



A Message from the 2021 Executive Committee

We, the Executive Committee of the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC), met virtually 25-28 May 2021 to evaluate the work of the past year, discern the present circumstances, and plan for the future direction and work of the organization.

The text of Esther 4:14, “At such a time as this...” framed our deliberations and our conversations. Using this text, President Najla Kassab invited the Communion into a renewed imagination regarding the questions of sustainability that lay before the Communion and called us into a radical hope for the Communion.

This time of pandemic has not only prevented us from meeting in person but has served as an apocalyptic moment that has unveiled our present reality and exposed the inherent inequalities and injustices in our world.

The work ahead of us in terms of communion and justice is significant, especially at such a time as this. We particularly noted the state of vaccination nationalism and the situations in which vaccines are available for some and not for all, deeply connected to the privatization of healthcare and the unavailability of healthcare resources to many in the world today. The pandemic situation has been particularly hard on women who have been the first to be moved out of the work force as the economy takes a beating as well as the ones who, along with children, are facing domestic violence and abuse at home.

The COVID-19 pandemic revealed the injustices that surround the world whether they are social, political, or economic. It exposed inequality, exploitation, and oppression that are rooted in economic systems and exploited the dignity of people where healthcare and other fundamental rights are only available to those who can afford it. Almost everywhere the vulnerable, poor, and marginalized are most affected by the disease and by the measures of disease control.

In this situation we call upon the whole Communion and all people of goodwill to join us in discerning “What does God require of us” (Micah 6:8)? Such a process shall strive to establish a renewed and refreshed theological understanding of the current crisis. We hope that such a practice of common discernment shall lead the whole Communion—local, regional and global—to a prophetic theological response and determined acts of witness that speaks the truth to power and calls for justice.

It is in this moment that we approved the Gender Justice Policy. The purpose of the Gender Justice Policy is to advance the WCRC’s vision of living out our call to communion and our commitment to justice, enabling and inviting churches to participate in God’s transformative mission of gender justice and partnership. The policy seeks to address gender inequalities and injustice in our Communion and in our churches.

We were happy to hear that the Communion's Ethical Investment Guidelines adopted at our last meeting are in action, moving investments away from any agency that violates any of the five core labour standards (child labour, forced labour, discrimination, freedom of association, the right to collective bargaining). The WCRC also will not invest in any organization that produces or promotes fossil fuels.

We also reiterated our commitment to peace and reconciliation around the world—particularly in this time of pandemic where we find the intensification of both capitalism and authoritarianism:

- We recommitted to our initiatives for peace in Cameroon and the violence between the francophone and anglophone parts of the country.
- We agreed to continue our peace building initiatives in Colombia where dissent and protest are being violently suppressed.
- We highlighted the situation of Palestine and the ongoing occupation and colonialism that is depriving people of their human rights and is unjustly seizing land.
- We remain committed to encouraging dialogue between the north and south of the Korean Peninsula, building bridges to bring a just peace.
- We continue to partner with our churches in Myanmar who are facing a military dictatorship with life and livelihood at risk.
- And we pledged to work for West Papua and the human right violations that are happening there.

At such a time as this, we lift up the call of President Kassab in her address and call the Communion to a renewed imagination for transition, a renewed imagination for confessing, a renewed imagination for sustainability, a renewed imagination for the inclusion of all marginalized, a renewed imagination for new spiritualities, a renewed imagination for a Communion empowered by the work of its regions—all inspired by the hope we have as the life of Jesus is manifested in each and every one of us.

We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies.

—2 Corinthians 4:8-10

As a Communion we renew our imagination inspired by hope where our Lord continues to journey with us for a better tomorrow.