

Arkivsak: 17/00334-16

Saksdokumenter:

Olav Fykse Tveit: Rapport til sentralkomiteen Agnes Aboum: Tale til sentralkomiteen

Marianne H. Brekken og Berit Hagen Agøy: Kronikk i Vårt Land 29.06.2018: En økumenisk

vårdag

Olav Fykse Tveit: Preken i Metodistkirken på Grünerløkka, 26.08.2018

Rapport nr. 11/2018 Marianne H. Brekken

Rapport fra møte i KVs sentralkomité 15.-21. juni 2018

Artikkel i Vårt Land 27.08.18: 70 år med kirkelig brobygging

Nytt fra den verdensvide kirke – Kirkenes verdensråd (KV)

Sammendrag

Sentralkomitémøte og besøk av pave Frans

Kirkenes verdensråds sentralkomité møttes i Genève 15.-21. juni 2018. Møtet var preget av pave Frans' besøk som ble svært vellykket, og som var til stor oppmuntring for videre økumenisk arbeid. Sentralkomitémøtet markerte også KVs 70-årsjubileum med gudstjeneste i katedralen i Genève hvor den økumeniske patriarken, Bartholomeus, talte.



Det vises til rapporten fra Marianne H. Brekken.

Det anbefales å lese rapportene til generalsekretær Olav Fykse Tveit og leder av sentralkomiteen, Agnes Aboum, som til sammen gir en god oppdatering om KVs arbeid (begge er vedlagt).

Vedlagt artikkel fra Vårt Land summerer opp inntrykk fra pavebesøket.

Fyldig referat fra sentralkomiteen og pavebesøket finnes på KVs hjemmeside: https://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/wcc-shares-overview-of-june-central-committee-meeting

Filmer fra møtet og pavebesøket finnes her:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLI22eVXX9FYldvlXoX5O-KpILYUK4pREt

Se også oppslag på kirken.no:

https://kirken.no/nb-NO/om-kirken/aktuelt/et-hapstegn-for-kristen-enhet/



70-årsmarkering under Arendalsuka 16. august

Vi markerte KVs jubileum på Kirkeskipet gjennom en samtale mellom Olav Fykse Tveit, Marianne H. Brekken og Hilde Frafjord Johnsen. Møtet, som ble svært godt besøkt, ble ledet av Berit Hagen Agøy.

Opptak av samtalen finnes her:

https://kirken.no/nb-NO/om-kirken/aktuelt/kirkens-potensial/



70-års markering i Amsterdam 23. august 23. august markerte Kirkenes verdensråd sitt 70-årsjubileum på det stedet der organisasjonen ble etablert, i Nieuwe Kerk i Amsterdam, Nederland. I tillegg til festgudstjeneste var det faglig symposium og pilegrimsvandring gjennom Amsterdams gater. MKRs generalsekretær representerte Den norske kirke under jubileumsfeiringen i Amsterdam.

Oppslag og bilder fra Amsterdam finnes her:

https://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/pilgrims-gather-from-far-and-wide-to-celebrate-70-years-of-wcc

70-årsmarkering i Oslo 26. august

Søndag 26. august var det festgudstjeneste i Metodistkirken på Grünerløkka i Oslo i samarbeid med Paulus menighet. Olavs Fykse Tveits preken – som trekker interessante tråder fra 1948 til KV i dag – er vedlagt.





Etter gudstjenesten var det felles vandring til Paulus kirke med innlagt stopp i Birkelunden for å se på fotoutstillingen til Kirkens Nødhjelp, *«Ser alt du er»*.

Etter kirkesuppe var det hilsener fra Oslo biskop, leder av Metodistkirkens hovedstyre og generalsekretærene i Kirkens Nødhjelp og Norges Kristne Råd. Peder Borgen som deltok som pressemann i 1948, gav glimt fra møtet hvor KV ble stiftet. Olav

Fykse Tveit avsluttet med å si noe om dagens KV.

Oppslag på kirken.no om feiringen i Oslo:

https://kirken.no/nb-NO/om-kirken/aktuelt/kirkenes-verdensrad-70-ar/

Forslag til vedtak

Mellomkirkelig råd tar Rapport fra møte i KVs sentralkomité 15.-21. juni 2018 og saken til orientering.

15-21 June 2018 Geneva, Switzerland

Document No. GEN 03

FOR ACTION EMBARGOED AGAINST DELIVERY

Original

Report of the General Secretary

The Ecumenical Movement of Love Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit

1. At a milestone: Blessings and challenges of 70 years since Amsterdam – and four years since Busan

- 1. We have come to a milestone, 70 years since the World Council of Churches was established. This year is also a milestone mid-way between our 10th and the 11th assemblies. Every meeting of this significant body, the central committee, is a milestone for the WCC. This whole meeting of the central committee has been prepared as a comprehensive, significant, public, and quite dense event to commemorate, consider, and celebrate the life and work of the World Council of Churches. In addition, after our meeting, the milestone will be marked further by a unique visit of the head of the Roman Catholic Church, Pope Francis. You will not get much time to rest. But let us pause for a moment to reflect on the way marked by this particular milestone.
- 2. This is a moment to look back, to see where we have gone, and to analyse where we have arrived at this stage. You have received several reports and evaluations about the last four years, and about what has happened since the last central committee meeting, in Trondheim, Norway, two years ago. You know a lot that is happening in the WCC as a fellowship of churches, as an organization, and as a partner and trusted instrument for leadership in the one ecumenical movement. Some of you also know much from the 70 years' history, as well. There is no need to use the next precious minutes to tell those stories again just now. I will focus on some of the overall tasks and issues of this organization and this meeting seen from one particular perspective. Probably the most important perspective.
- 3. The WCC has made a difference in many ways because we have been "walking together, serving justice and peace" as the theme for this meeting and our anniversary says. We should grasp this moment to share with one another and attend to our calling and to the challenges facing us, to how we have responded to them, and to summoning the courage to continue. There is markedly increased public attention to the WCC at this milestone, maybe more than any time before. I have been asked by several journalists, what are the purpose and the outcome of the work of the WCC? "In a few words," they ask. I have answered: "Unity, justice, and peace. And how these three are interrelated in the church and in the world at large." And how are they related? I have found no better way of describing what has motivated us, no more significant perspective, than to call the WCC a unique instrument for "the ecumenical movement of love."
- 4. This milestone is a place where we offer thanksgiving to God. The churches in the WCC and other churches, like the Roman Catholic Church, are at a very, very different place in their relations to one another than they were 70 years ago. What we might take for granted, was not at all so in 1948.
- 5. We have seen more clearly what unites us. We have costly experiences of truth and reconciliation processes to share. We have gradually become able to understand one another better and respectfully deal with our differences. Even deep divisions based on theological convictions and historical developments can be bridged. We have learned a lot about living together with our diversity. We have become mutually accountable to one another and to our common calling and mission.

- 6. The 70 years since the beginning of the World Council of Churches have been a blessing and a challenge to the churches and to the world.
- 7. How has this been possible? I believe it has to do with love.
- 8. In the ecumenical movement we need both perspectives on love, both *eros* and *agape*. We need the passion for fellowship, the longing for togetherness with the other to be with one another. We also need the willingness to give, to offer what we have, even to sacrifice, to be able to put the needs of others first, following the example of Jesus Christ.
- 9. We have seen both dimensions of love, and that makes me confident in speaking about an ecumenical movement of love in these 70 years. The question of "what is in for me, for us?" cannot define a *koinonia* of love. We cannot ignore one another or withdraw our attention when it is no longer primarily serving our own interests.
- 10. The *blessings* that come from being a fellowship of love are many. This is not a zero-sum deal for doing business together. One plus one is more than two in the power of love. We have been sharing our gifts from the different churches, confessions and contexts. Sharing the sufferings and the precious joys has brought new and added dimensions of being church. I have been inspired and moved by seeing the many initiatives, agendas and people carry them forward through these 70 years as expressions of love, of genuine attempts and efforts to act in love for the fellowship and for justice and peace in the world.
- 11. The *challenges* we have received from one another in this movement of love have changed our preconceptions about one another, but also dealt with the truth about one another.
- 12. From the early initiatives long before 1948 till now it has been clear that the quest for the unity of the church has served a wider purpose: life together as God's creation as one humanity. The love that could be expressed among the churches should serve the life and peace of the world. After 70 years we have come to a place in our journey when we should not be shy to say that we learned a lot about how to reconcile, how to work for unity, justice and peace. This must be a legacy shared among us and with others who need it today. We have learned enough to see that we have to continue. The mission is not completed.
- 13. The urgent needs for unity, justice and peace have driven the WCC forward. In this perspective I think it is proper to have a 70th anniversary in thanksgiving for the World Council of Churches as an instrument for the ecumenical movement *of love*. In this perspective we can accept, even embrace and celebrate, what are imperfect but real and diverse expressions of unity and shared service for justice and peace. Even if our unity is imperfect, it has dimensions driven by the love of Christ to us and to all humankind and to the whole creation.
- 14. This time we are asked to reflect on what have we been able to contribute or not as we now pass the mid-term milestone between the 10th and the 11th assemblies. This means if we use the images of this region that we look at the bigger picture, the whole mountain range of the Alps, not just one hill or one peak or one valley. I asked my colleagues in the last staff planning days to offer some examples to share with one another and with you about the peaks we have been able to climb and surmount during these four years. In this inspiring but not complete picture we can see a lot that inspires us to continue working and planning together. I am proud of leading this team and this work during this time. In that perspective of four years we can see more clearly the character of the work that the organization and the fellowship of the WCC can contribute. The more detailed studies of plans and reports is the task of the executive committee.
- 15. In the four-year perspective and even more in the 70^{th} anniversary perspective we zoom out and see the larger landscape. We see both the blessings and the challenges of doing something together. We

see that the WCC even changed the landscapes of our churches and our relations, even beyond the landscape of our churches.

2. 70 Years of the WCC: A theological interpretation of a fellowship of love

2.1. A fellowship participating in the love of God

16. We have been helped by some of the major projects of Faith and Order (whose texts will now be made accessible in a digitized version) to see our fellowship as *koinonia*, as a shared gift, participating in the *love* of the triune God of life, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God is love. The church is invited to be one – as the Holy Trinity is one – in love. The church is called to be the expression of this love in a broken and sinful world. How could the ecumenical movement, trying to unite the churches in this call and to bring the signs of the reign of God – justice, peace and joy – into this world – how could this movement be something other than a movement of love?

2.2 An ecumenical movement of the cross and the resurrection

17. We should also at this milestone read our ecumenical history from the perspective of the biblical call to the ministry of reconciliation. That means: "For the love of Christ compels us" or, in another translation: "The love of Christ moves us on" (2 Cor. 5:14). We have a shared gospel as our basis, corresponding to this point made by St Paul: "And he died for all, so that those who live might no longer live for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them" (5:15).

When I began my ministry for the WCC as general secretary some years ago, I found that I had to see this movement in the light of the cross. Everything is proven by the cross. The cross is the sign of God's love for all. The cross is also the sign of the challenges and of the suffering, even death, that might come when we do what we are called to do as disciples of Jesus Christ. We cannot have unity of the church or an ecumenical movement without the cross. The meaning of what we are doing is not to be measured in normal indicators of "success" or great wind in the sails and applause from everybody. For the true unity and service of the church there cannot be anything "except Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:2).

18. Yet this is only possible to see in the light of the resurrection. The call to unity and reconciliation, justice and peace, is driven by the one who died and was risen – so that those who live might no longer live for themselves. We are called to find the proper expression of the love given in Christ to us – in our way of living together. We serve the God of life, leading us to justice and peace. The WCC has challenged the powerful and everybody who has responsibility for making decisions on behalf of many. (We have spoken truth to power. We do so driven by love for all, and particularly for those suffering, occupied, colonized, excluded, non-privileged, marginalized, discriminated against.) It is in this perspective that we also should see a very important shared ecumenical theological point, "the preferential option for the poor." This axiom is expressing God's love for the world in a particularly profound and relevant way. This is our shared faith in the crucified and resurrected Jesus Christ.

2.3 A fellowship itself in need of the love of God

19. The whole biblical story shows why human beings are in need of divine love, both individually and collectively. There is no reason to understand human life in another way in our time. The need for divine grace is at least as obvious as before.

20. The encounter with Peter in chapter 21 of the Gospel of John must be read in light of the famous words of chapter 17. The prayer that they may all be one is fulfilled in a unique expression of love. The way forward to the ministry of unity is reopened in Jesus' generous invitation to the meal at the shore for the disillusioned fishermen. This expression of love is also a call to accountability: "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Yet the question of Jesus Christ is not leading to sentimentality and emotional self-preoccupation, but to a new and wider and much more demanding task, namely to share the new sign of fellowship and unity in the meal also with others – in all dimensions of the meal: "Feed my sheep – tend my sheep."

- 21. One night almost 40 years ago I read that text after asking God for guidance for my life. The question from Jesus was overwhelming, almost unfair. How can we fully and honestly say that we really love Christ? How can we do something reciprocating the endless and unfathomable love of Christ? Jesus Christ expects that we can, even if we feel that it is beyond our capacity. This story has motivated many, myself included, for ministry in the church and in the ecumenical movement.
- 22. There is no reason to believe that we who are involved in this movement, which is meant to heal wounds and mend broken relationships are ourselves in any less need of divine grace and love. There is no sense in talking about an ecumenical movement of love without being honest about ourselves and realistic about the people involved in this movement as human beings sometimes able to lose sight of the purpose and the objective of what we are here for.
- 23. Yet Jesus Christ did not ask for perfectionism but honesty and love. The world is not in need of perfectionism, but desperately in need of love.

2.4 The attitudes of love for the ecumenical movement

- 24. The call to work for unity, justice and peace requires some kind of shared attitudes that make it possible to pursue shared objectives. These attitudes can to some extent be defined and can be pursued and used as criteria for what kind of professionalism and capacity are needed for this particular type of work. It is not only individual and emotional dimensions of love we are talking about.
- 25. In my analysis of the texts from our ecumenical history (in *The Truth We Owe Each Other*), and from my daily experience of our discussions and our practices, I have found that there is required *an attitude of mutual accountability*. This means a firm position reflected in practice and in established relations of openness and reliability. Willingness to share but also to learn from others and their contributions must be articulated through a constructive criticism that also is shown in proper self-criticism. Accountability for our common, shared Christian faith and values is essential, as is accountability to the common mission of the churches.
- 26. Increasingly, I see this attitude of mutual accountability and its corresponding structures and practices as ways to embody the quality of relations needed for a fellowship of diversity seeking unity in its objectives and practices. It is a concretization of what the attitude of love means, particularly in an institutional setting like ours.
- 27. The attitude of love is more than softness and gentleness; it is the reliable and solid relationship that also allows for expression of disagreement and differences for the sake of necessary clarity. Love means the ability to say both yes and no and to discern when to say which even if it sometimes hurts, for a while for some, and even for those who have to say it.

2.5 An ecumenical movement of love embracing diversity

- 28. One of the characteristics of the WCC is that it is by definition a fellowship of diversity: different churches, with different traditions and confessions, even different visions and expressions of unity. Another characteristic is that the WCC has embraced diversity in our human family in terms of acknowledging different cultures, different abilities, different ways of expressing fellowship. This is the case also when we have developed methods of consensus-building.
- 29. This mosaic is our strength and our glory. We embrace the diversity given by God. We do so in love for one another and for God the creator of all and whose image we bear.
- 30. Sometimes I wonder why we are not able to embrace more of the differences and diversity among us in all aspects of human life and human nature. We try to contribute to this process as the WCC, and also in issues where the churches are struggling within themselves. We are, for example, working carefully to find a common ground for conversations about issues related to the personal issues of human sexuality. The advisory group we have appointed has promising work in progress toward delivering a report in 2020.

Let us not end the conversation with their report, as happened after the significant and substantial report in 2006 on these themes.

31. The question for all of us remains: How can we express more clearly the love of God for all human beings, regardless of who they are and to which community they belong?

3. The way forward

3.1 The movement of high ambitions

- 32. Where is the way forward? Given the reflections above, no wonder the purpose and the objectives of the WCC are very ambitious. They should be. We have allowed ourselves to set such very ambitious objectives, because there is an understanding of the WCC as a leading agent for the unity of the churches as a sign of the unity of humankind. Is this a sign of being unrealistic, overambitious, setting objectives that can really never be achieved? Is this a sign of the blindness that, it is often said, is the characteristic of the first falling in love, and, if so, should we after 70 years become more realistic?
- 33. The objectives of unity, justice and peace are God-given ideals, characteristics of the reign of God breaking into this world. They are genuine expressions of what the love of Christ can restore, how the cross and the resurrection together relate to the world of sin and evil as it is, but still transforming this reality.
- 34. There is a fascinating willingness in the WCC to try to do what is right. In the WCC, there are high objectives for the whole of life, for visible unity, for the care of creation, for human dignity and rights, for a just community of women and men, for better protection of children, for health and healing, for reconciliation and peace, for mutual understanding among the religions, for end of poverty, for just distribution of wealth and resources, for involvement of all generations in these common efforts, for doing them in an inclusive and fair way. And much more. In my view this is beautiful. But, I have to admit, sometimes it is quite demanding to work for an organization with such ambitious objectives and limited resources. But if we understand them properly as expressions of how the love of Christ for us motivates us in doing this, they make a lot of sense.
- 35. We have a review of these overall objectives in our strategic objectives for this period, focusing on five major expressions of how the WCC in this time can contribute to this ecumenical movement of love. The central committee this time is asked to reflect on how these strategic goals have helped us to move and to act properly. We have worked hard to translate these strategic goals into more specific objectives for our programme work for the period of four years, then further into the plans for every year. These are brought to the executive committee to define the plans according to the budgets and staffing resources available, discerning the changing needs from year to year. There we try to be faithful to our mandates, though sometimes we have to say, "This is too much, we cannot do this."
- 36. Sometimes we see that we should have used our resources better and more efficiently. But I can report that the WCC is in a good process of developing better formulations of adequate objectives and outcome indicators, as an expression of our stewardship.
- 37. In all these processes I can interpret the efforts to make plans, to work to achieve the objectives, to do something important, something new, something that makes a difference, as expressions of love for those who need what we can do: the churches, the people, the earth. I am greatly inspired by how the ambitions of members of our staff, governing bodies, reference groups and advisory groups, commissions and committees are driven by this overall and sometimes overarching ambition. I see it as a real sign of love.

3.2 The ecumenical movement of love as pilgrimage

38. Love is "the better way" to take on all issues, challenges and tasks we are addressing as a church fellowship, as the body of Christ, seeking unity, justice and peace, as St Paul reminds us in 1 Cor. 13. It

was so 70 years ago, it is so today, and will so be tomorrow. This is what makes it one ecumenical movement. One way to do that is to see how the pilgrimage approach can express this dimension of an ecumenical ecclesiology, pursuing the dimensions of *diakonia*, serving justice and peace. This leads us to some reflections on where we are and where we are going after passing this milestone.

- 39. Some of these ambitions mentioned above have been transformed into the concept of *pilgrimage* in this period of the work of the WCC. I think that has been a new challenge for many to understand; what it should mean and what that perspective brings to our work. We have discussed that several times. We see now more clarity in the theology, in the way of describing objectives, and in the practices and experiences of what it can mean. The reference group for the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace, and the theological study groups supporting its work, have contributed a lot to this. The methodology of "pilgrim visits" (not unlike the "living letters" methodology from some years ago, but now even more focussed on solidarity and accompaniment) is also developing. And this idea of pilgrimage is seen in the many visits made by colleagues, groups appointed by the WCC to visit different parts of the world.
- 40. I find that also the participation and presence of the general secretary (representing the WCC and the fellowship) in many places is meaningful ly seen as ecumenical pilgrimages, seeking unity, justice and peace together with the churches and other ecumenical partners. I report to the executive committee regularly about my travels and visits, also as contributions to programme objectives in many ways. They will not be reported here as they can be found in the reports referred in the minutes of the executive committee.
- 41. Even more, we have developed this concept of the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace to become the overall perspective in everything we do, and we see that this motif of pilgrimage translates as openness; as willingness to be present in the lives of others as accompaniment, listening and acting in solidarity; as readiness for change and transformation of the surroundings and ourselves as in the theme of transforming discipleship in the recent world conference on mission and evangelism in Arusha, Tanzania. This is also the dominating and shared perspective in how we understand and develop ecumenical relations, strongly expressed in the motto for the visit of Pope Francis: "Walking, praying and working together."
- 42. The pilgrimage perspective and the pursuit of pilgrimage initiative are characteristic of this period of work. It is more than an idea that we can leave behind when we come to the next assembly. We need to reflect on how this approach continues even as we move on to a new theme and a new phase in the years to come, in a movement of love.

3.3 A counter-movement for unity against forces of polarization, fear and hate

- 43. We are experiencing a new momentum in finding new expressions of unity. It is an urgent task to move on for us as churches, and for the service we can do in the world. This is happening in a time when also there are so many polarizing and even dividing forces in the world, even using religious faith and identity as a tactic for dividing people.
- 44. The three values of unity, justice and peace held together in love are the core of the mission of the WCC. I believe that precisely this ability to keep these three together is the genuine and critical contribution of the WCC in the time ahead of us. It has been possible to see how they are connected in the way we have pursued the idea of pilgrimage, discipleship and fellowship. This must continue as we move on, in a counter-movement to many other strong movements and forces of our time, affecting our churches as well as the world at large.
- 45. The "realpolitik" of the church is defined by the gospel's call to love one another, to be one, to be expressions of the love of God in the Trinity and expressed in the relation to human beings seeking the truth in faith. Being one is a sign of this love so that the world may believe. God is love, and there is no way to love God without loving the sister and brother in need (1 John 4:17-19).
- 46. "The power of love" is a message to the world, to the powerful and to the powerless, to all who are longing for a different reality from what we see in today's world. This is to be expressed in our quest for

the unity of the church and the unity of humankind, serving the sustainability and unity of God's creation. We cannot leave the quest for unity on a side-track. We should include all our reflections on church unity in the wider horizon of work for a sustainable, just and peaceful unity in the world. The ecumenical movement of love has much to contribute in these efforts, bringing other perspectives and dimensions into proper relationships that we need to develop and build in our time. (This is a theme I have pursued on several occasions, also in the executive committee, and you have seen them in the minutes from those meetings. In the 70th anniversary issue of *The Ecumenical Review*, which you are receiving in this meeting, my article has this as its focal point.)

- 47. There are many forces promoting conflict and violence. There are enormous powers of division and polarization, widening the gaps between the rich and poor, the privileged and the non-privileged (in terms of wealth, security, health, etc.). There are shocking signs of some powerful nations seeking only their own interests, not world peace or creation care for our one and only planet. There are signs of ignoring international law or utilizing it for one's own purposes, of the deconstruction of multilateral regulations and accountability, the lack of care for the lives of innocent people, the lack of willingness to share the burdens of responding properly to the needs of refugees from situations of war and conflict, the use of the international financial architecture for the benefit of the strongest and the richest. The list goes on.
- 48. Another 70th anniversary of high significance this year is that of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This has been the common basis for a new beginning after the 20th century's world wars and the worst slaughters of humankind. Human dignity and human rights, preserving each person's life and dignity, have to be at the core of our advocacy as Christian churches following the command of Jesus Christ. They should also be the basic concern and message of all who care for the sanctity of life and for the respect for God the creator of all human beings, wherever these persons are or whatever category some would put them in. Racism in all its forms is a human failure to recognize the diversity of humankind as given by God, and it is a sin against God. All the ways we categorize others in order to exclude or discriminate against the other, are per se an attack on the faith in the God of life and love we uphold. This has become and must continue to be a priority for the WCC to combat, in whatever forms it might appear.

Even our own high-ground objectives of unity, justice and peace are sometimes reinterpreted or abused by powers to dominate or to discriminate. Through a serious dialogue among us, even a critical one, we can discern when they are serving the love we are called to promote.

- 49. Unity, for example, might become a means of enforcing an oppressive uniformity or demand for agreement, or a frontier, a border, a wall against others that are not included in the protected and unified area or country. This might happen even in the churches, not serving primarily the needs of those who are suffering or supporting those who are struggling. A reference to justice is in some cases seen as the rule of the stronger and privileged, neglecting the needs of those who are excluded from having the safety of citizenship with equal human rights. Peace, too, might be defined as an objective but pursued by some in practices dividing and creating conflict. This might happen by getting total dominion over the other or less powerful or privileged, as we have seen in the attempts to make Jerusalem an "undivided capital" for Israel before an international and bilateral agreement with the Palestinians is even on the table.
- 50. There are strong powers undermining the need to see one another as participants in the one humanity, seeking our common good and our common interests. There needs to be somebody and something that represents a counter-power of unity, justice and peace and that expresses nonpartisan, universal love.
- 51. The expectations of the WCC in this respect are strongly felt and often made explicit. We can make a difference as churches together, as people of faith, hope and love. Somebody must and we can believe there is another and better way, the way of love.
- 52. The WCC and our partners should have more resources to act even more adequately in these challenging times of the world. We are relevant even if we are not able to respond to all in the way we wish. We do not present ourselves as the perfect communion, nor as the oracle that knows everything and has every answer to every complicated matter in this world.

53. We are not shy as WCC to present ourselves as a fellowship of churches, as people of faith, sharing the vision of something better, something built on another scale of values, something that binds peoples and nations together out of mutual respect, dignity, accountability—even love.

3.4 The WCC contributing to the holy work of peace-making

- 54. The UN with its many agencies, as well as other international organizations, are calling for our contributions every day, more and more. As the WCC, we represent member churches on the ground, in the many realities where change and transformation must happen. We respond daily through our comprehensive programmes, such as EHAIA and EAPPI, and in peace initiatives for all our prioritized countries and even more. We try to see the conflicts from the side of the suffering, particularly from the perspectives of children and women, from all peoples who are victims and targets of violence and armed conflicts. We are called to serve for the sake of the peace that all human beings need and deserve.
- 55. We have in the WCC during these last years made efforts to focus more on our common calling and mission, and searching for expressions of unity in addressing the needs for justice and peace in many conflictual contexts. Our very significant discussions and definitions on "just peace," e.g., from the Convocation in Jamaica in 2011, are of high relevance and must be implemented in many ways.
- 56. One of the great fears of our time and for the future is the fear of the impact of climate change and other destructions of our environment. The WCC has been involved in many initiatives for a "just peace with the earth." The commandments to love God and our neighbour cannot be explained without focusing on how we should love creation itself, the nature to which we belong and on which we are totally dependent.
- 57. These initiatives for peace and justice are expressions of our love for others and for future peace and justice for our world. When ICAN, the campaign for the banning of nuclear weapon, received the Nobel Peace prize last year, we were happy to show that this is our agenda, our campaign and our policy in showing our love for human beings, the civilization and the environment, which are threatened by any use of nuclear weapons. The lack of support for this initiative reflects a regrettable lack of commitment to use all means and possibilities to spread information and understanding on what a nuclear attack would mean in terms of irreparable disasters. We need to nurture attitudes of accountability and love for the one planet and the one humanity that expresses itself in real disarmament also by the nuclear states.
- 58. The conflict in the Holy Land calls upon all who can contribute to a real and just peace. The anniversary of the establishment of the state of Israel and the beginning of the tragedy for the Palestinian peoples happens to be the same year as our anniversary. The call and commitment to continue working for the people in the Holy land and for their future in just peace continues every day in the WCC and with our partners. The plan to renew and strengthen the WCC efforts from the executive committee last year is about to be implemented in different ways in the coming years and months. The role of the local churches is significant. The role of the churches together internationally and ecumenically is as needed as ever. We should strengthen even more our efforts to use our role as international partners for inter-faith dialogue in the interests of a just peace.
- 59. The many initiatives and visits by different groups representing the WCC to our prioritized countries, such as Colombia, South Sudan, Burundi, Nigeria, Egypt and several other places during these last years are expressions of our pilgrimages and our longstanding involvement in and commitment to peace initiatives, particularly where churches are involved or called upon and where the unity of the churches in these efforts is particularly important. They show that the presence and accompaniment of the ecumenical family are of utmost significance and that we should continue contributing through our means and perspectives to the needed peace. These peace initiatives are reported in different ways through statements, news releases and other communications. Some of them are explicitly addressed in the public issues statements from the executive committee, and some are prepared and will be expressed through this meeting.

60. I have personally participated in several of these peace efforts and pilgrimages, most recently in my visit to South and North Korea. We heard again how important the on-going involvement for peace in Korea and the WCC's visions for peace are inspiring these efforts we see these days. We will hear more about the unique momentum for peace on the Korean peninsula from media and from our participants in this meeting.

3.5 The ecumenical movement of love - expressed in ecumenical diakonia

- 61. These joint efforts, even if they are not always as successful as we want, are bringing us together in new ways and are a common expression of our service our *diakonia* for justice and peace.
- 62. The UN has defined the Sustainable Development Goals toward 2030. We can with great pride say that many of them are pursued in the programmes and activities of the WCC. Many of them are pursued in close collaboration with our ecumenical partners, particularly the specialized ministries and ACT Alliance.
- 63. The way we have shared our responsibilities in the ecumenical movement must be expressed also through a shared understanding of what ecumenical *diakonia* is. This has been our intention for a while, and the WCC has been leading in developing a longer document for reflection on what ecumenical *diakonia* is historically, theologically, and strategically today. This document is presented to you to be received, discussed, and supported for distribution and active use in our member churches and with our many partners. It has already achieved a very positive response in a strategic ecumenical forum last year with many of them and in other contexts, as well as among many of our partners, including the ACT Alliance.
- 64. This document is a great opportunity to show that we want to be the leading agent of an ecumenical movement of love that is, showing the love of God in practical actions together. The ecumenical challenges and potential are to be addressed now, and we have a great opportunity to move forward together now in a better grounded and better developed, shared vision and strategy. We will also have a unique opportunity to explore that vision further in a common day between the ACT Alliance assembly and the WCC executive committee November 1 in Uppsala, Sweden.

3.6 The WCC moving toward the 11th Assembly

- 65. To be convening the ecumenical movement of love not only means sharing a vision but also identifying concrete steps to move forward. We seek the shared wisdom and guidance we can offer together, being mindful of how we do so in a modus of love and respect, and exercising our stewardship for decisions in the best possible and reconciled way.
- 66. This has been expressed in our principles and practice of consensus. This practice has become a gift to us, and an expression of mutual respect and love.
- 67. Even in issues where we, in accordance with our rules, make decisions by votes (for the sake of transparency and to secure the equal involvement of all members of the central committee), we need to make efforts to conduct the procedures in mutual respect and love for one another as a fellowship of churches. This has been emphasized also by the Permanent Committee on Consensus and Collaboration (PCCC) in regard of important decisions to be made by this meeting of the central committee (cf. their report).
- 68. Important decisions must be taken at this meeting about the 11th Assembly of the WCC, to be held in 2021. In this phase of the preparation, we should keep in mind that the assembly is really the gathering of the whole fellowship the only means to do so every eighth year (as it is now after the new constitution). Wherever it is held, it is the assembly of all of our member churches, not only of the region or the country or the confession taking the particular responsibility and task to host it. It should be prepared so that we all own it, have access to it, have resources to pursue it, and are represented there. It should be planned with a programme so that we all feel at home, inspired by this, our shared gathering.

- 69. It is really a serious burden for those who take the responsibility to be hosting an event like a WCC assembly. That some churches, and even more than one church or group of churches, have invited the WCC to organize it in their context, is a privilege for the WCC. Even more: it is a condition for the WCC to be able to have an assembly that some churches request to host it. These are signs of love and care for the fellowship of churches that we represent. The two invitations, from South Africa and from Germany, represent this, and they both represent contexts of significance for our legacy and are of high relevance for our challenges of our time as fellowship.
- 70. Furthermore, the WCC assemblies are milestones on our journey, our pilgrimage. We move from place to place, from context to context, from continent to continent. Last time we were generously invited and hosted by our Korean member churches, supported also by other churches in the Republic of Korea.
- 71. It is important that the fellowship, represented by you as our central committee, take time to prepare and make these decisions about the assembly venue in the manner of fellowship and love for the fellowship as a whole, not as a competition for one to win over the other, like in the Olympic movement. I have been asked to prepare the decision-making process together with the executive committee in a manner of prayer and deep respect for the fellowship we are serving together, and I trust that we all share that intention.
- 72. The principle and practice of rotation from region to region for these events is a sign of being a global fellowship of love and unity. The assembly has not been in the European region since the 4th Assembly in Uppsala in 1968, but it has been twice in the Asian region, twice in the African region, once in the Latin American and once in the North American region since then. Many say it is time for Europe now, when we have a serious invitation to that region. The WCC can affirm and participate in the important on-going processes of reconciliation and just peace in South Africa. However, that does not overrule the need for making the assembly an expression of the worldwide fellowship, alternating between regions as venues for the highest and widest expressions of its fellowship. The WCC can acknowledge the offer from some of our member churches in South Africa, and honour the significance of these processes of reconciliation by asking them to host other WCC events than having the next assembly there. This can happen in events before or after the 11th Assembly.
- 73. The offer from EKD and the church in Baden also shows their strong commitment to contribute to the whole fellowship, in the spirit of the first years of the WCC, when the German churches were seeking reconciliation and new beginnings in the fellowship with other churches after the tragedies of World War II. Today the churches in Germany are actively addressing the huge challenges for justice and the need for expressions of love for refugees from Africa and the Middle East. The issues of Europe today are also the issues of the whole fellowship, in many ways. The situation in Europe today makes it quite relevant to have an assembly analysing and addressing the many challenges for the churches and the human fellowship in this region from the perspective of the one global ecumenical movement of love.
- 74. The resources the member churches in Germany can make available for the preparation and pursuing of this assembly would also help to support the full participation of all member churches in the next assembly. This is a relevant perspective in a time when we have many severe demands on our financial reserves due to other great tasks we undertake in the next years with our buildings here in Geneva and the reduced incomes for the period of transition, till we have the full benefit of securing funds for the future of the WCC through these undertakings. For you as the central committee, the highest governing body responsible for the total stewardship of the work and the resources of the council at this moment, it is important to see these dimensions of the work of the council as well.
- 75. The central committee will also make a decision about the *theme* of the assembly. The assembly planning committee has carefully begun preparation of the assembly, and in their report they offer three alternatives. The committee points to the fact that the word "love" has never been used in an assembly theme. The proposals from the APC are in different ways expressing how the WCC is and should be an expression of the ecumenical movement of love. One of them does so more explicitly than the others, as the word "love" is expressly articulated.

76. Taking care of our resources and assets are expressions of stewardship and love for those who come after us. The WCC has been leading the churches' advocacy and witness in Geneva in the context of international institutions serving the multilateral work for justice and peace. This is a privileged place to be, and we have the privilege to steward this legacy in our time with a significantly increased involvement with other partners here and more public attention and interest. This responsibility means also taking care of the resources and the real estate we have here. In a critical situation for an overdue revision of the WCC pension fund, we have as the WCC, with the mandate of the decision-making bodies, addressed this crisis of the WCC by developing a building project on the real estate here.

77. This has been pursued with resilience and success, with sincere love for the council and its sustainability, supporting those who serve it now and in the future. We now have the area plan approved, and the first phase of the project is launched for the investors and tenants. The value of our property is already three times what it was before this project started. This is duly reported in another document and will be presented in another session. I see this as a way to use all our efforts and available support and competence from inside and outside to find the best way of saving the WCC from a financial crisis and breakdown and of stewarding this property for the future generations of staff and work of the WCC. The chapel and this hall have been classified as historical monuments in Geneva due to their special history and architecture.

78. A personal remark at the end: I love the work of the WCC and love to work with my colleagues and you as governing bodies as general secretary, in deep gratitude for the privilege of serving in this ministry with the trust of you and our member churches. I have shared with the leadership of the central committee in due time to prepare this meeting (according to the rules) whether I am "available for reelection for another term." After prayers and a long time for reflection, my conclusion is that I am not ready to say yes to a third five-years term. Due to the sequence of the central committee meetings, I had to make this decision long before the end of my term, and without knowing what God will call me to do thereafter. I urge you to not see this meeting as a farewell, but to acknowledge my clear intention of continuing in the present mandate you have given me, pursuing all the important tasks and processes of the WCC during this time.

Conclusion

79. We are privileged to work in the World Council of Churches, as an expression of the ecumenical movement of love.

80. It is a significant dimension in how we should read our 70 years' history. It is a significant dimension in shaping the role and work of the WCC today for the sake of unity, justice and peace. And it is the perspective that should guide the WCC toward its next assembly and beyond. Nothing less and nothing other than love.

"So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love" (1 Cor. 13:13).

Central Committee



15-21 June 2018 Geneva, Switzerland

Document No. GEN 01

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Moderator's Address

Walking and Serving Together for Peace and Justice Dr Agnes Abuom

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

- 1. It is a great joy that we can all be at this important central committee meeting, whose theme is "Walking and Serving Together for Peace and Justice." *Karibuni!* Welcome to all of you. I thank God for giving us this opportunity to reflect on and celebrate the achievements of the past 70 years in working for Christian unity and action. Moreover, the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace that we launched, as the WCC, back in 2013 has continued to be vital in responding to God's call for unity, mission, justice and peace. Therefore, this central committee meeting has a special character in terms of our celebration of the 70th anniversary and this year 2018, and it will continue to form the basis of our anniversary activities together with member churches and the wider ecumenical fellowship. Another dimension of our meeting this time around is walking together, as we review our performance of the mandate given to us by the last assembly while we are mid-way on the journey to the next assembly. Finally, this central committee meeting is special because we are halfway also in terms of our meetings together, and we are expected to make critical decisions that will guide the future of the council. Thus we are at a time when we are once again reminded of our transitional nature as an organization.
- 2. My address in the context of the theme attempts to look at the ecumenical landscape and the gracious spaces where we have walked and served together for justice and peace. The address also delves into the areas of concern regarding the state of governance, specifically democracy and the attendant dilemmas and threats that democratic governance is experiencing. I conclude by reminding us to step up our resolve and our commitment to "move together toward justice and peace."

What Does the Lord Expect of Us?

- 3. The theme "Walking and Serving Together for Peace and Justice" evokes aspirations of a world free of injustices, free of divisions and free of conflicts. With what was happening worldwide back in 2013, we felt that it would be a perfect response by the council, the wider ecumenical fellowship and people of good will. This being our WCC 70th anniversary, it must be said that there has never been a better time to reflect on the importance of walking together as churches toward a peaceful and just society. We're experiencing an increase in polarization, a widening gap between the rich and the poor, climate injustice, racism, xenophobia, extremism, violence and gender inequality, among many other trends. It is reminiscent of that time when God's prophet Micah (6:8), asked the question, "What does the Lord expect of us?" As we share our narratives on the theme, God tells us through his prophet that God wants not only trust and faith among his people but also a strong solidarity. God is watching us to see if we have solidarity strong enough to help build bridges, save the earth, reconcile, heal, and transform the lives of millions of people all over the world.
- 4. *Gracious spaces for joint journeys*. As we gather here, I'm delighted to acknowledge various efforts that we've made toward our goals as a council. For many of us, the Pilgrim Team Visits (PTVs) that we embarked on have enabled us to walk together in our ministry of presence, listening, praying with

and supporting the victimized as they shared their narratives in different parts of the world. There are a number of such highlights that continue to give us hope in our efforts toward a peaceful and just world. Some of these are contained in our programme reports and will be shared during the thematic plenaries. First, South Sudan has provided space for accompaniment, as well as ecumenical and interfaith solidarity. Yet, despite our focus on and intensified ecumenical efforts with the people of South Sudan, it is sad to observe what continues to happen there. It is unfortunate that the youngest country in the world does not enjoy the peace that it has long sought. The South Sudan conflict remains a source of displacement and the dislocation of millions, destruction of property, and the loss of so many lives. With both sides of the conflict unwilling to compromise, thousands of children, the elderly and women continue to bleed and die; and we cannot imagine the type of rape and violence that are meted out on these innocent people. Years of youthful life are being lost in a battle for power, status and greed. We are thankful for the humble and God-fearing people, like those of the South Sudan Council of Churches and its leaders, in creating platforms for peace talks in the country. There is still much to be achieved in the now revitalized IGAD-led talks, and so in this space we witness the ecumenical family having to ascend to its calling to walk and serve for justice and peace amidst confusion. Brothers and sisters, this is a space that is providing new momentum to walk together on new paths of multilateral collaboration, which is necessary for lasting solution peace.

- 5. Additionally, the Syrian war, which has engulfed that Middle East country, is another space where churches in the Middle East and especially Europe have had to marshal courage to walk together to save lives and face political powers in order to receive refugees. Alas! It is tragic that so many lives have been lost on the journeys. Meanwhile, the challenges of integration surfacing in the host countries remind us of the need to continue ecumenical collaboration and engagement with other actors in society to ensure we remain on track in so far as humanitarian assistance, justice and peace are concerned. It is our duty within these spaces to continue urging NATO allies and the Syrian government to break the cycle of violence. It is our considered view that airstrikes lead to loss of life on both sides of the war, and a just and sustainable peace for all Syrians can only be brought about through a political solution. Once again, the WCC and churches in Syria and the region have a vital role to play in healing trauma, building bridges, working for justice and peace and nurturing social cohesion.
- 6. Furthermore, we remain optimistic and hopeful that our constructive engagement and accompaniment for a peaceful solution in the Korean Peninsula will in the long term yield fruit. Once again this is a space that requires us to acknowledge our vulnerability and fragility on the journey and the need for humility as we serve together. Millions of lives are at stake. Perhaps this is the one region, North East Asia, where our insights on joint initiatives and prayers to avert the build-up of armaments, especially nuclear arms, should inform our on-going work.
- 7. *Misuse and abuse of religio*n. The trend of violence across the globe has significantly taken on a religious camouflage where we see churches and mosques being burned and believers killed. The introduction of this type of religious war is not new to us. While we are cognizant of the many global, national and even grassroots interfaith activities to address this trend, perhaps this is a growing space for walking together with people of other faiths that we must intentionally strengthen insofar as forums that will enhance interfaith relations are concerned. As much as there are diverse religious traditions, they should not be causes for conflict and victimization. No one has prayed for thunder to come down and wipe out another religion here today. It is commendable to see Pope Francis bridging the gap for peaceful coexistence with our Muslim brothers and sisters. By just accompanying a Muslim imam and a Jewish rabbi to the Dome of the Rock back in 2014, the Pope continued to show us what it really means to walk together. His visits have set the pace for an inclusive religious attitude all over the world. Never before in history has the intrinsic link between an authentic religious attitude and the great good of peace become evident to all as it is now. Interfaith work remains a major piece for the WCC, especially given the development of Islamophobia in some countries. Our walk toward justice and peace means working with communities to develop attitudes and values around unity in diversity.

8. Spaces for gender justice. Around the world, communities of women are rising up to the task of walking and serving together for justice and peace as their efforts get recognized. The Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace visit to Colombia exposed participants to an ecumenical group that works across denominational and ideological lines for justice and peace. This trend is growing in our communities as women seek to work both at peace-building and conflict resolution through mediation and dialogue. The WCC, together with member churches, empowers religious women to use tools provided by the UN in advocating rights and gender justice. We all are aware of the Thursdays in Black campaign, operating through the simple gesture of wearing black on Thursdays. It is an expression of the desire for safe societies, free of rape, shootings, verbal abuse and discrimination due to our gender or sexual orientation. We still have a lot to be done on this front by urging governments and faith communities to develop policies that will create a just society of equality between men and women globally.

What's at stake?

- 9. **Democratic governance**. Recent years have witnessed a decline in the values and ethos of democratic governance due to the weakening of democratic structures across the world that were put in place after World War II. We are in many ways witnessing democracy and democratic governance under serious threat or even siege. To begin with, the global North, especially Europe, has a growing tendency toward conservative nationalist political parties that have found space in national parliaments. Meanwhile in the global South, not least Africa, democracy remains a shell, with elections ushering in politically motivated violence and conflict. Moreover, a number of African governments are reviewing their constitutions, especially regarding the tenure of presidents. At the United Nations level, although nation states are meant to participate equally and participation in the Security Council is shared on a rotation basis, the veto power rests with only five countries. With emerging politics of identity, where values of truth-telling and compassion are waning quickly, people of faith have to once again rise up to the task of providing guidance on this matter. It is therefore incumbent upon churches and civil society to walk together in realizing stronger democratic institutions as visualized at the founding of the WCC back in 1948. It is everyone's hope that his or her views are heard. People, regardless of their faith, want to participate in fairly determining who their leaders should be. So the increasing cases of incumbents wanting to retain power while at the same time continuing to oppress men and women of opposing views is unfortunate indeed.
- 10. *Together for gender justice.* We have many things and milestones to celebrate when we look at our journey together as men and women in church and society and our aspiration toward the just community of men and women. The pace of the walk has, however, been rather slow. A number of hurdles remain on the pathway, and they include crafting policy frameworks that can systematically and coherently affirm the dignity of men and women, boys and girls. Power relations between men and women remain asymmetrical. There is a need for continued empowerment of communities and churches to use new lenses and understand what society is losing by not utilizing the talents of more than 51 per cent of its population. Now, twenty years after the launch of the Decade of Churches' Solidarity with Women, we are challenged to walk side by side as men and women toward just, peaceful and participatory communities and churches. In many ways it demands that we review our culture and understanding of masculinity. Both community and religious organizations should work to establish inclusive, safe and facilitative spaces for their decision-making.
- 11. Toward a just and sustainable economy. Our walk together must build on the momentum of the Paris Climate Accord and the UN's 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. The gap between the rich and poor is not narrowing but widening, even in countries where the gross national product is growing. On the other hand, the rise of public-private partnership means that there are fewer resources in the form of development aid. It is estimated that there is a funding gap of 29 per cent of the amount required to assist four major humanitarian situations. With decreasing levels of aid, massive corruption in some countries, and inadequate climate resilience and adaptation strategies, justice and peace remain dim hopes in the lives of many. As much as we hope to achieve peace and prosperity together, we need to understand that creating platforms for economic justice is an

imperative that the ecumenical family must step up. Historical injustices and the resurgence of racial discrimination continue to cast a shadow on progress in WCC's and other ecumenical initiatives and thus need to be addressed. Together and in solidarity with other people of good will, we have the potential to offer a foundation for addressing issues such as refugees, migration and economic inequality.

- 12. Our task is, *inter alia*, to continue serving together to reclaim the dignity and rights of all people as the basis for how we live together and urging nation states to respect international law. Without justice and peace, we cannot pursue our calling toward the unity of humankind and the church. I strongly believe that churches and civil society can help strengthen confidence; open doors of cooperation and dialogue that will keep trade wars from escalating; halt the marginalization of women and form a level playing field for full realization of economic development; and promote climate justice as balance in natural ecosystems is restored.
- 13. *The long journey.* In conclusion, walking and serving together for justice and peace has been and remains a long journey. There are moments when it is and will be tiring, torturous and sometimes dangerous. In a refugee camp, children from South Sudan apparently had prayed several times to return home to South Sudan but found themselves still confined in the camp and continued to ask, "Where is God?" In many crisis-hit regions, it is common to see kids in despair, maybe physically injured, emotionally drained, or even hopelessly looking for the next meal, as in the case of South Sudanese children. God wants us to spread love, but on its own it is just a word. That is why our theme of walking together is also a reminder that we need energy and strength that is God-given through the Holy Spirit so that we continue to walk and serve with survivors of conflict, rehabilitate them, and ensure they get food, shelter, education and security.
- 14. *Hope and Empowerment*. As a movement and an organization, we are more than ever called upon to be bearers of hope and vessels of empowerment of the people. To be vessels of hope and empowerment, we also empower each other on the journey toward justice and peace in order to build and strengthen bridges of trust, respect and patience. The remaining period of service implores us to step up collaboration and networking with other faith communities, all people of good will and international agencies to mitigate and end dehumanizing political, economic and socio-cultural violence. We know it is quite difficult to handle all these at the moment, but with strong resolve and revitalized commitment, we can continue moving forward together.
- 15. Our call for unity and for the dignity of all men and women should be echoed in every corner of the world so that the next generations will appreciate unity in diversity. Our contribution toward justice and peace as the WCC will surely increase as we push for new frontiers, setting new agendas and new initiatives that can bring real hope to a world so deprived of the values or the fruits of the spirit that Paul writes about in Galatians 5:22. Yes, let us celebrate the many small and large strides we have made in the last 70 years. Let us also be cognizant of the daunting task that remains to secure justice and peace, as well as to invite more people to share the vision. Philippians 2:4 says, "Each one of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others." Walking and serving together for justice and peace is about taking care of the interests of the others. As we walk and serve together, let us draw from the well of God's grace for inspiration and guidance.
- 16. We are the current generation of leaders of the ecumenical movement, so everything rises with each one of us. Eyes are upon us, to see our resolve and our concrete actions on the journey of justice and peace. May God be with you all!

Thank you.

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ØKUMENIKK

MARIANNE H. BREKKEN Medlem av KVs

BERIT HAGEN AGØY Generalsekretær i Mellomkirkelig råd



ave Frans kom ensærend til Genève 21. juni, for å delta på markeringen av 70-års-jubileet til Kirkenes verdensråd (KV). Det unike besøket er en sterk bekreftelse på pave Frans' prioritering av kirkelig enhetsarbeld og på den nære relasjonen som aå har utviklet seg mellom Den romersk-katolske kirke og KV.

Paven var krystallklar i sin tale: Gud har gitt hele sin kirke i oppdrag å fremme evangellet om fred og forsoning. Kirkens enhet er Guds gave til oss, og vi er satt til å synliggjøre fellesskapet mellom kristne søsken – I tjeneste for hverandre og for alle menesker. Den verdensvide kirken må derfor stå sammen i møte med en truet og sårbar verden. En samlet kirke må bringe håp til mennesker som lider og som kjemper for fred, rettferdighet og skaperverket.

Klar brodd. Paven minnet oss om at vi vandrer i kraften av Den hellige Ånd, og at bønn er økumenikkens oksygen. Han etterlyste et sterkere økumenisk samarbeid om evangelisering og mi77

Smerten over det vi fremdeles ikke kan dele, som felles nattverd, er der selvsagt fortsatt, men mens tiden arbeider langsomt for dogmatiske tilnærminger, er det svært mye vi kan gjøre sammen. sjon, og han kom med klare diakonale utfordringer i møte med en ødelagt verden. Pave Frans var radikal og konkret da han snakket om diakoni. Han utfordret oss blant annet til å ta imot så mange flyktninger vi er i stand til – fordi de er våre medmennesker. Han hadde også en klar brodd mot grådighet materialisme og ødeleggelse av skapervorket

Paven Frans' agenda er gjenkjennelig for alle som har fulgt KVs arbeid gjennom 70 år. Når paven snakker om klimaengasjement og menneskerettigheter – i et språk KV har brukt i tlår – vekker det internasjonal oppmerksomhet. Det viser paveembetets gjennomslagskraft, men handler også om pave Frans' personlige engasjement og utstråling. At pave Frans nå forplikter sin kirke til et tettere samarbeid med KV, er ikke overraskende, men ilkevel svært gledelig.

Felles pilegrimsreise. «Vi bør gjøre sammen», sa KVs generalsekresær, Olav Fykse Tvelt, i sin tale under pavebesøket. Selv om kirkene er ulike både i teologi og tradisjon, er vi «forsonet i vårt mangfold» og står sammen om det viktigste. I dag ser vi en tendens til at økumenisk samarbeid fokuserer på hva vi er *enige* om og kan gjøre sammen, heller enn på det vi er uenige om. Smerten over det vi fremdeles ikke kan dele, som felles nattverd, er

der selvsagt fortsatt, men mens tiden arbeider langsomt for dogmatiske tilnærminger, er det svært mye vi kan gjøre sammen.

KVs siste generalforsamling i Sør-Korea i 2013 lanserte «Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace» som vision for KVs arbeid I årene framover. Pave Frans har sagt at denne pilegrimsreisen vil han også være med på. Sammen med hele Guds kirke på jord – og alle mennesker av god vilje, uavhengig av tro – vil vi stå sammen i arbeidet for en fredeligere og mer rettferdig verden, i respekt for hverandre og for skaperverket. Temaet for pavebesøket i Genève 21. juni var nettopp Økumenisk pilegrimsreise – vi går, ber og arbeider sammen.

Bildet av pave Frans som slår armene ut og smiler strålende idet han får øye på KVs generalsekretær, Olav Fykse Tveit, ved ankomsten til det økumeniske senteret i Genève, forteller at økumenikk handler om vennskap. og mellommenneskelige relasjoner.

Mirlam Spies er en ung prest som sitter i rullestol. Som medlem av KVs sentralkomite var hun tilstede under pavens besøk. «Paven stoppet opp og hilste på meg og bå meg be for ham. Vanligvis sier kirkeledere at de skal be for meg», fortalte Spies.

Disse møtene er eksempler på pave Frans' inderlige tilstedeværelse. Paven møtte manges blikk i løpet av de timene han var i Genève, korte møter som bekreftet fellesskap. De over 400 journalistene som dekket møtet fikk mange flotte bilder av en smilende pave i samtale med ulike mennesker i løpet av dagen. Paven møtte også studentene på det økumeniske studiestedet Bossey, og en gruppe kristne fra Sør- og Nord-Korea.

Berøres av hverandre. Dogmatiske læredokumenter og fellesuttalelser er gode og nødvendige redskap i økumenikken, men livet leves mellom mennesker som berøres av hverandre. Den personlige relasjonen mellom paven og KVs lederskap er utvilsomt avgjørende for at samarbeidet nå er så nært og godt. Å bygge gode personlige relasjoner er en måte å virkeliggjøre enheten i økumenisk arbeid.

«Dette var en dag for unike møter. Når en person møter en annen og kjenner at møtet gjør en glad, beveges alltid hjertet». Pave Frans var tydelig rørt da han oppsummerte i Genève for journalistene under flyturen tilbake til Roma. «Dette var ingen formell høflighetsvisitt», fortsatte paven, «men møter mellom mennesker.»

Generalsekretær i KV, Olav Fykse Tveit, kaller årets pavebesøk en historisk milepæl i forholdet mellom KV og Den romersk-katolske kirke. Med sine 350 medlemskirker, i 110 land representerer KV over en halv milliard kristne, mens Den romersk-katolske kirke har 1,2 RECLER KRONIKK OG DEBATT © Kronikk: Maks 6.000 tegn. Hovedinnlegg: Maks 3.500 tegn. Innlegg og replikk: Maks 2.000 tegn. Kort sagt. Maks 1.200 tegn NB: Alle mål inkluderer mellomrom © Innsendte manus blir ikke returnert. © Vårt Land betinger seg retten til å arkivere og utgi alt stoff i avisen i elektronisk form i eget arkiv eller andre databaser Vårt Land har avtale med © Vårt Land har avtale med ©

VÅRLØSNING: Relasjonene mellom Vatikanet og Kirkenes ver-densråd har svingt opp igjennom årene. For 10–20 år siden blåste det en «økumenisk vinter», men nå snakkes det om en «økum nisk vår», skriver Marianne H. Brekken og Berit Hagen Agøy. Foto: World Council of Churches

milliarder medlemmer.

Bare to ganger tidligere har Den romersk-katolske kirkes overhode besøkt KVs ledelse i Genève, Paul VI i 1969 og Johannes Paul II i 1984, men i år var første gangen paven møtte KVs valgte lederskap, sentralkomiteen. Det har vært offisiell kontakt mellom KV og Den romersk-katolske kirke siden 2. Vatikankonsil på 1960-tallet. Siden 1968 har det vært katolsk representasjon i «Faith and Order»kommisjonen.

I dag deltar katolikkene også som medlem av Kommisjonen for misjon og evangelisering, og deltar i en rekke av KVs ulike utvalg og arbeidsgrupper. Studiestedet Bossey har også en katolsk professor. Relasjonene mellom Vatikanet og KV har svingt opp igjennom årene, for 10-20 år siden blåste det en «økumenisk vinter», men nå snakkes det om en «økumenisk vår»

Tegn til håp. Paven nikket gjenkjennende da KVs generalsekretær snakket om retten til å håpe i sin tale. Kirkens budskap må gi mennesker håp om et bedre liv og troen på at forandring faktisk er mulig, sa Olav Fykse Tveit. Dette står vi sammen om, responderte paven. «Pavens besøk er et håpstegn for alle som lengter etter enhet, fred og rettferdighet i en polarisert og urolig verden» ifølge KVs generalsekretær. Vi opplevde en økumenisk vårdag.

Forvrengt syn på Pedersen

I Bibelen står det at en arbeider er sin lønn verdt. Jeg synes ikke det er noe galt med Teletorgtjenesten til Svein-Magne Pedersen.

MIRAKELPREDIKANTER

AASMUND BUHAGEN

Selger

åde VG og Vårt Land har den siste tiden slått stort opp om Svein Magne Pedersen og hans helbredelsestjeneste. Jeg kjenner litt til virksomheten til Pedersen, og jeg vet at han er veldig nøye med å be folk ta en legesjekk etter forbønn. Han lover ikke helbredelse, men vi vet ut fra en lang rekke vitnesbyrd at det er mange som er blitt helbredet etter Pedersens forbønn.

VG skriver at de har tatt skjulte videoopptak av to damer som etter avtale med VG ringte og ba om forbønn. Ifølge VG er dette ikke ulovlig, men tross alt - det er en svært spekulatív máte á skaffe seg informasjon pá.

Slutter seg til hylekoret. Det som også er veldig tragisk er at den kristne dagsavisen Vårt Lånd ser ut til langt på vei å være enig med VG, og slutter seg i stor grad til hylekoret. I Vårt Land 20. juni er tre kristne ledere intervjuet under overskriften: «Tror på en annen helbredelse - Kristne ledere reagerer.» I tillegg har Vårt Land tatt imot et leserinnlegg med overskriften «Forvrengt kristendom» (VL 16.06.18). Det er skrevet av en som kaller seg «tidligere aktiv kristen» og som er svært skeptisk til Pedersens virksomhet.

Reaksjonene mot Pedersen er i hovedsak to: For det første at han tilbyr forbønn via Teletorget, der man må betale for å få forbønn. Min kommentar: I Bibelen står det at en arbeider er sin lønn verdt. Jeg synes ikke det er noe galt med Teletorgtjenesten. Det gis god informasjon om priser og vilkår, og for mange er dette en betydelig rimeligere utgift enn å reise til et møte. Her er jeg helt enig med presten Odd Sverre Hove

Nå har som kjent Pedersen bestemt



Fokus på kroppslig helbredelse kan forvrenge hele det kristne menneskesynet, skriver Helga Haugland Byfuglien.

Nå har som kjent 7 Pedersen bestemt seg for à legge ned Teletorgtjenesten, så her har VG og Vårt Land fått det som de vil.

seg for å legge ned Teletorgtjenesten fra I. august, så her har VG og Vårt Land fått det som de vil.

Bruk av cellegift. Den andre anklagen er at Pedersen fraråder syke å søke lege. Min kommentar: Dette er rett og slett ikke sant! Han tror på forbønn, men han tror også at Gud bruker leger og andre fagpersoner i helsevesenet. Pedersen har uttrykt skepsis til overdreven bruk av cellegift. Og faktisk er det godt dokumentert at svært mange som har vært igjennom behandling med cellegift, sliter med senskader i lang tid etterpå.

At VG ikke tror på helbredelse er ikke så rart, men tror den kristne avisen Vart Land at alle de som forteller om sin helbredelse lyver? Da er det svært

mange som ikke snakker sant, - for det finnes flere tusen slike vitnesbyrd om helbredelser etter forbønn av Pedersen

Slik Jeg ser det har Pedersen helbredelsens nådegave, og mange forteller at de er blitt helbredet etter hans forbønn. Pedersen er imidlertid tydelig på at han kun er et redskap for Gud, og det er Jesus som helbreder, ikke Pedersen selv! Han bare ber.

Arbeid blant spedalske. Jeg vil også henlede oppmerksomheten mot de øvrige delene av Pedersen sin virksomhet. De driver et stort og positivt arbeid. I tillegg til forbønnstjenesten har de for eksempel TV-sendinger til 120 land, driver hjelpearbeid blant indianere og blant rusmisbrukere i Canada, bygger mange barnehjem i India, støtter misjon i Moldova, gir støtte til arbeid blant spedalske i Chennai – og mye mer.

I stedet for å kritisere Pedersens helbredelsestjeneste, bør vi heller heie på ham og takke ham for hans utholdenhet i tjenesten. Han lever og ånder for sin virksomhet, og gir sitt liv til en tjeneste som er til stor hjelp for mange mennesker.

Kristensosialismen og Aalborgs verdensbilde

Kristensosialistene er på vei opp i SV, men preger partiet på andre måter enn før. Det er politisk redaktør Berit Aalborg sin analyse i tirsdagens Vårt Land (26. juni). I kommentaren bruker hun imidlertid mye plass på et intervju med undertegnede fra 22. januar, og forsøker å «forklare» mine uttalelser med min bakgrunn og hennes egne oppfatninger av Skaperkrafts plassering i det kirkelige og politiske landskapet.

Jeg ga i intervjuet uttrykk for at den delen av SV som er opptatt av kristne verdier, og eksplisitt formulerer det, har tapt terreng de seneste årene.

Aalborg mener av en eller annen grunn at jeg tenker tilbake på en votering om abort I Stortinget i 1975. Derfra kan hun trekke den slutning at dagens kristensosialister prioriterer andre saker fordi de står i den brede folkekirketradisjon. Etter denne lille spekulative øvelsen kan Aalborg

da bekrefte sitt verdensbilde med å slå fast at det gjør verken jeg eller Skaperkraft.

Bade i Aalborgs kommentar og i den interessante nyhetssaken fra 22. januar, er det imidlertid Vårt Land selv som bringer abortsaken inn i diskusjonen om kristensosialismen.

Skaperkraft er partipolitisk uavhengig tankesmie og har en kristen basis. Det er ingen av oss gitt å utskrive enkle politiske fasitsvar av Bibelen. Vi har som tankesmie heller ikke noe politisk program og vare skribenter og medarbeidere står selv unsvarlig for sine synspunkter.

Langt mer interessant enn å spekulere i hva ulike aktører «egentlig» har ment utfra stereotype bakgrunnsparametere, er det å diskutere selve spørsmålet om kristensosialismens stilling i dagens politiske

Jeg vil anføre at dersom spørsmålet skal

ha relevans må også begrepet ha et innhold. Det er rimelig å ta utgangspunkt l at kristensosialisme har et politisk synlig uttrykk som gjør at den faktisk betyr en forskjell for de miljøer som driver politikk på dette grunnlaget. Jeg er sikker på at det finnes mange kristensosialister som evner å formulere dette godt, og at det vil gjøre seg gjeldende i et bredt spekter av politiske saker. Jeg legger også merke til at to av de SV-ere Vart Land intervjuer peker nettopp på spørsmål om menneskelivets verdi og bioteknologien når de skal eksemplifisere kristensosialismens bidrag.

Vart Land fant naturligvis ikke plass til hele intervjuet jeg gjorde med avisen i Januar. Jeg gjentar gjerne overfor avisen at det er positivt at det finnes aktive kristne i alle politiske leire.

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Øyvind Håbrekke,

faglig leder i tanker

Olav Fykse Tveit, generalsekretær Kirkenes Verdensråd

Preike på Vingardssundagen, 26. august 2018

I anledning av at KV er 70 år – økumenisk gudsteneste og markering i Metodistkirken på Grünerløkka, Oslo

Tekstar: 1 Kor 3, 4-11; Luk 17, 3-10

Kjære søstre og brør i Kristus!

Dette er ein flott dag å markere og feire at World Council of Churches – «Kirkenes verdensråd» eller berre «KV» på norsk – har fremja einskap og fellesskap mellom kyrkjene i verda og tent menneske og høyrt deira rop for rettferd og fred i alle delar av verda i 70 år. Den 23. august 1948 vart rådet offisielt etablert i Amsterdam, på det som var den første generalforsamlinga. Der samla dei seg frå 147 kyrkjer i verda. Både det som sidan vart United Methodist Church, og Den norske kyrkja var godt representerte og aktivt med på å førebu og å sette i gang dette tiltaket. Eg vil takke for at de saman med Norges Kristne Råd og Kirkens Nødhjelp, to viktige partnarar for KV i dag, har tatt initiativ til denne fine markeringa av eit unikt arbeidsreidskap i Guds hage i verda.

Den 23. august, på torsdag, var mange samla i Neuwe Kerk i Amsterdam, for å feire jubileet. Vi gjekk ein fredsmarsj gjennom byens travle gater, og mintest den dramatiske krigshistoria som prega alle i 1948, ikkje minst jødeforfølginga og – utryddinga. Vi mintest også Nederland og Amsterdam som ein fristad for forfølgde kristne i mange hundreår, kolonimakta og deira grep på verda. Vi mintest viktige økumeniske leiarar og tiltak, kampen mot apartheid (eit hollandsk ord som vart til ideologi, politikk og endå til teologi i Sør-Afrika) – og vi såg kyrkjene som i dag vert brukt til andre ting enn

å be og feire gudsteneste. Og vi såg kva Frelsesarmmen gjer saman med dei som lever der i dag – også i det berømte Red Light District.

Det gav eit spesielt høve til å undrast på kva tankar som prega dei som var der i 1948 og dreiv dette fram. Temaet sa ganske mykje: «Man's disorder and God's design»! I preika på opningsgudstenesta talte metodistpresten D T Niles frå konferansen på Ceylon (den gongen heitte det så) over teksten om då Moses vart kalla til teneste for Gud. «Who am I that I shall go to Pharao and bring the Israelits out of Egypt?" "Who am I?"

Dei sto overfor enorme utfordringar og sette seg ambisiøse mål. Og dei var djerve når dei tok opp dagens realitetardei sto overfor: Korleis konfrontere dei veldig splittande kreftene og den voldsomme rasisme og nasjonalisme som hadde drive fram katastrofen? Korleis verne menneskeverd og møte behove til millionar av flyktningar og migranter? Korleis forkynne evangeliet truverdig om ein nådig og kjærleg Gud etter alt som hadde skjedd – til dels med påstand om at det var i Guds namn? Korleis bygge tillit og einskap mellom kyrkjene? Den gongen var det forbudt for katolikkar å delta i økumeniske arrangement. Det var eit rop etter forsoning mellom både folk og kyrkjer. Ein kjente nok lite til kvarandre, for eksempel var det stor avstand mellom ortodokse kyrkjer i aust og protestantiske kyrkjer i vest.

«Who am I?» «Kven er vel eg?» Det er eit ekko av dette spørsmålet også i bibeltekstane for Vingardsssundagen. Men spørsmålet kjem til oss på litt ulike måtar.

«Gjev oss meir tru!» ba apostlane (som dei vert kalla av Lukas). Dei kunne kjenne på at oppdraget dei var sendt til krevde noko meir av dei enn dei kunne bidra med. Gje oss meir mot, meir tru på at det nyttar!

DT Niles fann styrke i svaret frå den Gud som kalte han: «Eg vil vere med deg.» «Eg er med dykk all dagar så lenge verda står», sa Jesus.

Dei vågde å tru at Gud ikkje var uberørt av all verdas nød og rop frå konsentrasjonsleirar og krigsofre og flyktningar. Dei vågde å tru at Gud framleis elska denne verda. Og dei vågde å tru at *dei sjølve* var kalt til å vise det, i ord og i praktisk handling.

Det var ikkje nytt at menneske tvilte på eigne krefter og tru i møte med livsoppgåvene Gud kallar oss til på ulikt vis. Det var heller ikkje nytt at ein fann trøst og styrke i Guds ord. Men det som var nytt i 1948 var at dei såg tydelegare enn før at dette må vi gjere dette saman, vi må våge saman, vi må dele trua på Jesus Kristus som Herre og frelsar – saman. Det vi er kalt til maktar vi ikkje om vi held fram med å vere splitta – og til og med motarbeide kvarandre. «We are committed to stay together.» Slik lyder det i bodskapen frå Amsterdam til kyrkjene og verda.

Lovnaden frå Gud «eg er med deg» vart tolka vidare og forstått også som eit ord dei måtte dele og gi til kvarandre: «Vi vil vere med kvarandre» - «vi er forplikta til å stå saman».

Dei visste kva det var å vere adskilt og kva det var å vere sameina i tru. Ei av historiene som har bore fram denne kjensla – og vissa - er fortalt er om biskopen i Oslo, Eivind Berggrav. Då han var husarrest i hytta si i Asker under nazi-regimet i Noreg fekk han ei jul, på slutten av krigen, då det såg som mørkast ut og tvilen dro han ned, ei melding: Erkebiskopen av Canterbury hadde bedt for han på julaftan på BBC. Det gav han det motet han trengte til å fortsette å tru på både fred og rettferd. Då kjente han på hjarteslaget kva einskap i kyrkja var. Det var eit sennepskorn av tru.

Å vere eitt kosta noko og var verdt noko. Det visste dei frå dei harde tider. Og det skulle dei og vi lære frå arbeidet i KV: Det er hardt arbeid, og det er ikkje alltid ein ser resultatet – i alle fall ikkje med ein gong. Men det er ikkje mindre viktig å gjere det, saman. Tvert imot, det er nettopp det som er saka. Og det er kanskje Jesus meiner: Når

vi spør etter meir tru, svarar han med at vi skal gjere det vi er sett til å gjere. Det er nok.

Det er vel det som Paulus strir med i sine oppmuntringar og formaningar til kyrkja i Korint, den verdsbyen og handelsbyen der det var blitt ei svært mangfaldig kristen kyrkje – med mange motsetnader. Det økumeniske problemet var tidleg reelt. «Kven er vel Appolos?» «Kven er vel Paulus?» Grupperingar som vert til motsetjingar og splittingar har følgt kyrkja i alle tider.

Det økumeniske svaret er det same: Vi er kalt til det same oppdraget, sjølv om vi er forskjellige og har forskjellige gåver og bidrag å kome med. Vi må fokusere på det som bind saman i kjærleik. Grunnvollen er den same og den er lagt: Jesus Kristus. Det er ingen annan og vi tregn ingen annan. Det gudfiendtlege, det vonde i verda, og i kyrkja, og potensielt i oss alle - er for sterkt til ei splitta kyrkje. Vi treng kvarandre som lemene på den same lekamen treng alt vi har og alle som høyrer til Jesu kristi kyrkje på jord. Og det kan berre haldast saman i kjærleik. Ikkje i det perfekte. For det finst ikkje. Men i det gode vi kan gje kvarandre og gje saman i kjærleik. For det «er Kristi kjærleik som driv oss» (2 Kor 5,14).

For oppgåvene ligg der og ventar, rett framfor oss. I dag som i 1948. Mykje er annleis, og noko liknar.

Det var mange viktige tiltak og erklæringar i åra etter 1945 som skulle svare på ropet «aldri meir, aldri igjen». Internasjonalt samarbeid i FN, menneskerettserklæringane, internasjonal lov og avtalar om samarbeid vart utvikla. I dag er det eit veldig press mot internasjonalt samarbeid og tilbake til at dei sterke gjer som dei vil. Demokratiske nasjonar vender multi-lateralt internasjonalt samarbeid ryggen, og leiaren i den mektigste nasjonen i verda hissar til splittelse, rasisme og forakt for andre.

Dei som starta KV og dei som har vore involverte i KV har sidan vore med på å fremje kontakt og samarbeid over alle grenser. I den kalde krigen vart det viktig. I dag er det viktig når vi besøkjer både Seoul og Pyongyang.

Mange i Noreg har deltatt i KV sitt ledsagerprogram for rettferd og fred i Palestina og Israel. Det er eit krevjande oppdrag, men veldig viktig for dei det gjeld.

I samarbeidet i KV har ein lært at ein må seie både «ja» og «nei». Det var svært tydeleg i programemt for å bekjempe rasisme. Kampen mot apartheid gjorde at samarbeidet med KV her til lands vart aktivt og kjent - for kyrkja i Noreg og andre samarbeidspartnarar i Noreg. Det vart eit vegskilje og ein stor inspirasjon for mange i forståinga av kyrkja si rolle i kamp mot urett og for fred. Kammpen mot rasismen er diverre ikkje over, ikkje i noko kontinent og land. Heller ikkje i Noreg og i Europa.

KV fordømte bruk av atomvåpen alt i 1948 som synd mot menneske og Gud. I fjor mottok ICAN, der KV er aktivt medlem, Nobels fredspris, for arbeidet med å få til eit internasjonalt forbod mot atomvåpen. Trusselen frå slike våpen er diverre vorte heilt reell igjen.

For 30 år sidan starta KV eit tiår for «Churches in solidarity with women». Det hadde store ringvirkningar, også her til lands. Den første kvinne ordinert til prest i Noreg var metodist (1954) og den første kvinne med tilsynsmannsrolle var metodist (Jorun Wendel). Andre kyrkjer (så som Den norske kyrkja) har fulgt etter. Inspirasjonen til dette kom mellom anna frå KV. Men arbeidet for å skape eit rettferdig fellesskap for kvinner og menn er på ingen måte ferdig. Kvinner er ofte dei som lir mest i konfliktar og etter konfliktar.

Denne veka var eg i Den demokratiske reuplikken Kongo (DRC), i ein felles delegasjon med representantar frå Vatikanet. Kongo treng eit rettferdig valg, med frie og pålitelege prosedyrer. Kyrkjene der vil no samarbeide i denne siuasjonen før valget i desember med den målsetting. Forholdet til den katolske kyrkja er heilt annleis enn i 1948. Pave Frans sitt besøk til KV 21.juni i anledning 70-årsjubileet

markerte det tydeleg. Mottoet var : «Walking, praying, working together». Ei av fruktene var at vi kunne dra saman til Kongo i fredens og rettferdas sak.

På den tiande generalforsamlinga, i Busan i Korea i 2013, har ein knytta banda til 1948, ved å slå fast «We are committed to move together». KV har invitert kyrkjene i KV, andre kyrkjer, og mykje vidare – til å vere saman som pilgrimar for rettferd og fred. Dette er å fornye samanhengen mellom vår tru og oppgåvene som ventar på oss i verda. Men det er også eit uttrykk for at vi må vere saman som menneske, med opne hender og opne sansar for kva som trengst. Vi har ikkje svar og løysingar på alle spørsmål, men vi har oss sjølve.

I dag gjeld det å sjå etter kven som er villige til å gå saman med oss på fredens og rettferdas veg.

Vi skal gå med ei fornya tru på at Gud vil gå med oss.

La oss ikkje gløyme kva Gud har gjort. Gud har skapt oss, frelst oss, og kalt oss til liv i meiningsfulle oppgåver - saman. I dag takkar vi Gud for alt som er gjort gjennom desse åra i KV. I dag takkar vi for alle som har stått i arbeidet for einskap, for fred og rettferd, og som har stått på når det røynte på motivasjon og krefter og tru. I dag takkar vi for det «nådens fellesskap» vi kan leve i mellom Metodistkyrkja og Den norske kyrkja her i Noreg.

I gudstenesta i dag er vi minna på vår dåp, og vi takkar for at dei økumeniske samtalene har ført til at vi gjensidig anerkjenner kvarandre sin dåp. Vi høyrer Kristus til gjennom vår dåp.

I dag håper og ber vi om at samarbeidet mellom oss må styrkast, at vi kan våge meir saman, at vi kan ta nye steg saman med alle som vil gå fredens og rettferdas veg.

Vi er kalte til å tene. Saman. I namnet åt den Gud som har vist seg som skaparen, frelsaren og livgjevaren.

Ære vere Faderen, Sonen og Den Heilage Ande. Amen.

Rapport fra sentralkomitemøte i Kirkenes verdensråd 15.-21. juni 2018 v/Marianne H. Brekken – Medlem av sentralkomiteen

Sentralkomiteen i Kirkenes verdensråd møttes i Geneve 15.-21. juni 2018. Dette var det tredje av fire møter i inneværende periode. Under temaet "*Walking together, serving justice and peace*" møttes vi til møtedager og feiring av Kirkenes verdensråds 70-årsjubileum. Møtet i dette jubileumsåret hadde flere viktige og signalrike høydepunkter: Feiringen av KVs 70-årsjubileum i Saint-Pierre-katedralen i Genève, delegasjon fra Nord-Korea og offisielt besøk av pave Frans.

Gjennom møtedagene var det også mange viktige og store saker på agendaen. Det ble holdt plenary-møter om Enhet, Økumenisk diakoni, Det levende fellesskap og Erfaringer fra pilgrimsvandringen. I tillegg ble Kalsruhe i Tyskland valgt som sted for neste Assembly i 2021. Olav Fykse Tveit varslet om at han ikke stiller seg til disposisjon for en ny periode som generalsekretær, og vil avslutte perioden i desember 2019.

Kirkenes verdensråd 70 år

Markeringen av 70-årsjubileet preget flere deler av sentralkomiteens møte. Både gjennom økumenisk bønn i Saint-Pierre-katedralen og feiring på Bossey. Feiringen preget også møtedagene, blant annet i plenary. Spesielt ble programposten om «Det levende fellesskap» et sted for å stoppe opp og se hvilken betydning Kirkenes verdensråd har spilt gjennom disse 70 årene.

Gjennom disse årene har Kirkenes verdensråd vært en viktig aktør for fred, rettferdighet og fellesskap. Ved å ha programmer som fokuserer på kvinner og på å bekjempe rasisme, fikk sentralkomiteen høre fra en tidligere ansatt i KV, Brigalia Bam, og hvordan hun har arbeidet med kirker verden over for å bygge nettverk mellom kristne kvinner. På samme måte har arbeidet mot rasisme vært viktig for å få til et internasjonalt engasjement for å bekjempe apartheid i Sør-Afrika. En uttalelse fra Kirkenes verdensråd gav støtte til anti-apartheid-kirkene i Sør-Afrika og var viktig for å få til en økonomisk boikott mot apartheid.

Også i de senere årene har KV vært viktig. Det kunne direktøren i ICAN som fikk fredsprisen i 2018, Beatrice Fihn, fortelle da hun besøkte møtet. Hun beskrev hvor viktig kirkene og den økumeniske bevegelsen har vært for å få forbudet mot atomvåpen igjennom i FN: "I am a 100 % certain that we would not have achieved the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons or won this prize without support, guidance and commitment to ICAN from partners like WCC." Hun avsluttet med å si at fredsprisen er gitt til oss alle, før hun inviterte til å ta selfie med prisen.



Moderatoren i Kirkenes verdensråd, Dr. Agnes Abuom, fortalte om tiåret for kirker i solidaritet med kvinner som var på nittitallet, og sa: "We listened carefully to the stories of women subjected to rape and violence due to war, abuse of power, poverty, desperation and oppression at the hands of family, friends, community and religious leaders, bosses, colleagues and strangers." Det var ut fra dette at "Thursdays in Black" vokste frem. Aboum

fremholdt videre hvordan vi ikke er i mål og må fortsette kampanjen ettersom den er "an encouragement and tribute to the resistance and resilience of women who refuse to accept the violence as inevitable and the perpetrators as beyond the law".

De overstående fortellingene om hvordan fellesskapet i Kirkenes verdensråd har vært viktig for å skape endring, ble også gitt en ekstra håpsdimensjon for fremtiden da delegasjonene fra Sør- og Nord-Korea samtalte foran sentralkomiteen.

At Kirkenes verdensråd gjennom tiår har kunnet være i fellesskap med kristne i både Nord- og Sør-Korea, ble av begge delegasjoner trukket frem som et viktig håpstegn for kristne i Korea. Da delegasjonene på feiringen på Bossey sto sammen og sang en gammel koreansk folkevise, ble også dette et symbol på den økumeniske bevegelsens betydning, ikke bare i de 70 år som har gått, men også her og nå. For som Rev. Dr. Sang Chang sa:



-Today is a day of joy and dancing. We are presenting this programme as one Korea

Pave Frans besøkte sentralkomiteen:



- Pavens besøk er et håpstegn for alle som lengter etter enhet, fred og rettferdighet i en polarisert og urolig verden, sier Olav Fykse Tveit, generalsekretær i Kirkenes verdensråd.



Det var en historisk dag for den økumeniske

bevegelse da pave Frans besøkte Kirkenes verdensråd den 21. februar. Dette er pave Frans' første besøk til KV, og bare tredje gang at en pave besøker Kirkenes verdensråd. Det var også første gang at pavens besøk ble gjort på bakgrunn av invitasjon fra KV; tidligere besøk har vært en del av offisielle statsbesøk. Å være vertskap for et pavebesøk krever en omfattende logistikk, det samme gjør et sentralkomitemøte. – Det bør derfor gis stor honnør til KVs stab som var i stand til å få det hele til å henge sammen. Mer enn 430 mediefolk var akkreditert til besøket, og det fikk mye oppmerksomhet både nasjonalt og internasjonalt. I norske media skrev Dagen en artikkel om besøket, mens Berit og jeg etter pavens besøk hadde en kronikk på trykk i Vårt Land. Et viktig budskap fra besøket er at "vi bør gjøre sammen det vi kan gjøre sammen".

Generalforsamlingen i 2021

Kirkenes verdensråd mottok to invitasjoner fra medlemskirker om å være vertskap for den kommende generalforsamlingen i 2021; fra Kalsruhe i Tyskland og Cape Town i Sør-Afrika. Begge invitasjonene var veldig gode, og det var stor enighet om at en generalforsamling ville vært mulig å gjennomføre godt begge steder. Etter avstemning ble det klart at generalforsamlingen vil avholdes i Kalsruhe.



Det er lenge siden sist det ble holdt en

generalforsamling i Europa, og det spredte seg som en stemning i sentralkomiteen at det kan være viktig for kirkene i Europa nå å få det friske pustet og motivasjonen som kan følge med en generalforsamling. På grunn av for lite plenumsbehandling klarte ikke sentralkomiteen å lande tema for generalforsamlingen, men eksekutivkomiteen vil behandle forslagene videre og sende dem ut til avstemming før jul.

Da valget av møtested for generalforsamlingen var gjort, ble det fra lederskapet og fra kirkene i Sør-Afrika annonsert at det neste møtet i sentralkomiteen vil bli holdt i Cape Town.

Møteagenda

Etter generalforsamlingen i Busan ble forholdet mellom sentralkomiteen og eksekutiv-komiteen i KV endret. Dette har blant annet gjort at konkret oppfølging og detaljer tilfaller eksekutivkomiteen, mens sentralkomiteen i større grad skal gjøre overordnede bestemmelser (policy). Det er en god fordeling av nordiske i de ulike komiteene, og vi som delegater har gitt hverandre innspill på ulike elementer gjennom møtet. Dette viste seg å være svært viktig ettersom det i liten grad var muligheter for å komme med innspill i plenum. At plenumstiden ble svært begrenset, gjorde at det nok ble en mer spent stemning i møtet enn det for eksempel var i Trondheim.

Strategiplanen til KV inneholder to fireårsperioder, 2014-2017 og 2018-2021. På dette møtet ble det fremlagt en midtevaluering av den første perioden. Selv er jeg medlem av finanskomiteen i KV, og i evalueringen av 2014-2017 ser man at KV for tiden har en stødig økonomistyring, og at de nødvendige grepene for å kunne gjennomføre Green-Village prosjektet, blir tatt. For den kommende gjennomføringen av finansstrategien 2018-2021 var det i tillegg viktig at dette ble fastslått: 1) Tydeliggjøring av målsettingen om likelønn mellom kvinner og menn i strategiplanen 2) De ansattes mulighet til innflytelse i prosessen knyttet til renovering av deres arbeidsplass på det økumeniske senteret 3) Viktigheten av at kirkenes økonomiske bidrag sees i sammenheng med hvordan kirkene følges opp, og i hvilke sammenhenger de involveres i utvalg og komiteer.

Sentralkomiteen mottok på møtet dokumentet "Called to Transformative Action: Ecumenical Diakonia". Dette er det samme dokumentet som MKR fikk presentert på reisen til Genève i september 2017, og som Kjell Nordstokke har vært medforfatter av. Det ble en overraskelse for flere av oss at dette dokumentet ble svært omdiskutert både i komiteen og i plenum. På side 54 nevnes LHBTQI-personers levekår. Dette avsnittet ble i plenum beskrevet som svært krevende for noen av medlemskirkene. Påstander om at dokumentet var for luthersk og for nordisk ble også nevnt. I komiteen ble det jobbet hardt for å forsøke å omskrive avsnittet til noe som kunne aksepteres av de ulike partene, men det klarte man ikke å enes om. Diakonidokumentet omtales nå som et "working-document", og ikke som et offisielt KV-

dokument, og det skal sendes til kirkene for tilbakemelding som skal legges frem for sentralkomiteen i 2020. I omtalen av diakonidokumentet er det verdt å nevne at mange av delegatene også var svært positive til dokumentets innhold, men dette fikk derimot ikke stor plass i samtalen. Generalsekretæren informerte i sin åpningstale om at referansegruppen på Human Sexuality vil legge frem sin rapport på neste sentralkomitémøte. At denne samtalen nærmer seg i de offisielle beslutningsorganene i KV, er nok med på å prege den generelle samtalen.

Det ble på dette møtet gitt medlemskap til to nye medlemskirker, Africa Brotherhood Church (Kenya) og the Community of Baptist Churches in Central Africa (Kongo). KV har nå 350 medlemskirker.

Konsensusmetoden har fremdeles behov for å modnes i de ulike organene i Kirkenes verdensråd. Gjennom møtedagene kom man i komiteer og plenum inn på flere krevende debatter og samtaler. I disse sammenhengene er opplevelsen for flere av oss at en gikk over i avstemmings- heller enn konsensusmodus. At noen dominerer store deler av samtaletiden man har i plenum, er med på å gjøre at ikke alle stemmer blir hørt. For at konsensusmetoden skal fungere bedre fremover, vil det være nødvendig å arbeide videre med medlemskirkenes forståelse av selve metodens hensikt.

Ettersom generalsekretær Olav Fykse Tveit gav beskjed om at han ikke stiller seg disponibel til en ny periode, ble det valgt en søkningskomité som skal arbeide med å finne kandidater til stillingen som generalsekretær. Biskop Simo Peura fra Finland ble valgt fra vår region. Olav Fykse Tveit vil sitte som generalsekretær ut 2019, og som norsk delegat i sentralkomiteen mener jeg å kunne si at Olav er svært respektert, og at mange positivt fremholder det arbeidet han har gjort for den økumeniske bevegelse gjennom årene som generalsekretær.

Følgende uttalelser ble gitt av sentralkomiteen:

Progress toward peace on the Korean Peninsula

70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Building a just and sustainable peace in Colombia

Solidarity with the People and Churches of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Recent events in Gaza and Jerusalem

50th anniversary of the Poor People's Campaign in the USA

Christian presence in the Middle East

De-escalating rising tide of violence in the Philippines



70 år med kirke lig brobygging

JUBILEUM: I en verden hvor religion blir brukt til å splitte i stedet for å samle, har Kirkenes verdensråd fremdeles en oppgave, mener generalsekretær Olav Fykse Tveit.

SARA J. HØGESTØL

– I en tid med sterke polarise-rende og splittende krefter, også ireligjøse sammenhenger, er det desto viktigere å samarbeide om det vi har felles som mennesker, sier generalsekretær Olav Fykse Tveit i Kirkenes Verdensråd (KV). I går feirer kV 70-årsjubileum med festgudstjeneste i Metodist-kirken og markering i Paulus kir-ke på Grinerløkka i Oslo. Rådet har i dag cirka 350 medlems-kirker fordelt over hele verden. - I en tid med sterke polarise

Religion og politikk. Fykse Tveit mener KVs samlende rolle rveit mener x vs same a rone er like viktig i dag som for 70 år siden. Han peker på politisering av religion, og bruk av religion på splittende måter, som tendenser å være på vakt overfor.

Wi ser det for eksempel når religiøse organisasjoner tar til orde for å flytte USAs ambassade til Jerusalem. Det som blir lagt

til Jerusalem. Det som blir lagt frem som et religiøst poeng, blir også politisk svært vanskelig. KV Jobber som bindeledd mel-lom kirker i ulike land, men også for samarbeid masjonält. Fykse Tveit nevner Kongo som et land hvor den protestantiske og den

katolske kirken har stått på ulike steder, Her har KV, i samarbeid med Vatikanet, nylig vært inne for å bidra til å styrke dialogarbeidet i forkant av valget. Invita-sjonen kom fra de kongolesiske kirkene selv.

— Problemene er jo ikke løst,

men vi fikk til en god samtale og ble enige om noen felles ut-talelser.

Han minner om at 80 prosent

av kongoleserne tilhører en kir-ke, og at kirken dermed har en viktig stemme inn til folket.

dem som når først inn med hjelp, understreker fungerende gene-ralsekretær Lisa Stvertsen (Kir-kens Nødhjelp (KN).

– Trossamfunnene betyr ofte svært mye i folks hverdag, noe-som kan ugen latt å demmat te-

som kan være lett å glemme i sesom kan være lett å glemme i se-kulære Norge. De gir håp, men er også aktive i arbeidet med for ek-sempel rent vann og skole. Ofte er kirkene også de eneste som kan samle ledere som er i kon-

Kan same electer som er han.
KN eles av kirkene, men jobber også sammen med kirkene
i bistandsarbeidet sitt. Sivertsen mener KV spiller en viktig rolle i å samle kirkesamfunnene, noe

i å samle kirkesamfunnene, noe hun ser effekten av lokalt. – KV er en viktig partner for oss i alle deler av verden vi Job-ber I, og et forbilde innen inter-nasjonalt samarbeld, sier hun.

er mer opptatt av det som sam-ler medlemskirkene enn det som splitter og er vanskelig å enes om Han trekker likevel frem misjon som et felt hvor det i enkelte land kan være vanskelig å finne felles plattform.

– KVs misjonskonferanse i

KVS misjonskonieranse i Tanzanla tidligere lå rviste hvor-dan enkelte misjonsorganisa-sjoner anses for å drive med en form for åggressive misjonering på egne premisser, for silk å «ta» folk fra andre organisasjoner.

folk fra andre organisasjoner.
Han peker også på dialog mellom religionene som en viktig del
av KVs arbeid.
– For 40–50 år siden var religionsdialog omstridt. I dag har
den diskusjonen stilnet. Religionsdialog er blijt noe vi er nødt
til å drive med det, men den også
skifter litt karakter. Den er i kke
å teolopisk lenger, men en viktig så teologisk lenger, men en viktig del av fredsarbeidet.