The things that make for peace

“If you, even you, had only discovered on this day the things that make for peace!” Luke 19:42

The year 2011 confronted the World Council of Churches, as it confronted the world, with an urgent call to discern the things that make for peace. We experienced an array of joys and sorrows, opportunities and setbacks, occasions for hope – and moments of terrible tragedy.

North Africa and the Middle East serve as one illustration of the uproar in 2011: the year began with the merciless bombing of a Coptic church in Alexandria, continued with the promise of an “Arab spring” and the fall of autocratic rulers, and drew to a close amid violent conflict and a rising death toll in Syria.

In each nation that is facing turbulent change, we recognize the need for a just peace to be established from within the country and its culture, based on a full recognition of shared citizenship and equal rights for all. As we have insisted in the case of Israel and Palestine, this is the only way to a sustainable peace.

The WCC is accompanying the churches and people of nations at the crossroads through visits, consultations, acts of solidarity and the creation of safe spaces for deliberations.

To cite another example of turmoil in 2011, I was visiting my own country of Norway in July when its peace was shattered by a disturbed gunman intent on slaughter. His twisted claim to be acting on “Christian” principles shocked the nation, and the faithful swiftly acted in love to demonstrate the true meaning of the gospel. The churches joined with Muslims, Jews and people of all faiths in responding through fellowship and service to the nation’s grief.

One of the brightest moments in the year was the gathering in May of more than 1,000 church leaders and peace activists for the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation (IEPC). The conference, at the University of the West Indies near Kingston, Jamaica, was called to harvest and examine results of the Decade for Overcoming Violence (2001-2010), and to initiate recommendations for the 10th Assembly of the WCC to be held at Busan, Korea, in the autumn of 2013.
An encouraging aspect of the IEPC was the engagement of participants from so broad an age range: long-time veterans of the ecumenical movement were in evidence, but so were enthusiastic young people determined to make a difference in their communities and societies. The establishment of just peace in our world requires the perspectives and accomplishments of youth. We in religious, political and economic institutions must acknowledge that often we have failed to honour and foster the contributions of young people. We must welcome the young and all who have been excluded, hear their voices and heed their warnings and advice.

A landmark achievement came at mid-year with the publication of “Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World”, a series of guidelines for creating codes of conduct in Christian mission and evangelism that encourage vibrant proclamation of the gospel while demonstrating respect for all our neighbours. The document is the fruit of a careful, collaborative process and was endorsed by the World Evangelical Alliance, the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue of the Roman Catholic Church and the WCC. The breadth of cooperation among these bodies has been inspirational, and we hope that this relationship may serve as a model in our work together in pursuit of Christian unity.

Also in 2011, the WCC central committee adopted a theme for the 10th Assembly in 2013: “God of life, lead us to justice and peace.” Spiritual reflections, programmes and related activities before, during and after the Busan Assembly will revolve around this prayer to the Triune God. In it, we dedicate ourselves once more to follow the one who leads us out of the depths of our despair toward God’s justice, peace and life.

Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit
General Secretary, World Council of Churches
WCC and the Ecumenical Movement in the 21st Century

The visible unity of the church remains a central goal of the ecumenical movement. Through the WCC, churches and other ecumenical partners find a common space to pray, reflect, plan and move together toward visible unity. This programme focuses on encouraging relationships with and among WCC member churches, Christian world communions, conciliar bodies and other ecumenical agencies in order to support ecumenical initiatives at regional, national and local levels.

Unity, Mission, Evangelism and Spirituality

Core to the work of the WCC is the calling of churches to work together for a more faithful mission in the world and for the deepening of the spiritual dimensions of their lives in an integrated way. Through this programme, the WCC works to accomplish these goals through various ecumenical instruments such as the Faith and Order Commission, the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) and the Ecumenical Disabilities Advocates Network (EDAN).

Public Witness: Addressing Power, Affirming Peace

Environmental disasters and climate change, lack of food security, economic injustice, poverty, exclusion and many other forms of violence are all part of our world today. Through this programme the WCC provides a common witness reflecting the churches’ concerns on the international level by challenging the economic, social, political and cultural powers that exist while offering a prophetic voice for justice, peace and security.

Justice, Diakonia and Responsibility for Creation

At the heart of the WCC’s work is an ecumenical commitment to justice and enabling people to transform their own lives by meeting immediate human need, enabling churches to work together to address the structural roots of injustice and helping them to identify and combat threats to creation. This programme works to hold together in new and creative ways these different forms of ecumenical engagement with justice, diakonia and responsibility for God’s creation.

Education and Ecumenical Formation

Ecumenical formation at community and academic levels is vital for the renewal of the ecumenical movement. The Ecumenical Institute at Bossey provides ecumenical formation and supports churches, ecumenical bodies and theological institutions through developing capacity, contextualized curricula and educational methodologies. The Ecumenical Institute at Bossey is an international centre for encounter, dialogue and formation. Founded in 1946, the Institute brings together people from diverse churches, cultures and regional backgrounds for ecumenical learning, academic study and personal interchange.

Inter-Religious Dialogue and Cooperation

The first decade of the 21st century has seen an increase in the importance of the role of religion in bridging cultural differences. The key role religion can play in conflict resolution, seeking justice and peacebuilding has never been more evident than it is today. This programme promotes contact between Christians and neighbours of other faiths primarily through multilateral and bilateral encounters and dialogue aimed at building trust, meeting common challenges and addressing conflict and divisive issues through cooperation.
WCC expresses concern for people of Egypt

After condemning a 2011 New Year’s bomb attack on worshipers at a midnight mass in the Saints Church in Alexandria, Egypt, WCC leaders offered condolences and prayers for non-violent and just resolution of conflict.

The bomb killed 21 people and injured more than 80. The Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, general secretary of the WCC, led a group to Cairo to offer condolences to Pope Shenouda III of the Coptic Orthodox Church.

Christian-Muslim dialogue theme of Libya visit

During a visit to the offices and college campus of the World Islamic Call Society in Tripoli, Libya, the WCC general secretary spoke on the theme “Who is my neighbour?”

He said, in part, “The common Abrahamic roots that we have as Christians and Muslims, together with the Jews, mean we are able to share many of our values.”

Archbishop of Canterbury greets WCC

The Archbishop of Canterbury Dr Rowan Williams and other Church of England leaders hosted a WCC delegation. The group focused its discussion on the role of the Church of England and the Anglican Communion within the fellowship of churches of the WCC; the work of the commission on Faith and Order; the Middle East and issues of inter-religious dialogue; and churches’ response to the economic crisis.

Ecumenical solidarity team aids in preparation for Liberian elections

Ecumenical observers appointed by the WCC and All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) released a report on their visit to Liberia in advance of the country’s October 2011 elections. The seven-member delegation was led by Bishop Robert Aboagye-Mensah, a vice-president of the AACC.

The report details historical conditions that led to the elections and describes the findings of the Ecumenical Solidarity Mission following their travels through Liberia in August 2011.

WCC urges water as human right

At a February meeting, the WCC Central Committee issued a statement strongly welcoming the recognition by the United Nations of water and sanitation as a human right.

The statement points out that only a few countries, such as the United Kingdom and Canada, continue to oppose full recognition of the right to water and sanitation.

WCC says USA mistaken on UN resolution veto

The WCC expressed “deep concern and disappointment” at a veto by the United States of a United Nations Security Council resolution condemning continued settlement construction by Israel in the Palestinian Territories.

The resolution was co-sponsored by 130 countries and supported by 14 of the 15 members of the UN Security Council.

Ecumenical community supports post-tsunami Japan

Prayers, letters of solidarity and monetary support flowed from the global ecumenical community as Japan coped with an earthquake, tsunami and nuclear consequences that left few untouched.

The tragedy brought together WCC member churches in Japan as they responded jointly to the needs in the disaster area.

Christians and churches encouraged to seek common Easter date

WCC general secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit urged Christians to work for a common date of Easter for the future, noting that in 2011, Easter fell on the same day, April 24, for both eastern and western traditions.

“We rejoice that this year Christians of eastern and western traditions will celebrate the resurrection of the Lord on the same date,” said Tveit.
WCC delegation visits Cuba

During a May visit to Cuba, Dr Olav Fykse Tveit underscored the witness and steadfastness of the Cuban churches in the midst of serious difficulties and new challenges.

“I found their witness very inspiring and very meaningful to the Cuban society and the universal church as a whole,” Tveit said.

Artists reach for global harmony in Stitching Peace exhibit

In February 2011, the WCC hosted an international exhibit of textiles, arpilleras – Latin American appliqué collages – and quilts at the Ecumenical Centre and later at the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation which took place in Jamaica in May (see pp. 6–9 for story).

The curator of the exhibition was Roberta Bacic, a former member of Chile’s truth and reconciliation commission who now lives in Northern Ireland.

Indian Christians tackle dynamics of caste, religion, culture

A May international colloquium on Caste, Religion and Culture was held at the Renewal Centre in Cochin, Kerala, India. It was sponsored by the WCC, National Council of Churches in India, Centre for Social Studies and Culture and the Student Christian Movement of India.

Trees and tweets for World Sunday for Peace

As the sun rose on Sunday, May 22, Christians and churches across the world were encouraged by the WCC to celebrate God’s peace in their worship services, to hold a Peace Sunday dawn vigil, to plant a tree as an act of peace or to use social media, such as tweeting on Twitter, to share prayers for peace with Christians around the world.

WCC expresses sympathy to Christian Council of Norway

The WCC general secretary and WCC Central Committee moderator Rev. Dr Walter Altmann expressed their “deep shock and sadness” over violent terrorist attacks in July.

“We wish to express our deepest solidarity with the people, churches and authorities of Norway,” they said in a letter sent to the Christian Council of Norway.

WCC hails independence of South Sudan

As South Sudan achieved its independence in July 2011, its new president received congratulations and an assurance of continued solidarity from the WCC general secretary.

In a letter dated July 7 on behalf of the WCC, the general secretary extended to the president of the Republic of South Sudan, General Salva Kiir Mayardit, “our prayers and very best wishes for the bright and peaceful future of your country and people.”

WCC leader calls for an end to Syrian violence

Voicing an appeal in August 2011 for the renunciation of violence by all sides in ongoing political conflict in Syria, WCC general secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit stated: “It is particularly urgent that the army and government security agencies cease the indiscriminate use of force” against demonstrators, moving instead to protect all Syrian citizens’ lives, dignity, human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Ecumenical consultation recognizes threat to Asia’s peace and security

Serious issues that threaten Asia’s peace and security were recognized in August 2011 by an ecumenical consultation organized by WCC and the Christian Conference of Asia. The event, attended by 35 participants from 20 Asian countries, was held in Bangkok, Thailand.

WCC calls for prayer and action in Somalia, South Asia

Peace and human security in Somalia and South Asia were key concerns addressed at a September WCC Executive Committee meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The committee, a governing body of the WCC, meets twice per year to set policy and transact business.
Conflicts and hope are focus of Day of Prayer for Peace

From Fiji to Rwanda, prayers and signs of commitment were offered for the annual International Day of Prayer for Peace in September.

Observances in 2011 took place in parishes and through social networking such as Facebook.

WCC and Globethics.net launch global online theological library

A web-based theological resource was launched in September by the WCC and Globethics.net. It aims to redress a global imbalance of access to research materials in theology and related disciplines.

The Global Theological Library contains several hundred thousand articles, documents and other academic resources that can be accessed for free online by registered participants worldwide (www.globethics.net/gtl).

Hope in Christ is answer to the challenges of churches, says WCC moderator

Responding to the changing ecclesial landscape and challenges facing churches today “our hope grounded in Christ is the means through which to address them,” said WCC moderator Rev. Dr Walter Altmann to a group of 300 delegates at the Global Christian Forum meeting in Indonesia.

Climate change a spiritual crisis

WCC member churches in Canada joined hands with faith leaders, politicians and civil society actors to stress a “moral responsibility to address global warming,” which they named a spiritual crisis.

Together they prepared a “Canadian Interfaith Call for Leadership and Action on Climate Change” on the occasion of the United Nations Climate Change Conference 2011.

WCC calls for protection of minorities in Pakistan

During an October visit to Pakistan, WCC general secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit urged the protection of religious minorities and the need for the state to take necessary measures against religious intolerance.

“The Pakistani government should not turn a blind eye to the culture of violence perpetrated through the use and abuse of the blasphemy law, which intensify communal hatred, intolerance and persecution,” he said.

Ecumenical youth launch new book

“Echoes of Peace,” reflections from eight young people across the world, was released by WCC as an acknowledgment of the significant role young people play in the pursuit of peace.

The essays address issues of global peace, justice and nonviolence. The book was launched in November at a meeting of the Echos Commission on Youth in the Ecumenical Movement in Lebanon.

Middle East churches reaffirm commitment to peace

At the 10th General Assembly of the Middle East Council of Churches, Christians in the Middle East renewed their commitment to unity, dialogue and peace amid varied political developments in the region. They also elected a new general secretary, Fr. Dr Paul Rouhana from the Maronite (Catholic) Church in Lebanon, at the November 2011 gathering.

Ecumenical Patriarch highlights freedom of religion and minority rights

In a presentation in November to a gathering of experts on religious freedom and religious rights of minorities, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I said there must be respect for the “inherent rights of all human beings and their aspiration and rights of religious freedom should be important components to sustain tolerance among all God’s creation.”

Churches tackle migration issues in Beirut

Around 214 million people in the world are on the move, seeking livelihood and security outside their home countries. To address this global phenomenon of multi-directional migration, and respond to the political, economic, ethical and ecclesiological challenges it poses, the WCC held a regional conference in Lebanon in December.

A church that excludes cannot be holy, assert Indian churches

“Churches that practice or remain silent on caste discrimination cannot ascribe themselves the status of holiness,” said Metropolitan Dr Geovarghese Mor Coorilos, Bishop of the Malankara Jacobite Orthodox Church in India, and WCC moderator of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism. He spoke at the WCC joint consultation for Dalit and indigenous theologians in December.
International Ecumenical Peace Convocation opens path toward global peace

Drawn together in a profound ecumenical experience, more than 1,000 participants from more than 100 countries attended the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation (IEPC) in May 2011. Together, through worship, seminars and intense face-to-face discussion, they explored a common path toward worldwide peace.

Held in Kingston, Jamaica, the convocation addressed four themes: peace in the community, peace with the earth, peace in the marketplace, and peace among the peoples, allowing for specific emphasis on each theme and how it shapes an ethical and theological approach to just peace.

After a week of pondering theological questions and exchanging perspectives, the participants released a message expressing their unified determination to navigate a path forward as they returned to their homes and churches across the world.

Key to their message was espousing a framework and lifestyle of just peace and asserting that peace is central in all religious traditions.

In part, the message stated: “With partners of other faiths, we have recognized that peace is a core value in all religions, and the promise of peace extends to all people regardless of their traditions and commitments. Through intensified inter-religious dialogue we seek common ground with all world religions.”

The participants acknowledged that each church and each religion brings with it a different standpoint from which to begin walking toward a just peace.

The IEPC message captured only part of a truly historic event, said the Rev. Dr Walter Altmann, moderator of the WCC Central Committee.

“You take with you much more than a text; you take with you a profound ecumenical experience,” he said to participants. “The complexity of the issues we have addressed will certainly require further work, reflection and action.”

The ending of WCC’s Decade to Overcome Violence is also a new beginning, he added. “As we return, each of us becomes a living message for the IEPC,” he said.
“With partners of other faiths, we have recognized that peace is a core value in all religions, and the promise of peace extends to all people regardless of their traditions and commitments.”
In the months following the convocation, its outcomes continued to inspire local peacemakers. WCC general secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit said he believes those outcomes are both tangible and significant.

“Many churches are interested in clarifying the concept of how we as churches are peacemakers. We all took back a renewed understanding of how the call to work for peace and justice is a Christian calling. This is actually what Christ has called us to do – to be peacemakers.”

IEPC participants said they believed that Jamaica, as the host country for the convocation, played an important role in helping participants express their feelings.

“This country has a history that will remind us forever about how even Christian countries could be part of a colonial process, slave trade and what was real oppression,” said Tveit. “And yet this culture is able to express its joy and feelings as a genuine expression of human life and shared life. In many ways, it will remain a Jamaican experience for us.”

“This is actually what Christ has called us to do – to be peacemakers.”

Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit
WCC supports ecumenical actions, engagements in new and longstanding contexts

Throughout 2011, both new partners and long-term commitments were vital to the WCC’s response to broader participation in the worldwide ecumenical movement.

The ecclesial landscape is significantly changing, said Martin Robra, WCC director for Ecumenism in the 21st Century. “In addition, migration in many countries is prompting many churches to consider new dimensions of the question: Who is my neighbour?”

Events such as a three-day WCC regional conference in Beirut, Lebanon, helped churches explore this question. The conference hosted 30 participants in December 2011 from Africa, Europe and the Middle East, representing churches, ecumenical organizations and non-governmental activist groups.

Organized by the WCC programme on Just and Inclusive Communities, and hosted by the Middle East Council of Churches, the conference allowed participants to reflect on how poverty, unemployment and conflict are major reasons behind migration. With these challenges, they agreed, the theology of welcoming and loving one’s neighbour becomes more crucial than ever.

Migration and the increasing globalization of diverse religious communities have affected virtually every WCC programme area. When the WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) met in November 2011 in Ghana, CWME members reflected on how, five decades ago, missionary work in Africa was widely understood as moving from the global north into the global south.

Now, the gospel is being carried from the global south to regions of the north. Similar dynamic shifts, CWME commission members agreed, have been taking place worldwide among WCC member churches and especially Pentecostal, charismatic and evangelical churches.

Migration was also among the topics discussed by representatives of the WCC and Roman Catholic Church when they met in Malta in October and November 2011 in a final consultation of their Joint Working Group (JWG) before the WCC 10th Assembly convenes at Busan, Korea, in October 2013.

The group, which is preparing a report on relations between Roman Catholics and the WCC, reported that “the JWG members witnessed a fresh spirit of ecumenical openness and cooperation on this predominantly Catholic island, not least because of a common response to the steady arrival of migrants.”

Because migration changes the fabric of regional conflict, impacts natural resources and affects indigenous populations and their faith traditions, it often changes the shape of the ecumenical movement at local and national levels, said Robra.

“Concern for people involves changing our concept of loving our neighbour. If we can support churches in doing that, the ecumenical movement will grow stronger. Our programmes and methods of support at WCC reflect that rapidly changing, mobile world,” he said.
Planning underway for 10th Assembly

The planning committee for the WCC 10th Assembly – which includes WCC Central Committee members and ecumenical partner representatives – met in Busan, Korea in September 2011 to offer direction for the development of the assembly’s spiritual life, programme, business and partnerships needed to strengthen preparations over the next two years.

The assembly will take place Oct. 30 to Nov. 8, 2013, under the theme “God of life, lead us to justice and peace.”

The WCC Central Committee requested that the next Assembly provide greater space for a participatory “togetherness” among the whole ecumenical movement, with more possibilities than in the past for cooperation between member churches and ecumenical partners.

During the meeting, the committee considered the Korean concept of madang as a way to root the assembly in the host context and also give shape and meaning to the gathering. Madang is the traditional Korean “courtyard” connecting different parts of a house; a space for discussion, deliberation, celebration and fellowship; and a traditional centre of family and community life. The Assembly planning committee visited a number of traditional madang spaces in the city of Kyung-ju in order to understand the concept better.

The committee affirmed that the next assembly should be prepared in a spirit of madang, inviting participants into a common space of discussion and celebration. Previous WCC assemblies have used similar concepts to help shape the meeting – padare at the Harare Assembly in 1998 and mutirão at the Porto Alegre Assembly in 2006.

Douglas Chial, assembly coordinator, noted that the All Africa Conference of Churches is also preparing its 10th Assembly in 2013 with the complimentary theme “God of life, lead Africa to peace, justice and dignity.”

“There is one example of resonance there, giving greater coherence to the one ecumenical movement,” he said.

Canadian churches respond to Christian Witness document

Churches in Canada addressed challenging questions, with a strong interfaith perspective, while responding to the document “Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World: Guidelines for Conduct” in an event held in November 2011.

The document was launched by the WCC, the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue and the World Evangelical Alliance in June 2011.

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WCC nurtures ideas, explores new avenues and expands dialogue on Christian unity and mission

Around the globe, throughout 2011, the WCC created an atmosphere in which ongoing dialogue about Christian unity could flourish and expand. At international and national levels, the WCC facilitated and supported forums and consultations through which WCC member churches could discover and explore new forms of ecumenical cooperation with each other as well as with the Roman Catholic Church. Relationships with Evangelical and Pentecostal communities and churches are also growing.

“The WCC has helped facilitate many new dialogues focusing on Christian unity,” said the Rev. Dr Hielke Wolters, WCC associate general secretary for Unity and Mission. “We have created a space in which church leaders meet, discuss concerns and affirm the need for ecumenical cooperation and fellowship, then become inspired to take their conversations on to their regional and local counterparts.”

Each time such a breakthrough occurs, he said, churches gain courage to ask the questions that potentially lead to a stronger sense of Christian unity. This is also the reason why the WCC is a strong supporter of new expressions of ecumenical life, such as the Global Christian Forum (GCF).

The GCF in October 2011 drew to Indonesia more than 300 delegates from the WCC, Pentecostal Churches, the World Evangelical Alliance and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity for four days of listening to one another, building relationships and exploring challenges.

“The great gift of this forum is the space it provides for building relationships across the breadth of our faith tradition, and exploring together the common challenges before us,” said Rev. Dr Walter Altmann, moderator of the WCC Central Committee.

The WCC also worked in 2011 to affirm and renew the ecumenical understanding of Christian mission. The first draft of a new WCC statement of mission was the focus of a five-day meeting held by the 25-member Commission for World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) at the University of Ghana in November 2011. The draft statement will be put before a larger mission and evangelism pre-Assembly gathering in Manila in March 2012, then ultimately find its way to the next WCC Assembly in Busan, Korea, in 2013.

The new statement of mission will take into account today’s changed ecumenical context, said the Rev. Dr Jooseop Keum, a Presbyterian from Korea who is the CWME secretary.

“It will provide new concepts and directions for WCC member churches and affiliated mission bodies, as well as offer a broader appeal that goes beyond the WCC fellowship,” he said.

WCC also has the role of serving as a resource to help the next generation of church leaders work ecumenically.
Faith and Order gathers theologians on crossroads of understanding

In January 2011, Christians around the world prayed for church unity during the traditional annual Week of Prayer. The 2011 materials were prepared in partnership with the churches of Jerusalem, drawing resources sponsored jointly by the WCC commission Faith and Order and the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity of the Roman Catholic Church.

“In a present-day context of despair and suffering, the churches of Jerusalem show determination and witness together with the global church for a just peace in the city of peace,” said WCC general secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit in a sermon at Geneva’s Ecumenical Centre during a service of prayer organized by the city’s churches.

In addition to the Week of Prayer, over the course of 2011, Faith and Order provided many forums in which theologians with an international focus could exchange thoughts and craft theological text with their counterparts across the world. Rev. Dr John Gibaut, director of the WCC Commission on Faith and Order, described his feelings while working with Dalit theologians in Bangalore, India.

“It was extraordinary,” he said. “After crafting text in the midst of this context, you come away slightly changed and recreated by a synergy much larger than its parts.”

Tribal and ethnic populations in India have experienced a history of caste discrimination, and the National Council of Churches of India has stressed the need to think of mission as transformative tool for the cultures of discrimination and exclusion.

“When we met people from the Dalit communities, we understood that casteism is profoundly church-dividing,” said Gibaut. “Churches will be divided among and between themselves until these distinctions are undone.”

Faith and Order has also provided WCC’s many members the opportunity to comment on and participate in an ongoing dialogue related to the document “The Nature and Mission of the Church – A Stage on the Way to a Common Statement.”

As WCC members discover their common convictions regarding the church, they also begin to identify issues that divide the church.

Dialogue centred on these convictions and issues – which Faith and Order facilitates in many countries – begins to open a path toward Christian unity, Gibaut concluded. “Christian unity will happen only if we begin to agree on what the church is.”

One Baptism study text released

A study text, One Baptism: Towards Mutual Recognition, was released by the WCC Commission on Faith and Order. The document links questions of Christian initiation with ecclesiology, mutual recognition of baptism and the basic bonds of Christian unity. The study text also deals with issues that prevent mutual recognition of baptism.

Journal celebrates hundredth year

The International Review of Mission marked a century of publication in December with a public celebration at the WCC’s Philip Potter Library. To mark the occasion, its publishers released an omnibus issue featuring 15 commissioned articles assessing the history of the journal, the evolution of the field, and the prospects and shape of its future.
Public Witness: Addressing Power, Affirming Peace

“Advocating for human rights means helping people find their voices within their community, throughout their region and before the United Nations.”

Christina Papazoglou, WCC programme executive for human rights

WCC strengthens ecumenical advocacy for stateless people

As 2011 marked the 50th anniversary of the United Nation’s Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, the WCC strengthened its advocacy for the rights of the world’s 12 million stateless people who span five continents.

In 2011, the WCC organized “solidarity visits” to Bangladesh and Nepal in order to learn more about the situation of stateless people, meet with indigenous people and empower churches to engage in solidarity, advocacy and ministry.

“When you’re stateless, you’re in legal limbo. You have no home. You have no access to education and healthcare,” explained Segma Asfaw, who coordinated the solidarity visits.

Bangladesh is home to some 300,000 Urdu-speaking minorities who sided with Pakistan during civil war in 1971. Most lost their homes, jobs and positions in society and were forced to take up residence in crowded urban camps. Only those born since 1971 have become eligible for Bangladeshi citizenship since a 2008 High Court ruling.

In addition, about 200,000 Rohingyas – a Muslim ethnic minority – live in Bangladesh after fleeing persecution from Burmese authorities in the Arkan state. To date, only 28,000 are registered as refugees in Bangladesh.
Hundreds of thousands of Rohingyas in Bangladesh live in camps – both official and makeshift – where shelters are falling apart, malnutrition is rampant and water security is a burning issue.

“They are living in degraded, precarious situations that are quite violent,” said Asfaw. “Many women and children are completely exploited, and are easy prey for traffickers who smuggle them to neighbouring countries.”

Many of the WCC’s programmes are founded on the belief that advocating for human rights is a prophetic witness of the churches.

In October 2011, the WCC organized a second African Human Rights Defenders Training in Sierra Leone. Participants called on faith-based institutions to use their constituencies to uphold human rights and dignity.

“Defending human rights is an affirmation of the prophetic witness of the churches,” said Dr Mathews George Chunakara, director of the WCC Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA).

“Biblical values and Christian theology affirm the dignity of humanity, created in the image of God, and this belief is the strong motivating principle that will guide churches to defend human rights.”

Advocating for human rights means helping people find their voices within their community, throughout their region and before the United Nations, said Christina Papazoglou, WCC programme executive for human rights. “For the WCC, advocating for human rights has to do with capacity building,” she said.

Constructive synergies between churches and human rights non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can be mutually beneficial, given the NGOs’ technical expertise and the churches’ broad access to the grassroots level, she added. “Such cooperation can considerably enhance the promotion and protection of human rights in the region.”

Pakistan visit focuses on protecting religious minorities

In a December 2011 visit to Pakistan, a WCC delegation met with prime minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani, religious leaders, civil society organizations and United Nations representatives urging protection of religious minorities, especially against the misuse of blasphemy law in the country.

The delegation was led by the Rev. Kjell Magne Bondevik, former prime minister of Norway and current moderator for the WCC Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA).

Prior to that in October 2011, WCC general secretary Rev. Dr Fykse Tveit and CCIA director Dr Mathews George Chunakara visited churches and civil society organizations in Pakistan to express solidarity with the religious minorities who are persecuted by religious extremists.

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The WCC advocates for religious freedom as a basic human right as well. In November 2011, the CCIA organized a consultation in Istanbul, Turkey, hosted by the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

There must be respect “for the inherent rights of all human beings and their aspiration and rights of religious freedom should be important components to sustain tolerance among all God’s creations,” said Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I.

**Accompanying the churches in conflict situations**

The WCC has been, throughout 2011, deeply involved with the people in many African countries as they strive for peace and reconciliation among churches, governments and communities.

South Sudan achieved its independence in July 2011 after four decades of warfare that killed more than 2 million people.

WCC general secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, in a letter to the president of the Republic of South Sudan, General Salva Kiir Mayardit, assured the country’s leaders that they will have the WCC’s continued solidarity.

Tveit recalled that “the WCC, our ecumenical partner the Sudan Council of Churches and both councils’ member churches have been accompanying the people of Sudan for much of your long struggle.”

The WCC also expressed its solidarity with the Ivory Coast, where political strife has killed thousands. An ecumenical delegation visited that country during November and December 2011 to meet with churches, civil society and key government representatives. Initiated by the WCC’s Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA), the visit also included the All Africa Conference of Churches, Community of Churches in Mission and the Protestant Federation of France.

Church leaders from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi and Rwanda also made a firm commitment to work together in promoting human dignity and fundamental human rights.

The commitment was one of the main outcomes of a five-day workshop on human rights that took place in Kinshasa in April 2011. Hosted by the WCC member churches in the DRC, the workshop was organized by the WCC in cooperation with the Lutheran World Federation and Bread for the World, and was funded by the European Commission.

WCC also continued to offer support to Nigerian Christian and Muslim communities engaged in peace-building, and has also encouraged Christian and Muslim leaders worldwide to act together in the face of extremist violence that threatens to divide Nigerians along religious lines.

Human rights advocacy is complex work, and the WCC has a wide scope of related initiatives, said Dr Nigussu Legesse, programme executive for Africa. “In many countries, when you advocate for human rights, you are viewed as attacking the government,” he said. “Some human rights defenders are taken as prisoners.”
Justice, Diakonia and Responsibility for Creation

“More and more churches are caring for creation by implementing environmentally conscious programmes at the local level.”

Dr Guillermo Kerber, WCC programme executive on Care for Creation and Climate Justice

Youth pledge to work for eco-justice

Young people from across the world carried new knowledge and heightened inspiration for ecological justice back to their communities after a 2011 event planned jointly by the WCC and Lutheran World Federation (LWF).

After two weeks of training on the theology and politics of ecological justice, the Christian youth participants pledged to start, in their own contexts, initiatives to promote the new understandings they acquired.

The event was held Nov. 26 - Dec. 10 in Durban, South Africa. Youth for Eco-Justice, a joint WCC and LWF project, brought together 30 young people for biblical reflection and dialogue on the environment.

Participants were trained in advocacy, communication and eco-justice project planning and implementation.

“For many of the young people, this was an intense experience,” said Maike Gorsboth, coordinator of the Ecumenical Water Network (EWN). “They experienced how reflecting on ecology and ecological justice can challenge our theological views of what is Creation, of who we are, of what ‘createdness’ implies; and from there moving on to consider their own role and that of their churches.”

The youth – who included Anglicans, Lutherans, Methodists, Orthodox, Presbyterians and Roman Catholics – were gathered in Durban at the same time as negotiations were underway at the 17th Conference of the Parties (COP 17) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

WCC general secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit said the COP17 outcome was not adequate. “Though a minimum deal was achieved at the last minute to keep the Kyoto Protocol, make some steps towards a new legally binding agreement in 2015 and implement the Green Climate Fund, the overall Durban outcome is far from being enough to respond to the currently disappearing countries and future generations.”

Despite this disappointment, the determination and intentions of the youth provided great hope even in the face of that disappointment.

“The WCC has the role of increasing awareness of eco-justice issues among churches, and of combining theological reflection in this area with the sharing of best practices,” he said. “More and more churches are caring for creation by implementing environmentally conscious programmes at the local level, as we saw at the meeting of the WCC’s Working Group on Climate Change.”

The group had also met in Kingston, Jamaica, in May 2011, immediately before the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation and contributed substantially to the “Peace with the Earth” component of the convocation.
The Ecumenical Water Network (EWN) also continues to develop and distribute resources to help WCC member churches explore and adopt environmentally conscious practices and become advocates for the responsible and fair use and sharing of water. Among those resources is “Seven Weeks for Water,” a series of worship and educational materials that churches can draw upon in formulating their own curriculum and worship services.

At the EWN Forum in Kenya, participants emphasized that water must be high on the agenda of international summits, conferences and church assemblies.

More than 20 activists gathered in October 2011 for the forum, which meets once every three-and-a-half years. They collaborated to shape a three-year action plan that sets directions for this church-related global network on water.

Clean, safe and sustainable water remains a rare commodity for billions of people in our world, noted the forum’s participants. They pressed for movement beyond mere recognition of a human right to water, calling for the actual implementation of this right as well as the establishment of adequate means of sanitation for all.

Financial system an “erosion of morals”

At the heart of the near-collapse of the global financial system is “an erosion of morals,” says Dr Rogate Mshana, director of the WCC programme on Justice, Diakonia and Responsibility for Creation. Mshana is also co-editor of the anthology “Justice Not Greed,” published by WCC Publications in 2010.

“The problem is not ‘out there’ but is in the hearts of the people,” he said.
The WCC met in November 2011 with the World Communion of Reformed Churches and Council of World Mission members from Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, North America and Europe to plan for a conference on proposing a criteria and framework for a “new financial and economic architecture.”

At the meeting, WCC general secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit said that measures adopted by governments and international institutions in response to the current economic crisis have been palliative and short-sighted at best, and at worst ineffective and unjust. “There is a need for a new discussion on morality and ethics in respect of the financial systems,” he said.

Latin American Churches are mutually empowered for diakonia

People from diverse Christian backgrounds gathered in Brazil in November 2011, coming from several Latin American countries to seek ideas for dynamic ways of ecumenical formation for diaconal ministry.

The “Latin American Formation Seminar on Diakonia” was promoted by the WCC and co-organized by the Latin America Council of Churches and the Superior School of Theology in Sao Leopoldo.

The event brought together theologians, church leaders and students, as well as people who develop work in various capacities. They discussed sharing training curricula and reflected on the theological dimensions of “prophetic diakonia,” with special attention to its role in the public policy.

Participants also had the opportunity to visit diaconal projects in the region of Porto Alegre. One such project was a music ministry, offered through Peace Lutheran Church, for 50 children who lived in neighbourhoods facing violence, drug trafficking and inadequate housing.

The programme is also supported by the Lutheran Foundation of Diakonia.

“This music ministry brings these children out of an unhealthy environment, developing their musical skills but also offering them a spiritual experience,” said the Rev. Dr Carlos Ham, WCC programme executive for Latin America.

Health and Healing: “Walking With the People”

From biblical meditations, to participation in World Mental Health Day, to advocating for health before the United Nations (UN), the WCC has been strongly demonstrating its concern for the well-being of society.

In November 2011, the WCC launched a series of Biblical meditations on gender, reproductive and sexual health, inviting congregations and individual Christians to reflect.

The WCC not only helps churches develop the resources to care for people in their communities but also supports these churches as they raise critical issues of advocacy in their communities, explained Dr Manoj Kurian, WCC programme executive for Health and Healing.

Healing and advocacy go hand-in-hand, he said. “As churches, can you only speak to the UN and not stand with these men and women in their communities? No. Healing has these two facets.”

When Kurian is helping churches within a community, he said he first asks about people who are marginalized in that community. He asks: “Do we see Jesus in the oppressed?” When social justice is realized, he said, only then can healing fully take place.

“We need to close the tap and not just keep mopping the floor,” he said. “I try to get communities to think in that more holistic manner.”

Atrocity documents given by WCC to Brazilian government

Substantial information on torture and other human rights abuses during the period of the military regime was entrusted to the Brazilian attorney general at a June ceremony in Sao Paulo. There was also a call for a national truth commission in Brazil to shed more light on past atrocities.
Building interfaith community in Bossey

The WCC Ecumenical Institute in Bossey brought 23 young adults from Christian, Muslim and Jewish faiths to Switzerland, to live together for a month-long summer course and learn to be peace builders and conflict managers.

The religiously diverse community of young people came from around the world. Together, they visited churches, a synagogue and mosques in Geneva.

They attended formal lectures introducing different faith approaches to contemporary issues, while living together as a community overcoming religious stereotypes.

In a follow-up to the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation in May last year, where peace education was included in all the educational programmes, a five-day intensive training on “Dialogue for Peaceful Change” took place as part of the course.

The training was developed by practitioners working in conflict settings, who offered tools for conflict management and effective communication skills to the students.

“This course continued to build in strength. With the training, participants were able to learn technical and practical skills in promoting peace building and conflict resolution,” said Prof. Ioan Sauca, director of the Ecumenical Institute.

“This experience of living together and learning as an interfaith community was much appreciated by the participants. They developed their capabilities as peace facilitators, and equipped themselves with innovative approaches for dialogue,” added Sauca.

Ecumenical institute promotes practical ecumenism

For Juan C. Chávez Quispe studying at the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey is a unique experience. Coming from the Roman Catholic Church in Bolivia, with an indigenous background, Chávez finds the study of ecumenism intriguing and provoking for his understanding of Christian unity.

He is a student of the Master of Advanced Ecumenical Studies (MAS) at the Ecumenical Institute, a one-year degree programme for theology students.

Chávez graduated from the Andean Ecumenical Higher Institute of Theology in La Paz, Bolivia. He also holds a degree in Archaeology.

“Studying ecumenism in a multi-cultural educational environment like Bossey makes me realize how diverse the realities of our churches are. Yet, despite the different traditions and backgrounds we all come from, I discovered that our struggles are very similar,” said Chávez.

For Chávez studying the history of the ecumenical movement, having workshops on inter-cultural Bible studies and being exposed to practical theology are some of the ways to work for social justice from an ecumenical perspective.

“Despite the different traditions and backgrounds we all come from, I discovered that our struggles are very similar.”

Juan C. Chávez Quispe, Bossey Ecumenical Institute student from Bolivia
“The social issues raised by the Indigenous Peoples of Bolivia, and from other parts of the world, are significant. I think the only way for addressing them from a theological perspective is through practical understanding of ecumenism and education directed to build a better life in community,” he said.

“The knowledge acquired here in Bossey provides us the skills to do it,” added Chávez.

Chávez’s thesis for the master’s course is also focused on Indigenous People’s spirituality and inter-religious dialogue.

Being interested in the inter-religious aspect of the indigenous issues, Chávez is involved in research for the WCC programme for Inter-religious Dialogue and Cooperation at the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva, as part of his master’s course.

Once he completes his studies, Chávez hopes to go back to his home country and use his learning for developing a wider perspective on ecumenism there.

Masters course in Bossey advances ecumenical learning

Chih-Mei Tang, a student of Master of Advanced Studies in Ecumenical Studies (MAS) at the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey, considers it a challenge to be exposed to a diverse and multi-cultural educational environment, where one can “learn, unlearn and relearn.”

Tang comes from the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan. She graduated in South East Asian Studies from the Ohio State University in Columbus, USA, and holds a masters’ degree in Theology and Religion from Taian Theological College and Seminary in Taiwan.

For Tang to be enrolled in MAS, a one-year course for theology students offered by the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey, is a profound learning experience.

“To be exposed to various theological disciplines and understanding of ecumenism in Christianity is not easy. In academic learning we have to adapt to different ideas that might not be familiar to us,” said Tang.

“Yet this is the first principle of learning ecumenism, that we let ourselves be challenged. Therefore through lectures and seminars, we get to develop a critical and constructive understanding of ecumenism,” said Tang.

As field trips are an important component of the MAS course at the Ecumenical Institute, Tang considered them a profound source of theological and ecumenical learning.

“As part of the course we had a chance to travel to Taizé, France, and Vatican-Rome. We had dialogue with the Taizé brothers and had an audience with the pope. This experience helped us to discover new dimensions of cooperation and dialogue, which is a significant part of ecumenism,” shared Tang.

“Bossey is like a laboratory, where your faith and academic skills are enlightened,” said Tang.

Tang is interested in the subject of feminist theology and Christian unity among churches in Taiwan. As part of the course, she is working with the Asia desk of the WCC in the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva for ten weeks. Tang’s thesis also deals with the theme of Christian unity.
Inter-Religious Dialogue and Cooperation

Christians reach historic consensus on appropriate ways for Christian witness

Recommendations for conduct by Christians engaged in mission and evangelism – agreed upon by representatives of an unprecedentedly broadly-based Christian grouping – were released in June 2011 after a five-year series of consultations between the WCC, the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue of the Roman Catholic Church and the World Evangelical Alliance.

The three groups include Orthodox, Catholic, Anglican, Protestant, Evangelical, Pentecostal and independent churches with a combined membership of some two billion people representing nearly 90 per-cent of the world’s Christians.

WCC executive secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit helped present the five-page document, “Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World,” at a public launch, where he said the recommendations are a testimony to the search for Christian unity.

“This mutual exercise of asking, of criticizing others and ourselves, is a very important part of the ecumenical movement,” he said.

Christian engagement in mission is very broad, added Clare Amos, WCC programme executive for Inter-religious Dialogue and Cooperation.

“For many, mission includes evangelism or, if you’re being negative, proselytizing. We hope this document encourages more people to ask themselves: what is the relationship between Christian witness and conversion?”

The document states that the recommendations have been formed “according to gospel principles.”

Those developing the recommendations said they hope churches across the world will be inspired to design their own codes of conduct relevant to their own particular contexts.

One of the 12 principles is focused on freedom of religion and belief, stating, in part: “Religious freedom including the right to publicly profess, practice, propagate and change one’s religion flows from the very dignity of the human person...”

The question of religious freedom is at the heart of witnessing to the world with full love and respect for other human beings, said Amos.

“In some countries, that freedom doesn’t exist,” she said.

She also commented that the recommendation regarding “renouncing false witness” has far-reaching implications. The recommendation states, in part, “Christians are to speak sincerely and respectfully; they are to listen in order to learn about and understand each others’ beliefs and practices...”

Today’s technology has the power to help Christians bear witness, but it also has the power to become a negative tool for false messages about religious traditions, said Amos.

“It’s very easy to splatter false witness across Google and the web, very easy to distort Christianity, Islam and other faiths.”

“The question of religious freedom is at the heart of witnessing to the world with full love and respect for other human beings.”

Clare Amos, WCC programme executive for Inter-religious Dialogue and Cooperation
Churches seek peace, justice through dialogue in Assisi

At an interfaith gathering in Assisi, called by Pope Benedict XVI, WCC general secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit said, “The cross is not for crusades but a sign of God’s love embracing everybody.”

He praised the role of “young change makers” in pursuit of peace and called faith leaders to engage in dialogue by addressing conflicts and accepting “the other.”

Ideally, the document will move the world toward an expanded sense of Christian witnessing, said Tveit. “We wish to see more Christian witness carried out, particularly among the poor and marginalized in the world. This document and this process can help us to do this better, more united and with a stronger voice.”

Current Dialogue resurrected after hiatus

Current Dialogue, a longstanding resource for inter-religious news and exchange of ideas, was relaunched in 2011 after a two-year break. The 96-page December issue focused on “Christian Self-Understanding in the Context of Buddhism.”

The magazine will continue to be released twice a year, said Clare Amos, the publication’s editor and WCC programme executive for Inter-religious Dialogue and Cooperation. For the Buddhism-related issue, she and her predecessor, guest editor Rev. Dr Shanta Premawardhana, have published papers drawn from a consultation organized by Premawardhana in December 2009.

First published 25 years ago, Current Dialogue is regarded as one of the world’s oldest and most respected journals related to Christian inter-religious engagement.

The magazine’s articles have been developed to help people understand that inter-religious dialogue is not solely about Christians engaging with other faiths, explained Amos.

“Of course it does include that, but one also needs to address the question of how the presence of other faiths shapes and reshapes our self-understanding. What does it do to our understanding of the person of Christ?”

Future issues of Current Dialogue will highlight Christian inter-religious engagement with Islam, Judaism and Hinduism.

The 2011 issue as well as 2012 issues will be part of Amos’s work with an ecumenical group to provide an overall report on Christian self-understanding in the context of religious plurality which will be presented at a WCC Central Committee meeting.

“The WCC is particularly well-equipped to reflect on how the self-understanding of Christians is affected by engagement with a world religion,” said Amos.
Total income decreased by CHF 3.9 million compared to 2010. The strength of the CHF against the EUR, USD and other currencies had an estimated unfavourable impact of CHF 1.6 million on contributions compared to 2010.

The IEPAC was managed close to budget, with total event costs of CHF 1.5 million. It was budgeted and expected that restricted funds reduce, drawing on balances, in 2011, following the increase to funds in 2010. The overall preliminary results 2011 compared favourably with the revised budget, principally because of efforts made to reduce expenditure.

Total funds are reserves closed at CHF 38.7 million (2010: CHF 40.8 million).

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**WCC Financial Overview 2011**

**FINANCIAL RESULTS**

(Swiss francs 000’s)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Unrestricted and designated funds 2011</th>
<th>Restricted funds 2011</th>
<th>Total funds 2011</th>
<th>Total funds 2010</th>
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<td><strong>22,852</strong></td>
<td><strong>28,616</strong></td>
<td><strong>32,468</strong></td>
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**EXPENDITURE**

Direct programme costs: grants — 1,847 (1,847 2,677)

Operating and other programme costs 5,066 8,899 13,965 12,452

Salaries 5,166 9,937 15,103 16,356

Redistribution of costs (3,922) 3,922 — —

**Total costs** 6,310 24,605 30,915 31,485

Transfers between funds (230) 230 — —

Transfers (to)/from funds and current liabilities 106 119 225 275

**Net increase/(decrease) in funds for the year** (210) (1,864) (2,074) 1,258

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**SOURCES OF INCOME 2011**

(Swiss francs 000’s)

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<td>WCC and the Ecumenical Movement in the 21st Century</td>
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<td>Unity, Mission, Evangelism and Spirituality</td>
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<td>Public Witness: Addressing Power, Affirming Peace</td>
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<tr>
<td>Justice, Diakonia and Responsibility for Creation</td>
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<td>Education and Ecumenical Formation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inter-religious Dialogue and Cooperation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
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<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Expenditure (Swiss francs 000’s)</th>
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<td>Communication</td>
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**WCC Income and Contributors 2011**

**INCOME TRENDS**

(Swiss francs 000’s)

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<td><strong>41,028</strong></td>
<td><strong>35,742</strong></td>
<td><strong>36,262</strong></td>
<td><strong>32,468</strong></td>
<td><strong>28,616</strong></td>
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**FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTORS 2011**

**Main contributors**

*Note: The list includes all member churches, partner organizations and other bodies that contributed more than CHF 20,000 to the WCC in 2011.*

- African Methodist Episcopal Church
- American Baptist Churches in the USA
- Anglican Church of Canada
- Brot für Alle
- Canadian International Development Agency
- Catholic Committee for Cultural Collaboration
- Christian Aid
- Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the USA
- Christian Council of Sweden
- Christoffel Blinden Mission International
- Church of England
- Church of Norway
- Church of Scotland
- Church of Sweden
- Church World Service
- Council for World Mission
- DanChurchAid
- Diakonisches Werk der EKD
- EED-Church Development Service
- Eglise Reformée de France
- Episcopal Church in the USA
- Evangelical Church in Hessen and Nassau
- Evangelical Church in Rhineland
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark
- Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland
- Evangelical Reformed Church of Canton St Gallen
- Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland
- Evangelisches Missionswerk in Deutschland
- Femmes Protestantes en Suisse
- Finn Church Aid
- Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission
- Fondation pour l’Aide au Protestantisme Réformé
- Foundation for Theological Education in Southeast Asia
- Hilfswerk der Evangelischen Kirchen Schweiz
- ICCO-Interchurch Org. for Development Cooperation
- Kerk in Actie
- Korean Methodist Church
- Methodist Church
- Mission Covenant Church of Sweden
- Nathan Soderblom Memorial Fund
- National Council of Churches in Australia
- Norwegian Church Aid
- Presbyterian Church (USA)
- Presbyterian Church in Canada
- Presbyterian Church of Korea
- Protestant Church in the Netherlands
- Reformed Church in America
- Reformed Church in Aargau
- Reformed Churches of Bern-Jura-Solothurn
- Religious Society of Friends
- Schweizerischer Evangelischer Kirchenbund
- Stichting Rotterdam
- Stichting Steunfonds Bossey Nederland
- United Church of Canada
- United Church of Christ
- United Methodist Church
- Uniting Church in Australia
- World Conference of Associations of Theological Institutions

**Other contributors (less than CHF 20,000)**

- Member churches
- Specialized ministries
- Organizations
- Individuals
- Local congregations
- Local ecumenical bodies
- Local contributions
WCC Governing Bodies and Staff Leadership 2011

**PRESIDENTS**

Archbishop Prof. Dr Anastasios of Tirana, Durres and All Albania
Orthodox Autocephalous Church of Albania

Mr John Taroanui Doom
Mashti Protestant Church (Tahiti)

Rev. Dr Simon Dossou
Protestant Methodist Church in Benin

Dr Soritua Albert Ernst Nababan
Protestant Christian Batak Church (Indonesia)

Rev. Dr Ofelia Ortega Suarez
Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba

His Holiness Abune Paulos
Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church

Rev. Dr Bernice Powell Jackson
United Church of Christ (USA)

Dame (Dr) Mary Tanner
Church of England

**WCC OFFICERS**

Rev. Dr Walter Altmann
Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil

Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima
Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople

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The programmes and management of the World Council of Churches reflect the fellowship of its member churches, guidance and oversight of its governing bodies, and strong relationships to church and ecumenical organizations.
Ecclesiastical body of the World Council of Churches: The WCC Fellowship of Churches

Africa
- Africa Inland Church - Sudan
- African Christian Church and Schools [Kenya]
- African Church of the Holy Spirit [Kenya]
- African Israel Nineveh Church [Kenya]
- African Protestant Church [Cameroon]
- Anglican Church of Burundi

Anglican Church of Kenya
Anglican Church of Southern Africa [South Africa]
Anglican Church of Tanzania [Tanzania]
Association of Baptist Churches in Rwanda [Rwanda]
Association of Evangelical Reformed Churches of Burkina Faso
Church of Christ - Harriet Mission [Harrist Church] [Ivy Coast]
Church of Christ in Congo - Anglican Community of Congo [Brazzaville]
Church of Christ in Congo - Baptist Community of Congo [Brazzaville]
Church of Christ in Congo - Community of Disciples of Christ in Congo [Brazzaville]
Church of Christ in Congo - Evangelical Community of Congo [Republic of Congo]
Church of Christ in Congo - Mennonite Community in Congo [Brazzaville]
Church of Christ in Congo - Presbyterian Community of Congo [Brazzaville]
Church of Christ in Congo - Presbyterian Community of Kinshasa [DRC]
Church of Christ in Congo - Protestant Baptist Church in Africa/Ecclesiastical Baptist Community in Africa [DRC]
Church of Christ in Congo - Protestant Church of the Holy Spirit [Brazzaville]
Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar
Church of Jesus Christ on Earth by his Special Envoy Simon Kimbangu [DRC]
Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)
Church of the Brethren in Nigeria
Church of the Lord (Aladura) Worldwide [Nigeria]
Church of the Province of Central Africa [Zambia]
Church of the Province of the Indian Ocean [Madagascar]
Church of Uganda
Church of the Province of West Africa [Ghana]
Council of African Instituted Churches [South Africa]

Episcopal Church of the Sudan
Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Church
Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus
Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church
Evangelical Baptist Church in Angola
Evangelical Church of Cameroon
Evangelical Church of Congo [Republic of Congo]
Evangelical Church of Gabon
Evangelical Congregational Church in Angola
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Congo [Brazzaville]
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa [South Africa]
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania
Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Republic of Namibia
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana
Evangelical Pentecostal Mission of Angola
Evangelical Presbyterian Church in South Africa
Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Togo
Evangelical Reformed Church of Angola
Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church
Lesotho Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lesotho
Lutheran Church in Liberia
Malagasy Lutheran Church [Madagascar]
Methodist Church Ghana
Methodist Church in Kenya
Methodist Church in Zimbabwe
Methodist Church Nigeria
Methodist Church of Southern Africa
Methodist Church of Togo
Methodist Church Sierra Leone
Moravian Church in South Africa
Moravian Church in Tanzania
Native Baptist Church of Cameroon
Nigerian Baptist Convention
Presbyterian Church in Cameroon
Presbyterian Church in Cameroon [South Africa]
Presbyterian Church of Cameroon
Presbyterian Church of East Africa [Kenya]
Presbyterian Church of Ghana
Presbyterian Church of Liberia
Presbyterian Church of Mozambique
Presbyterian Church of Nigeria
Presbyterian Church of the Sudan
Protestant Church of Algeria
Protestant Methodist Church of Benin Province of the Anglican Church of Rwanda
Reformed Church in Zambia
Reformed Church in Zimbabwe
Reformed Church of Christ in Nigeria
Reformed Presbyterian Church of Equatorial Guinea
The African Church [Nigeria]
Union of Baptist Churches in Cameroon
United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe
United Church of Zambia
United Congregational Church of Southern Africa [South Africa]

United Methodist Church of Ivory Coast
Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa [South Africa]
Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa [South Africa]

ASIA
- Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia
- Anglican Church in Japan
- Anglican Church of Australia
- Anglican Church of Korea
- Bangladesh Baptist Church Sangha
- Baptist Union of New Zealand
- Batak Christian Community Church (GPKB) [Indonesia]
- Bengali-Orissa-Bihar Baptist Convention [India]
- China Christian Council
- Christian Church of Central Sulawesi (GKST) [Indonesia]
- Christian Church of Sumba (GKS) [Indonesia]
- Christian Churches New Zealand
- Christian Evangelical Church in Minahasa (GIM) [Indonesia]
- Christian Evangelical Church of Sangkhe Taluad (GIMST) [Indonesia]
- Christian Protestant Angkola Church (GKPA) [Indonesia]
- Christian Protestant Church in Indonesia (GKPI)
- Church of Bangladesh [Bangladesh]
- Church of Ceylon [Sri Lanka]
- Church of Christ in Thailand
- Church of the Province of Myanmar
- Churches of Christ in Australia
- Convention of Philippine Baptist Churches
- East Java Christian Church (GKJW) [Indonesia]
- Episcopal Church in the Philippines
- Evangelical Christian Church in Halmahera (GMHH) [Indonesia]
- Evangelical Christian Church in Tanah Papua (GKTP) [Indonesia]
- Evangelical Methodist Church in the Philippines
- Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China
- Indonesian Christian Church (GKI)
- Indonesian Christian Church (HKI)
- Javanese Christian Churches (GJK) [Indonesia]
- Kalimantan Evangelical Church (GKE) [Indonesia]
- Karo Batak Protestant Church (GBKP) [Indonesia]
- Korean Christian Church in Japan
- Korean Methodist Church
- Lao Evangelical Church
- Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church [India]
- Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar [India]
- Mara Evangelical Church [Myanmar]
- Methodist Church in India
- Methodist Church in Indonesia (GMI)
- Methodist Church in Malaysia
- Methodist Church in Singapore
- Methodist Church in New Zealand
- Methodist Church, Sri Lanka
- Methodist Church, Upper Myanmar
- Myanmar Baptist Convention
- Nias Christian Protestant Church (BNKP) [Indonesia]
- Orthodox Church in Japan
- Pasundan Christian Church (GKP) [Indonesia]
- Philippine Independent Church
- Presbyterian Church in Taiwan
- Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea
- Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand
- Presbyterian Church of Korea
- Presbyterian Church of Pakistan
- Protestant Christian Batak Church (HKBP) [Indonesia]
- Protestant Christian Church in Bali (GKPB) [Indonesia]
- Protestant Church in Indonesia (GPI) [Indonesia]
- Protestant Church in the Moluccas (GPM) [Indonesia]
- Protestant Church in Sabah [Malaysia]
- Protestant Church in South-East Sulawesi (GEPUSLUTRA) [Indonesia]
- Protestant Church in Timor Loro'a'e (East Timor)
- Protestant Church in Western Indonesia (GPIB)
- Protestant Evangelical Church in Timor (GMIT) [Indonesia]
- Samavesam of Teloju Baptist Churches [India]
- Simalungun Protestant Christian Church (GKPS) [Indonesia]
- Toraja Church (G7) [Indonesia]
- United Church of Christ in Japan
- United Church of Christ in the Philippines
- United Evangelical Lutheran Church in India
- Uniting Church in Australia

CARIBBEAN
- Baptist Convention of Haiti
- Church in the Province of the West Indies (Bahamas)
- Jamaica Baptist Union
- Methodist Church in Cuba
- Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas [Antigua and Barbuda]
- Methodist Church of Puerto Rico
- Moravian Church in Jamaica
- Moravian Church in Suriname
- Moravian Church, Eastern West Indies Province [Antigua and Barbuda]
- Presbyterian Church in Trinidad and Tobago
- Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba

The total membership represents more than 550 million people. Among these Europe as a region and the Eastern Orthodox as a Church family have the largest membership of churches within the WCC.
United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands
United Protestant Church (Netherlands Antilles)

**EUROPE**

- Armenian Apostolic Church (Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin)
- Baptist Union of Denmark
- Baptist Union of Great Britain
- Baptist Union of Hungary
- Catholic Diocese of the Old-Catholics in Germany
- Church in Wales
- Church of England
- Church of Greece
- Church of Ireland
- Church of Norway
- Church of Scotland
- Church of Sweden
- Czechoslovak Hussite Church [Czech Republic]
- Ecumenical Patriarchate
- Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church
- Evangelical Baptist Union of Italy
- Evangelical Church in Germany
  - Bremen Evangelical Church
  - Church of Lippe
  - Evangelical Church Berlin-Brandenburg-Silesian Oberlausitz
  - Evangelical Church in Baden
  - Evangelical Church in Central Germany
  - Evangelical Church in Hesse & Nassau
  - Evangelical Church in Rhineland
  - Evangelical Church in Württemberg
  - Evangelical Church of Anhalt
  - Evangelical Church of Kurhessen-Waldeck
  - Evangelical Church of the Palatinate
  - Evangelical Church of Westphalia
  - Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria
  - Evangelical Lutheran Church in Brunswick
  - Evangelical Lutheran Church in Oldenburg
  - Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hanover
  - Evangelical Lutheran Church of Mecklenburg
  - Evangelical Lutheran Church of Saxony
  - Evangelical Lutheran Church of Schaumburg-Lippe
  - Evangelical Reformed Church in Bavaria and North-Western Germany
  - North Elbian Evangelical Lutheran Church
  - Pomeranian Evangelical Church
  - Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren [Czech Republic]
  - Evangelical Church of the Augsburg and Helvetic Confessions in Austria
  - Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Poland
  - Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Romania
  - Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark
  - Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland
  - Evangelical Lutheran Church of France
  - Evangelical Lutheran Church of Iceland
  - Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia
  - Evangelical Methodist Church in Italy
  - Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Portugal
  - Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Romania
  - Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches
  - Greek Evangelical Church
  - Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad [Germany]
  - Lusatian Church of Portugal
  - Lutheran Church in Hungary
  - Mennonite Church in Germany
  - Mennonite Church in the Netherlands
  - Methodist Church [United Kingdom]
  - Methodist Church in Ireland
  - Mission Covenant Church of Sweden
  - Moravian Church in Western Europe [Germany]
  - Old-Catholic Church in Austria
  - Old-Catholic Church in the Netherlands
  - Old-Catholic Church of Switzerland
  - Old-Catholic Mariavite Church in Poland
  - Orthodox Autocephalous Church of Albania
  - Orthodox Church in the Czech Lands and Slovakia
  - Polish Autocephalous Orthodox Church in Poland
  - Polish Catholic Church in Poland
  - Presbyterian Church of Wales
  - Protestant Church in the Netherlands
  - Protestant Church of the Augsburg Confession of Alsace and Lorraine [France]
  - Reformed Christian Church in Serbia and Montenegro
  - Reformed Christian Church in Slovakia
  - Reformed Church in Hungary
  - Reformed Church in Romania
  - Reformed Church of France
  - Reformed Protestant Church of Alsace and Lorraine [France]
  - Remonstrant Brotherhood [Netherlands]
  - Romanian Orthodox Church
  - Russian Orthodox Church
  - Scottish Episcopal Church
  - Serbian Orthodox Church
  - Silesian Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in the Czech Republic
  - Slovak Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Serbia & Montenegro
  - Spanish Evangelical Church
  - Spanish Reformed Episcopal Church of Spanish Union of Welsh Independents
  - United Free Church of Scotland
  - United Protestant Church of Belgium
  - United Reformed Church [United Kingdom]
  - Waldensian Church (Italy)

**LATIN AMERICA**

- Anglican Church of the Southern Cone of America [Argentina]
- Association The Church of God [Argentina]
- Baptist Association of El Salvador
- Baptist Convention of Nicaragua
- Bolivian Evangelical Lutheran Church
- Christian Biblical Church [Argentina]
- Christian Reformed Church of Brazil
- Episcopal Anglican Church of Brazil
- Evangelical Church of the Disciples of Christ in Argentina
- Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil

**MIDDLE EAST**

- Armenian Apostolic Church (Holy See of Cilicia) [Lebanon]
- Church of Cyprus
- Coptic Orthodox Church [Egypt]
- Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East [Israel/Palestine]
- Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Iran
- Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Egypt, Synod of the Nile
- Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa [Egypt]
- Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East [Syrian Arab Republic]
- Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem [Israel/Palestine]
- National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon
- Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East
- Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East [Lebanon]

**NORTH AMERICA**

- African Methodist Episcopal Church [USA]
- African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church [USA]
- American Baptist Churches in the USA
- Anglican Church of Canada
- Canadian Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
- Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Canada
- Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States of America
- Christian Methodist Episcopal Church [USA]
- Church of the Brethren [USA]
- Episcopal Church in the USA
- Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad [Canada]
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada
- Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East [USA]
- Hungarian Reformed Church in America
- International Council of Community Churches [USA]
- International Evangelical Church [USA]
- Moravian Church in America

**PACIFIC**

- Church of Melanesia (Solomon Islands)
- Congregational Christian Church in American Samoa
- Congregational Christian Church in Samoa
- Congregational Christian Church of Niue
- Congregational Christian Church of Tuvalu
- Cook Islands Christian Church
- Evangelical Church in New Caledonia and the Loyalty Isles
- Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea
- Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga
- Methodist Church in Tonga
- Kiribati Protestant Church
- Mahi Protestant Church [French Polynesia]
- Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma
- Methodist Church of Samoa
- Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu
- United Church in Papua New Guinea
- United Church in the Solomon Islands
- United Church of Christ - Congregational in the Marshall Islands

To learn more about the WCC member churches go to: oikoumene.org