions.

C: **Jesus Christ, forgive our separation,
grant us peace and unity.**

♪ **The Great Litany of Peace** (traditional from Kiev)
(sung by Ensemble Vocal Voskresenié, conducted by Yaroslav Ayvazov)

(You may stand.)

Words of assurance

L: This is the good news:
 God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love
 with which he loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses,
 made us alive together with Christ — by grace we have been saved.
 For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works,
 which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

C: **Thanks be to God!**

♪ **Mungu ni mwema**

Traditional song: Congo

♩ = 60

The musical score for "Mungu ni mwema" is written in 3/2 time with a tempo of ♩ = 60. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has four measures with chords F, C7, C7, and F. The second system starts at measure 5 and has four measures with chords F7, Bb, F/C, C, and F. The lyrics are provided in Swahili, English, and French.

System 1:

Chord	F	C7	C7	F
Swahili	Mu - ngu	ni mwe - ma,	mu - ngu	ni mwe - ma,
English	Know that	God is good,	know that	God is good,
French	C'est vrai:	Dieu est bon!	C'est vrai:	Dieu est bon!

System 2 (starting at measure 5):

Chord	F7	Bb	F/C	C	F
Swahili	mu - ngu	ni mwe ma,	ni mwe - ma,	ni - mwe	ma.
English	know that	God is good,	God is good,	God is	good.
French	C'est vrai:	Dieu est bon!	Dieu est bon!	Dieu est	bon!

Music, Swahili and English: Traditional song from Congo. Arrangement © Edo Bumba. French © 2005 David Fines.

(Please be seated.)

Prayer for illumination

L: O Lord, heavenly Father,
in whom is the fullness of light and wisdom,
enlighten our minds by your Holy Spirit,
and give us grace to receive your Word
with reverence and humility,
without which no person can understand your truth,
for the sake of Jesus Christ
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit
be all glory.

(John Calvin)

C: **Amen.**

Scripture reading: Ephesians 3:1-21

This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles — for surely you have already heard of the commission of God’s grace that was given to me for you, and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that is, the Gentiles have become fellow-heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God’s grace that was given to me by the working of his power. Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him. I pray therefore that you may not lose heart over my sufferings for you; they are your glory.

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen.

Meditative music

*("Tebe poem, tebe blagoslovim" by Dobri Hristov (1875-1941))
(Ensemble Vocal Voskresenié)*

We sing to you. We praise you. We thank you.
O Lord.

We pray to you, our God. (3x)
Our God.

Sermon

(His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, Archbishop of Constantinople)

Organ interlude

("Postlude pour l'office de complies" by Jehan Alain)

(You may stand.)

Common witness of our faith *(Nicene Constantinopolitan Creed)*

L: Together, let us confess our faith.

C: **We believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
begotten from the Father before all ages,
God from God,
Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made;
of the same essence as the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven;
he became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary,
and was made human.
He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered and was buried.
The third day he rose again, according to the scriptures.
He ascended to heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again with glory**

to judge the living and the dead.
 His kingdom will never end.
 And we believe in the Holy Spirit,
 the Lord, the giver of life.
 He proceeds from the Father
 and with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified.
 He spoke through the prophets.
 We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
 We affirm one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
 We look forward to the resurrection of the dead,
 and to life in the world to come. Amen.

(Please be seated.)

Offering

(For the work with refugees of HEKS/EPER, the aid organization of the Swiss Protestant Churches, a specialized ministry in working relationship with the WCC)

L: With joy, we offer our gifts to God
 as a sign of our deep devotion and covenant faithfulness.

♪ God has formed the church to be a sign

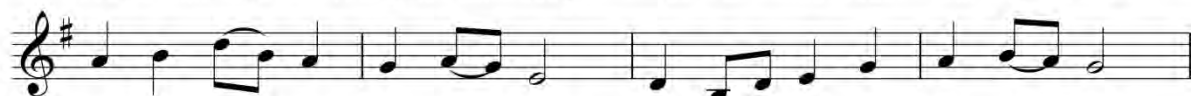
based on Eph. 4:4-6

Tiing-Chang Ling, Malaysia

♩ = 84



1. God has formed the Church to be sign of Christ through-out the world:
 1. Dieu fait de l'E - glise un corps où le mon - de voit le Christ:



man - y peo - ples, man - y tongues, in one bod - y re - con - ciled.
 peu - ples, lan - gues, ras - sem - blés de par - tout en frères et sœurs.

Refrain



One Lord is our u - ni - ty, one faith is our on - ly rock;
 U - nis en un seul Sei - gneur, le vrai roc de no - tre foi,



bap - tized ful - ly in - to Christ, his life flows out through us all.
 lais - sons jail - lir de nos cœurs l'eau de la sour - ce de vie.

Music and words: Tiing-Chang Ling, Malaysia © Christian Conference of Asia. French: Christian Kempf © 2018 WCC.

2. All are called to do God's will:
faith grows strong when proved by works;
people sharing myriad gifts
find one love, one peace, in Christ.

2. Vivons comme Dieu le veut:
agissons selon la foi,
partageons tous nos talents
et l'amour, la paix en Christ.

3. Now the Church in every place
holds her lamps of hope aloft:
where the Spirit gives them light,
they will shine by night, by day.

3. Tiens ta lampe à la main,
toi le peuple de l'espoir:
qu'elle éclaire nuits et jours
de la flamme de l'Esprit.

Prayers of intercession

L: Gracious God, we give thanks to you for the gifts
which, day after day, we receive from your goodness.
Accept this offering as a sign of our love and our consecration to your service.
God, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

L: Let us now pray to the Lord that the entire church may manifest the truth of Christ
in communion with his sufferings and his resurrection,
and that, empowered by the Holy Spirit,
we are able to realize the visible unity of the church
in our walking together in the pilgrimage of justice and peace.
God, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

L: Let us pray for those who are worn out by work and fatigue,
for those wounded by the constraints and hardships of life,
for those who must face old age or sickness,
and for those who suffer from affliction and despair,
so that they may find brothers and sisters capable of helping them
and be strengthened by God's gracious presence and care.
God, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

L: Let us pray for those who bear great responsibilities,
for leaders in our countries and the world,
that they may seek to serve, not dominate;
for us in this place and all people that we may be empowered
to devote our whole lives to the task of making peace and upholding justice.
God, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

L: Let us pray for our earth, the creation of God,
so that all those who inhabit it may stop wounding and disfiguring it,
and for those who give their lives for restoring peace and building justice.
God, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

L: Let us pray that our community may be a hospitable place
where service and pardon are lived,
so that all generations may find in it their home
and commit to the service of Christ.

God, in your mercy,
C: hear our prayer.

L: Lord, accept our prayers,
and do us the honour of allowing us to enter ever deeper
into your thoughts and in our service,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

(Adapted from "Alléluia: Avec le Christ, dépasser les frontières")

The Lord's prayer *(in the language of your choice)*

L: Let us pray the prayer that our Lord Jesus has taught us in our own language.

Announcements

(The Rev. Emmanuel Rolland, pastor of Saint Pierre Cathedral)

Words of greeting

(Bishop Dr Mary Ann Swenson, vice-moderator of the WCC central committee)

(You may stand.)

♪ Now go in peace

Michael Mair

"Junkanoo", Caribbean traditional

Now go in peace, now go in love from the Fa - ther a - bove.
 Va - yan en paz y en a - mor en el nom - bre de Dios.
 평 - 화 안 - 고 나 - 아 - 가 - 자 하 - 나 - 님 자 - 녀 - 여.
 Al - lons en paix, sùrs de l'a mour de Dieu, Père é - ter - nel.

Je - sus Christ the Son stay with you till the day is done.
 Je - sús los/las pro - te - ja y al ca - er el dí - a.
 구 - 주 예 - 수 - 님 언 - 제 - 나 함 - 께 하 - 시 - 고
 Le Christ a - gi - ra dans nos ac - tes et dans nos mots

Ho - ly Spir - it en - cir - cle you in all you think and do.
 los/las a - bra - ce. Es - pi - ri - tu al pen - sar y al o - brar.
 성 - 령 - 도 너 - 의 결 - 에 - 서 모 - 든 일 도 - 우 - 리.
 et l'Es - prit nous ins - pi - re - ra pour que le mon - de croie.

Fine
 Once a - gain, God's bless - ing be with us. A - men. Now go in
 Y que Dios nos dé su ben - di - ción. A - mén. Va - yan en
 주 - 의 은 - 총 안 - 에 살 - 기 - 를. 아 - 멘. 평 - 화 안 -
 Dieu nous don - ne sa bé - né - dic - tion. A - men. Al - lons en

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Blessing

- L: May God bless you and keep you.
 May God's face shine upon you
 and be gracious to you.
 May God look upon you with kindness
 and give you peace.
- C: **Amen.**

Recessional

Organ postlude

("Toccata" by Charles-Marie Widor)

His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew is committed to inter-Orthodox co-operation, inter-Christian dialogue and inter-religious relations and has acquired a reputation for raising ecological awareness on a global level. His All Holiness has served on the executive and central committees of the WCC and Faith and Order Commission. He is well known for promoting religious freedom and human rights, religious tolerance, international peace and environmental protection. As such, he is one of the global visionaries, peacemakers and bridge-builders and an apostle of love, peace and reconciliation.

Seventy Years of Fellowship: The World Council of Churches

The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of 348 churches that 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 the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The life of the WCC is nurtured by the vision “that all may be one”, as Jesus prayed shortly before he was crucified. The WCC responds to that vision in various ways:

- It brings together church leaders and theologians to explore the doctrinal issues on which their traditions agree or disagree. Ecumenical formation encourages and enables younger theologians to work for unity in their own contexts.
- Within a tragically divided world, the WCC helps churches to renew their common witness to the gospel of life and to bring reconciliation; it helps their message of peace to be heard.
- It connects member churches and ecumenical partners with human rights movements and others working for the common good.
- By uniting their wisdom and voices in the WCC, churches can be more loving neighbours to those who suffer and can challenge social, economic and political powers that control the lives of people.

Throughout its 70-year history, the Council has constantly adapted its focus, responding to the needs of its member churches, the challenges of the world and an on-going concern for renewal in church life and witness. Thirty or forty years ago there was little if any awareness in most churches about many issues that have become important to us today: mission from the periphery, climate justice, inter-religious relations, religion and violence, HIV and AIDS, children’s well-being, to mention only a few of the Council’s programmatic activities.

In the long pilgrimage of churches together there have been many success stories, such as: a declaration on “The Church, the Churches and the World Council of Churches”, memorable convergence documents on “Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry” and “The Church: Towards a Common Vision”, a “Programme to Combat Racism”, a study document on “My Neighbour’s Faith and Mine”, a “Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women” and a new mission affirmation “Together towards Life”.

For more information about the WCC, visit www.oikoumene.org.

Celebrating the Council's 70th Anniversary in 2018

The 70th anniversary of the WCC is an opportunity for member churches to give thanks to God for their common work for Christian unity, for their long pilgrimage of justice and peace. The many events organized throughout the year by the Council, by member churches and by ecumenical partners in some 25 countries are opportunities to celebrate the past and look together towards the future with confidence. "Walking, praying and working together", churches will continue their pilgrimage together, offer a genuine witness to the world and become signs of hope.

Find out more about anniversary celebrations and how you can contribute, individually or collectively at www.oikoumene.org/wcc70.