

Report of the General Secretary Chris Ferguson

Introduction

1. First of all, I want to give thanks to the God of Life for providing us for this opportunity to meet together as an Executive Committee to consider the business service entrusted to us from the 2017 General Council of the World Communion Reformed Churches.
2. We are privileged and then challenged to be able to meet here and address our theme: “Let your light shine forth: seeking shalom in the midst of empire.” We draw inspiration for this theme from Matthew 5:14 and Jeremiah 29:7.
3. It's been one year since our meeting in Seoul, South Korea, and in that year we continue to see the dramatic and catastrophic unfolding of our current historical context. It is clear that the whole world community is moving in a time of profound social, political, cultural, environmental and economic change that is putting the life of people and planet in peril.
4. Our Strategic Plan, born from a deep and rigorous reading of the signs of the times informed by Scripture and social analysis, focuses on the faith imperatives that emerge as we confess the God of Life in a world fallen among thieves.
5. The Executive Committee meeting's theme speaks to God's call to address the significant social, political and environmental threats to life by engaging directly and investing ourselves completely in our context. The call to let our light shine forth is a challenge to accept the gravity of the situation and to see that as people of good faith and as God's church we cannot retreat, we cannot ignore the situation and we certainly cannot continue with “business as usual.” The Jeremiah passage often jars in our ears the call to seek the shalom of the city in which the exiles find themselves and can be heard as a call to accept the situation as it is. To simply get on with life without challenging the injustice and the oppression which surrounds us. But nothing could be further from the truth. Jeremiah calls to seek peace, peace that requires justice and equity. Peace for the city requires reconciliation and full participation for all. In the midst of a world where the structures and systems, customs and practices are rigged for the benefit and the interest of the few at the cost of the majority. This has been a hard, hard year in the life of the world, our churches, in all the varied contexts. We rejoice in the faithful witness of our Communion and support each other in solidarity and prayer as we follow the God of Life.
6. As a Communion we enter this year with a clear and compelling vision and spirited conviction that we are called to communion and committed to justice. The discernment of the Leipzig General Council and the robust participation in the Strategic Plan have given us a strong, biblically based, theologically sound and justice-oriented framework from which to meet the challenges facing creation, our world and our churches.

Strategic Plan Implementation and Processes

7. The Strategic Plan approved by the Executive Committee in 2017 is the basis for the WCRC planning, prioritizing, programming, administration and evaluation. It is the harvest of the vision, direction, priorities and the imperatives of the Leipzig General Council. It is the fruit of Leipzig's powerful affirmation of the WCRC as a global *koinonia* “called to communion and

committed to justice” which emerged from an extraordinary spirit mad intense and participatory process of discernment by consensus.

8. Following Leipzig this vision was elaborated upon and translated into a plan by extensive and diverse processes that involved hundreds and hundreds of people and groups actively feeding into the creation of the plan. Input was sought and received from ecumenical partners, regions and specifically from those in the Communion and beyond whose voices were not already represented in the Executive Committee. The process was guided by a group that included the WCRC officers. The Executive Committee received the proposed plan, amended it and adopted it at the 2018 meeting in Seoul, South Korea.
9. The plan carries the depth and vision of the Leipzig General Council and takes seriously the mandates of that Council. In saying that, it is also clear that the Council made out a vision calling for many actions and initiatives, all of which cannot realistically be achieved given the finite resources of the WCRC.
10. Immediately following the Executive Committee meeting in 2018 we began the implementation process as mandated by the Executive Committee. This involved three distinct processes that we are reporting to this meeting for accountability and information.
11. First is the process of systematising the plan into a coherent and implementable framework of programmatic and organizational and operational objectives. This is called, obviously, the Programme Plan, although it includes operational objectives that are not programmatic. The process included grouping and prioritizing the mandates given at the General Council and the actions called before with a critical eye to ensuring that we had the capacity to carry out what was in the plan for a clear process to obtain that capacity before we proceed with any program or activity. It also included linking specific programs or activities rigorously to the vision of the plan and the impact and methods of evaluation and assessment (and at the same time) we have put in place the new way of working programmatically which the plan calls for. This includes new and integrative executive staff planning and team structure, such as the Executive Staff Council so that all aspects of the program were carried out in an integrated, collaborative and coordinated manner while maintaining the specific focus of each executive and the responsibilities.
12. Additionally, the implementation of a new role for the communications executive to include leadership for the operational aspects of the plan has been undertaken since February 2019 and as previously approved by the Executive Committee in 2018. Staff planning, monitoring, decision-making mechanisms and a systematic review of staff resources in order to assure maximization of staff capacities has been a key point of the process. This has included new ways of working to address some of the unresolved issues affecting the implementation of the Strategic Plan, such as database issues and significant issues with the Reformed Partnership Fund in relationship to accountability issues with Bread for the World (this we will comment on more significantly).
13. This process for the implementation of a new program planning, monitoring and evaluation structure and system as was called for in the plan involved the establishment of three program Reference Groups: Justice and Witness, Communion and Theology, and Mission and Ecumenical Engagement. These Reference Groups are responsible for overseeing the activities within the Strategic Plan. They come under their area of responsibility as outlined in the Implementation Plan: 2019-2024. The Strategic Plan is set until 2024 and therefore is general and opines basic directions. The Implementation Plan is specific, with detailed objectives which are measurable and express the desired outcome for each activity or

initiative. It is still detailed therefore and somewhat complex so in addition we've also created a summary or "user-friendly" introduction booklet to the Strategic Plan.

14. The Reference Groups are also mandated to create and oversee, with the help of the programme executives, specific working groups and networks to help carry out the objectives of the Strategic Plan. To ensure the coherence and coordination of the Programme Plan, the leadership of each of the three Reference Groups, together with the general secretary and the president, form the Strategic Plan Programme Group (SPPG). The SPPG receives, reviews, monitors and evaluates the reports of each of the Reference Groups and returns reports within the framework of the Strategic Plan to the Executive Committee through the general secretary. The SPPG is also responsible for certain aspects of the work which requires a more global perspective or overview of the programme. All three executive secretaries support the work of the SPPG. The SPPG is essential for ensuring that the program work is effectively monitored, coordinated and carried out in an interrelated and collaborative manner. The names of those serving on the reference groups in the SPPG were approved by the officers can be found in the Implementation Plan (see addendums).
15. The Reference Groups and the SPPG are hard at work, and the first report of the SPPG is appended here, and I will outline it's highlights below.
16. This new way of working replaces the former "core groups" of the Executive Committee. The purpose of the SPPG structure is to have broad and specialized leadership for the program work while allowing the Executive Committee to be fully focused on governance and vision. Please note in the Strategic Plan and Implementation Plan the Executive Committee recommendation for a mid-term evaluation. This has been included in the programme for 2021. The Executive will receive a mid-term review at that time that will allow the Executive Committee to recommend changes, updates and adjustments to the overall plan and working styles for the period 2022 to 2025 (as it would normally need to cover the period following the General Council up to the first meeting of the Executive Committee after the 2024 Council).
17. The third set of processes beyond the refining of the Programme Plan and putting in place the new ways of working has been the actual implementation process itself carrying out through specific programs and activities.
18. The Strategic Plan has, first, consolidation of the ongoing constitutionally-based vision, identity and purposes through our current commitments and, second, expanding our areas of activity and witness to have greater impact.
19. As mentioned above, considerable time and effort has been required in consolidating and attending to ongoing commitments, along with putting the new plan and structures in place. This included significant attention to unresolved issues of the past, some of which date before the move from Geneva.
20. The ongoing commitments to accompany regional councils, member churches, communications, ecumenical dialogues, publications, global peace and reconciliation initiatives in the Korean Peninsula, Colombia, Taiwan, Israel-Palestine and Cameroon, participation in WCC, partnership with CWM, follow-up to the Wittenberg Witness and the JDDJ, NIFEA and the GEM School among others were all contemplated in the Strategic Plan and where tended to or wrong with the implementation process and launch of new programs. These will be reported in the context of the SPPG and Reference Groups accountability reports which are appended.

21. In addition to the attention to resolving outstanding challenges and consolidating ongoing programs and priorities along with launching several new programs that since 2018 also saw the deepening of the WCRC presence and impact on the global ecumenical church scene with increased participation in significant Vatican events, racism and discrimination in the context of global migration and ecological and economic justice, as well as strengthening our ongoing participation into significant spaces in alliance and the Global Christian Forum.
22. Overall, I'm very pleased and gratified to report that the Strategic Plan and its implementation is fully engaged by the Communion on many levels and also has had an impact in giving focus to our global ecumenical contribution. One year from the approval of the plan, and we are well underway, although aspects of the operational plan and certain of the evaluation and reporting mechanisms are still a work in progress.
23. The report of the SPPG indicates strong affirmation for both the general direction and specific implementation of the plans. The executive summary of the report and the accountability reports of the Reference Groups, as appended, demonstrate much hard work and enthusiasm in embracing the plan and its vision. I want to pay tribute to the members of the Reference Groups, dozens of working groups, the SPPG and the WCRC staff who have brought us to this significant point. The vision and theological/faith witness embodied in the plan is being widely embraced and according to many reports inspiring several versions and churches to move forward as we seek to deepen our common witness as a confessing communion in a world fallen among thieves.
24. One consistent note of concern about the plan has been voiced at all the levels, and it has been ratified by our own experience of this last year and that is that the plan is both very comprehensive and visionary and at the same time overly ambitious given our current capacity and limited resources. And while as I will report below there is good (but not yet timely) progress being made on increasing executive staff capacity and gender equity, we have to admit that we have achieved such significant results in the last year only at the expense of undue pressure on our staff team.
25. The staff, sticking to the plan, pressed on with the three processes mentioned above and operated at the very edge and too often beyond the limits of our capacity, energy and health. The officers and SPPG, and of course executive staff together with me as general secretary, are clear that although we did attempt to focus and prioritize, we must do much more in order to keep our activities and reach within the healthy, responsible and reasonable limits of our human capacity. We are confident that we will be able to add staff capacity in the near future but until we do and of course even after that point we cannot continue to exact such a high toll on people's health and well-being. The 2019-2020 work plans will reflect changes so that the plan is carried out with integrity, new capacities are added and justice and healthy workloads are respected. The principle is to only implement the parts of the plan where resources are and where the capacity is not overstretched. The Reference Groups will be working with the SPPG and the Executive Staff Council and the general secretary to constantly review and re-prioritize our work so that we meet our most important objectives but do so in a way that is just and equitable.
26. The WCRC is the largest Protestant world communion and has the smallest infrastructure and staff. We have laid out a plan that takes our mandates seriously but has ordered them by strategic importance and capacity. The plan will only be implemented to the degree capacities allow.

27. The SPPG report is offered for information and comments. The summary document outlines the work of the Reference Groups and programme staff. As this is the first report, and implementation is very much a work in progress, we are moving into new ways of working together.
28. Each Reference Group received staff proposals based on the Strategic Plan as approved with additional input from working groups where appropriate. The Reference Groups also received reports about work carried out. The SPPG additionally received proposals for priority work for the 2019-2020. They approved and recommended proposals for the next five-year period with emphasis on the period up to and including 2021. The Reference Groups also proposed the programs and priorities for 2019-2020 in keeping with the overall plan. The SPPG, which as you will recall includes the president and the general secretary, then met to ensure the coherence and coordination of the program work, to make evaluative comments and recommendations and prepare a report for this Executive Committee.
29. The SPPG meeting was dynamic and inspiring. The SPPG was able to clarify roles, address priorities and significantly strengthen the programmes. The evaluation process and critical missiological reflection of the group lifted up the strategic imperatives within the plan and placed a very strong emphasis on focusing on the desired impact the programs are designed to achieve and to encourage moving away from simply proposing activities and events to being purpose-driven and lifting up the underlying vision and objectives of all that we do. Planning and evaluating must be tied to the purpose and impact not only the successful execution of a meeting, consultation or a bit. The key role of the regions in all aspects of programmes was strongly emphasized.
30. The SPPG specifically reviewed the programme plan for 2017 and affirmed it as the operational document for the implementation of the Strategic Plan, at the same time it was noting that there must be flexibility within the plan to deal with emerging issues to adapt to changing circumstances, although without overstressing our capacity or the limits of our resources.
31. The SPPG reviewed the interconnectedness of the Reference Groups' accountability reports according to the Strategic Plan's five interlocking dimensions, which are communion, justice, theology, mission and ecumenical engagement before defining action verbs from the Strategic Plan as seen as effectively driving the work, so it's been discerning, witnessing, confessing and being reformed. This framework was strongly affirmed and seems to be faithfully guiding the work.
32. In reviewing the accountability reports the SPPG has made specific recommendations as to how the reports can be more effectively presented in the future, with clear introductions to each area's work and emphasis on impact rather than activity. It is recommended that an evaluation of impact and results be included in each aspect of the work so that each report states what we had hoped to accomplish, or was actually done, and then evaluates the impact in summary form. Introductions to the accountability reports for each Reference Group will be refined as they explain the vision and goals and those will then form part of the user-friendly introduction to the Strategic Plan.
33. To conclude these general comments on the Strategic Plan and its process: the SPPG report strongly affirms the program and operations plan document as appended. The SPPG strongly affirms with recommendations and guidance for future reports the accountability reports of

the three Reference Groups as appended. The program plans as approved by the Reference Groups for 2019-2020 have been affirmed with the caveat to closely monitor staff capacity.

34. A key objective within the Strategic Plan is to increase the number of program executives as soon as possible to add two women from the Global South. This has been moving ahead by seeking support from partners for these positions. There are three possibilities under way, and it is hoped to report positive results very soon in the hope that at least one if not two appointments could be made in 2019.

Highlights of the Reference Group Reports

35. The Reference Groups reports reflect the programmatic work of the two programme executives and to a lesser extent the program work of the general secretary and communication and operations executive. The reports are appended, but I will lift up here the major programs and accomplishments since the last Executive Committee meeting. As noted above the last year has been intense with attending to winding up work from the past, attending to ongoing commitments, planning the future and launching key programs in the new plan.
36. Using those four categories I give the “headlines” of the work that falls under each Reference Group as already reviewed by the SPPG:

Justice and Witness

37. Recalling the overarching objective for the justice and witness interlocking dimension of the Strategic Plan:
38. To engage the whole communion to discern the signs of the times in order to effectively witness to transformative reformation in the areas of economic, social, gender and ecological justice, so that member churches will be better able to faithfully confess the God of Life in a world fallen among thieves ...will seek to deepen and strengthen ongoing commitment to justice while at the same time expanding and growing in accordance with the vision of the 2017 General Council.
39. Since the 2018 Executive Committee meeting, the justice and witness secretary together with many working groups and working closely with the communion and theology secretary have focused on translating the 2017 General Council vision and mandate into specific strategic global programs while working with specific regions to promote global impact.

RAN: Resisting Cultures of Discrimination, Authoritarianism and Nationalism

40. A very important new strategic emphasis emerging from the 2017 General Council and the Strategic Plan is addressing the global rise in structural dominance of racism, authoritarianism (often promoted through populist politics) and nationalism. The RAN: Resisting Cultures of Discrimination, Authoritarianism and Nationalism program kicked off in 2018 with two-part consultation featuring a dialogue between Dalit and African American theologians and activists.
41. The consultation worked with the objectives of:
- Conscientizing the membership of the WCRC through naming and understanding the new systemic and ideological formulations of the new political economy.
 - To create networks of resistance among and between Black and Dalit communities

- To assess whether a *process confessionis* is required for Reformed thinking on the church and the state.

42. The consultation resulted in:

- A message from the participants addressing the issues of cultures of discrimination, authoritarianism and nationalism from below
- Papers that will be published in the September 2019 issue of the Reformed Communion
- A network of Black and Dalit Theologians/Activists

43. As part of our regional strategy, the justice and witness secretary will be working closely with CANAAC so that this strategic program area can strengthen and focus CANAAC's very central role, while CANAAC helps facilitate the program for the whole communion.

44. This work, specifically with the repeated call to dismantle systemic racism and authoritarianism as a potential *status confessionis*, hopes to involve all member churches in the biblical-theological reading of the signs of the times, and is extremely, closely interlinked with theology, communion and mission.

Mission in the Context of Crisis and Marginalization

45. The "Mission in the Context of Crisis and Marginalization" programme will strengthen member churches in crisis situations that are aggravated by religious tensions (General Council Action 53) and empower them to participate in God's mission for justice, peace and reconciliation.

46. The programme will:

- accompany churches particularly in the Middle East, West Africa and Indonesia and support their work for justice, peace and reconciliation.
- establish a network for exchange, mutual learning and support between member churches in crisis situations that are aggravated by religious tensions.
- facilitate a process to develop mission strategies for conflict resolution, justice and peace.

47. A consultation is planned for the second half of 2019. The executive secretary for justice and witness has taken the lead in this process during the absence of Hanns Lessing.

Witness for Peace and Reconciliation

48. The justice and witness secretary has been actively involved in working on a transition process for the program work on peace on the Korean Peninsula and the Middle East to shift his desk under the direction of the Reference Group. This has involved the establishment of working groups and taking shared staff leadership for program work previously carried by the general secretary.

49. In the past year, this involved coordinating a major pastoral accompaniment visit to Iraq and follow-up on a significant international conference on religious contributions to peace and reconciliation in Kirkuk in 2020, as well as putting in place a plan for 2019-2020 to move forward accompaniment of the church in exile of Iran and mobilizing the member churches around the Palestine justice mandate from the 2017 General Council.

50. In helping the Communion discern the global *kairos* and provide theological resources for witnessing and confessing, the justice and witness area together with communion and theology, held a global consultation in the Philippines on "Critical Reflections on Empire."

The meeting reinvigorated the theological reading of global context. There will be a follow up consultation in 2019 where there will be publications, resources and study guides produced to aid the task of discerning, witnessing and confessing together.

51. Related was a consultation held with many of our Indonesian member churches to help further know, contextualize and live out the Accra confession. This was positive but shows the need for more specific resources in this area.

NIFEA: New International Financial and Economic Architecture

52. The justice and witness secretary together with the general secretary have put high priority on re-activating the WCRC's commitment to NIFEA, firstly among our concerns and secondly providing leadership to break the recent up rise in ecumenical global cooperation on and more the economic/ecological justice work to another level of global impact.
53. This has meant the re-activation of a global panel of experts with the World Council of Churches (WCC), Council for World Mission (CWM), and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF). The design of a three-year global advocacy foci and impacts. The ongoing work and realigning of the GEM School now moving into its fourth year.
54. Within the Communion we have focused on asking AIPRAL to provide the lead focus and have worked closely to address global issues while rooting them in the Latin American context and examples. The WCRC participated significantly in the G20 inter-religious meetings to influence the G20 meeting in Argentina. We are developing further strategic partnerships with CREAS and Christian Aid (UK) in this regard.
55. A WCRC working group is being formed to provide resources for our common call with strong leadership from AIPRAL.
56. Globally NIFEA will launch a campaign on just taxation and reparations. Just taxation will provide resources through reparations for climate and economic justice.
57. The Accra confession and Pope Francis' *Laudato Si* have strongly put economic and ecological justice at the very centre of the Christian faith.
58. As a communion, we need to re-double all efforts in the area of climate justice and economic justice. They are inseparably connected.
59. The NIFEA work within the communion is top priority. The ecological justice work must be more forcibly put forward with the imperatives to change the oppressive economic system that is destroying people and planet.

Gender Justice

60. The justice and witness secretary and the Gender Justice Working Group have put a priority on mobilizing the resources of the Theological Educational Scholarship Fund for women studying for ordination with great success after a period of slow use of the fund. The future of the fund and a new emphasis on accompanying women in theology is in place.
61. The justice and witness secretary and the Gender Justice Working Group are working to make visible and mobilize our Communion around the Faith Declaration on the Ordination of Women.

62. Special priority has been given to the drafting of a Communion-wide Gender Policy as mandated by the 2017 General Council. The first report of the Gender Justice Working Group is appended and will be a focus of discussion at this Executive Committee to consider the proposed Gender Policy draft.
63. Apart from these highlights, let me lift up again both the quality and impressive quantity of program work carried out by the program secretary since the last Executive Committee meeting.
64. The program team concept and Executive Staff Council concept have been fully achieved a high level of team work and collaboration and between the justice/witness and communion/theology work such as are seldom seen in global ecumenical organizations.

Communion and Theology

65. Since the last Executive Committee, the Communion and Theology Reference Group together with the communion and theology secretary have focused on the planning and expressing in program terms this program area.
66. The RAN program and Mission in the Context (etc.) programs are carried out collaboratively with the justice and witness secretary through the program team and therefore were mentioned above. The lead for the critical theological reflection on empire has been led by the communion and theology secretary.
67. To recall from the Strategic Plan, the overarching objective for theology is:
Hearing the cries of the wounded communities and engaging with them (GC action 21) the theological work of WCRC shall lead the whole communion in the theologically rooted processes of confessing the faith, drawing on the Reformed tradition and contextual theologies to address the present reality.
68. In this last year, significant work has been placed on the Global Institute of Theology (GIT), reactivating the publication of *Reformed World*, as well as the planning for the renewed development of global networks of theologians. There was a major evaluation of GIT and a new dean has been appointed, Hye-Ran Kim Cragg. Planning for GIT 2020 is underway.
69. The Strategic Plan overarching objective for mission is:
In witnessing to its call to communion and its commitment to justice, the WCRC will articulate a fresh vision of liberating discipleship that rejoices in Gods renewing presence in individual conversion and in social transformation and embraces the call to live out Gods mission in the face of idolatries and power.
70. The Mission in the Context of Crisis and Migration work is featured here as is planning for a major mission reflection and the Ruth Project in response to migration and human trafficking.
71. *Reformed World* has published a volume with the Lombard Prize winners' essays and others on the presentations made at the 2017 General Council. For 2019, the priority will be a re-activation of the editorial board and the articulation of the important role for *Reformed World* in light of the Strategic Plan.

Mission and Ecumenical Engagement

72. The ecumenical dialogue with the Roman Catholics is completed and the document is being readied for distribution and reception within the communion.

Ecumenical Dialogues

73. International Reformed-Anglican Dialogue (IRAD) is well underway and is opening new methods and foci for ecumenical dialogues by addressing mutual theological reflection and learning on the understanding of *koinonia*—communion—that not only helps move together towards greater unity by attending to disagreements but also support each other as we each face challenges with our understanding of communion within our own traditions.
74. The Reformed-Pentecostal Dialogue is underway and also is pressing to explore different understandings of mission that can have practical implications for the relationship between our communions.
75. A new dialogue and process of reconciliation and growth in understanding is being undertaken with the Mennonite World Conference and will address the painful truth, violence and brokenness of our common history from the side of the Reformed community, in order to focus on the movement towards common witness today.

Ecumenical Partnerships

76. A major accomplishment of the past year was the meeting in Notre Dame University with the five communions who embrace the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (JDDJ)—resolving to work together as five to build on the common agreement on the JDDJ in greater commitment to the real historic and ecclesial implications for common witness for justice and peace (see the appended statement from the meeting). A delegation representing the WCRC contributed significantly to this important step forward towards unity.
77. In a similar vein, the WCRC has set up a process of common staff meetings, and a small implementation committee with LWF to look towards concrete steps with implementation of the Wittenberg Witness.
78. The general secretary represents the WCRC on the WCC Reference Group for the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace, and the WCRC participates in the Taiwan Ecumenical Forum, the Ecumenical Forum on Korea, and Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum all led by the WCC.
79. Along with the CWM, the General Secretary participates in an annual gathering with the general secretaries of the United Evangelical Mission (UEM) and *Communauté d'Églises protestantes en Mission* (CEVAA).
80. Building strong relationships with the WSCF (World Student Christian Federation) are lifted up in our Strategic Plan, and the WSCF representatives participates actively in our program and planning.

Relationships with Ecumenical Organizations

81. The Strategic Plan proposed active ecumenical engagement at the global level to strengthen the global witness and impact of our objectives as a contribution to the wider ecumenical community in response to God's call and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We are now well placed with our participation in WCC, GCF and ACT Alliance, as well as the Conference of Secretaries of Christian World Communions and the JDDJ group to provide leadership to and learn from the most important global ecumenical bodies or forums.

International Reformed John Knox Center

82. The WCRC, and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches before it, have a very long, deep and historic relationship with the John Knox Center in Geneva. Over the past two years—and, in fact, since the WCRC left Geneva—the relationship has been more distant and our role in both the program life and governance of the Center has been diminished. The Center is facing many challenges financially and in terms of aging infrastructure. There had been tensions between the church related members of the association and the council and a new extremely ambitious redevelopment project was proposed without, in the view of many, sufficient consultation. Proposed changes to the constitution which would have made the WCRC relationship to the Center and its assets questionable prompted us to renew an active role in the governing bodies of the Center. The general secretary of the WCRC now sits on the committee and both he and Hanns Lessing are active in the association. We believe the Center is at a crucial turning point and the WCRC should remain active in the renewal of leadership and shaping the future direction.
83. We also note with regret that the president of the John Knox Center did not submit a report again this year nor has he communicated with us regarding his invitation to this meeting.

ACT Alliance Membership

84. The Executive Committee approved by email ballot the application for WCRC to join ACT Alliance. The general secretary participated in the last assembly in Uppsala in 2018. The application is under consideration. We believe this is an important forum for us to increase common ecumenical witness on the global level and bring the distinctive WCRC justice perspective to the challenges of global advocacy, development and peace and reconciliation from a church perspective emphasizing the voices from the Global South alongside the voices from large, northern-led diaconal agencies.

Global Christian Forum

85. The GCF is a relatively new but increasingly important space for global Christianity. It provides a space for faith sharing, dialogue and building mutual understanding between and among the “four pillars” of worldwide Christianity: Pentecostals, Evangelicals, the Roman Catholics and the members of the WCC. The WCRC has played an important role since the founding of the forum through the leadership of Rev. Dr. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson who has ably represented us on the steering committee. We thank him for his outstanding and prophetic leadership, vision and bridge building.
86. The GCF held its third global gathering in 2018 in Bogota, Colombia. There is an appreciable change in the openness of communication and level of mutual respect among the participants in the forum. There is still far to go to even more effectively address tensions and conflicts within the Christian family and further yet for common witness.
87. At the meeting a new secretary was appointed, succeeding Dr. Larry Miller who had in his turn provided exemplary leadership. Rev. Dr. Casely Essamuah, a Methodist from Ghana now living in the United States, has already begun to lead the GCF forward. Following the GCF Bogota gathering, the WCRC general secretary has joined the global steering committee and participated in its 2019 meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Taiwan Ecumenical Forum

88. In fulfilment of the mandate from the 2017 General Council which resolved to welcome and support the establishment of the Taiwan Ecumenical Forum, Collin Cowan and I were asked to serve as co-conveners of the TEF which we have done since 2017. The work has been intensive and has involved much dialogue and discussion in order to frame the

accompaniment of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT) in the context of a very difficult and dangerous conflict and tensions in North East Asia. The TEF focuses on the priority issues such as Indigenous peoples' rights, transitional justice and the future of Taiwan and the Taiwanese people in an ecumenical and regional context. The forum also aims to contribute to constructive dialogue with the China Christian Council (CCC) and The Three-Self Patriotic Movement. This dialogue has not been possible, and the very existence of the forum has been questioned by the CCC. WCRC role in accompanying the TEF has also been questioned by the CCC. We continue to engage and promote dialogue with both PCT and CCC.

Korean Ecumenical Forum

89. The WCRC actively participates at the request of our member churches in North and South Korea and the National Council of Churches in Korea (Korea) through the Ecumenical Forum on Korea. We maintain an active relationship with the Korean Christian Federation (KCF) in the North and actively promote the Intra Korean processes for a peace treaty and reunification as expressed in the 2018 Panmunjon Declaration. WCRC serves on the steering committee. The Executive Committee in its message stressed the importance of this prophetic action for peace in the context of seeking a world free of nuclear weapons.

Relations with Member Churches

Delegation to Iraq

90. The WCRC, in October 2018, led a high-level delegation to Iraq to express solidarity with Reformed Churches in the region. Given the issues faced by Iraq as a country in general and the Christian population in particular this was an important solidarity visit. The visit was made in collaboration with the Presbyterian Church (USA). The delegation included Najla Kassab, Chris Ferguson, Sara Lisherness (PC(USA)), Laurie Kraus (PC(USA)), Ibrahim Nsier (National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon), Tharwat Wabha, Philip Woods (PC(USA)), Elmarie Parker (PC(USA)) and Philip Vinod Peacock.
91. The delegation visited churches in the cities of Baghdad, Basra and Kirkuk and were witness to the life of the churches and the Christian community as well as the mission work that they engaged. The governor of Kirkuk invited the WCRC to conduct a peace and reconciliation consultation in Kirkuk which is being planned for 2020.

Equatorial Guinea

92. The Reformed Presbyterian Church of Equatorial Guinea is faced with major internal church conflicts and has asked the WCRC to lead a process of mediation and accompaniment. As the language of the country and church is Spanish a team was assembled of Spanish speakers with conflict transformation and church conflict experience (Dario Barolin, Coutinho Maravilhoso Moma and Valdir Franca) led by the WCRC general secretary to carry out an assessment visit accompanied by PC(USA) mission co-workers at the request of the church and make a mediation proposal. Unfortunately, we have still to gain the consent from both parties for ongoing mediation after the initial visit. This situation requires vigorous follow up.

Cameroon

93. In response to the emerging situation in Cameroon and the escalating violence and the threat of civil war, the WCRC has been in regular communication with the Presbyterian church in Cameroon and the council of churches along with other ecumenical partners including the WCC, CEVAA and the AACC and planned a staff level team visit in January 2019 around the election time in Cameroon. However, with the advice of our partners on the ground that determined that the time was too dangerous, the visit had to be postponed.

94. As the situation continues to deteriorate the WCRC with the same partners as mentioned above and the PC(USA) is now initiating an Ecumenical Working Group for Cameroon to be able to internationalize the issue. The initial meeting intends to meet at a location outside of Cameroon to be able to have as many voices and expressions as possible involved in creating a plan for solidarity and action responsive to the needs of the Cameroonian churches in the face of an extremely volatile and deadly human rights situation in the context of a deeply polarized conflict.

Colombia

95. The WCRC continues to accompany the Presbyterian Church of Colombia (IPC) in their peace work even as the peace agreements and the mechanisms of transitional justice are increasingly threatened by lack of government compliance with the peace plan. Violence and militarized confrontations continue to spiral upwards in the country side and human rights defenders and social movement leaders are being killed at a scandalous and intolerable rate. The WCRC supports ecumenical initiative like DIPAZ and the peace initiatives and programs of the Reformed University as well as the ongoing programs of the IPC Peace commission.

Witness at the Border

96. In order to bring Christian witness and solidarity to the situation of those seeking asylum at the Mexican-United States border the WCRC initiated a visit to the border followed by advocacy visits to Capitol Hill in Washington, DC. The Witness at the Border was held with the specific objectives of conscientizing our member churches and societies in which they find themselves over the issues involved. Making visible the multiple and underlying causes that make forced migration a growing reality in the region, the hardships faced by migrants on the way to the border and the laws that violate human rights. It worked with the further objective of weaving a wide ecumenical and social network as well as advocating in different areas so that the actions are not palliative but truly transformative. The Witness at the Border was intended to send out a strong message of the church's advocacy for human rights and particularly the rights of migrants and those seeking asylum.
97. The delegation included Chris Ferguson, Lisa Vander Wal, Douglas Leonard (WCC), Jennifer Flett (CWM), Dario Barolin (AIPRAL), Angela Martins (CANAAAC), Ryan Smith (PC(USA)), Ken Neeval (RCA), Melissa Stek (CRC), Amanda Craft (PC(USA)) and Philip Vinod Peacock.

PC(USA)/ECO

98. For nearly two years now, we have been acting as mediators between the Presbyterian Church (USA) and ECO: A Covenant Order of Presbyterians, two member churches who have had conflicts over congregational allegiances. The process has been going well, with both sides expressing satisfaction in the relationship being in a better place than before and with no new problems having since accumulated. A memorandum of understanding is nearing completion, which will codify the successful discussions, with only a few words yet to be settled.

Israel/Palestine

99. Action 55 of the 2017 General Council held in Leipzig, Germany, instructed the Secretariat of the WCRC to:
- Collect studies and materials that speak to the cry of the Palestinian people, and try to transform the conflict to make it a just and peaceful society, making them available to member churches; and
 - Undertake study and discernment, using the resources available from member churches and the ecumenical movement, regarding the theology that has been employed to

legitimate the oppression of the Palestinian people, recognizing that such a study may result in the need for prophetic action.

100. We have engaged a consultant to contact our member churches who have already published such material and put them together to form a study guide for the membership of the communion.
101. Further an initial visit is being planned to the region with a focus on a later high-level delegation to the region along with the Council for World Mission to engage in a face-to-face meeting. The specific impact of the meeting would be to make known the “cries of the Palestinian people” to the global community.
102. We support the theological and advocacy work of Kairos Palestine and the National Coalition of Christian Organizations of Palestine through the *Otto per Mille* funded peace and reconciliation program.

Regional Councils

103. The reports from the regional councils show active engagement and in several places key embracing of the regional councils’ special role in the Strategic Plan. We have accompanied the assemblies and special events of the councils and see renewed energy among them.
104. The Strategic Plan calls for a review by 2021 of the question of the number and configuration of regional councils.

CANAAC Assembly

105. As is fully covered in the CANAAC report to the Executive, a successful regional assembly was held last fall, electing new leadership and planning for new activities in line with the WCRC Strategic Plan. Both Philip Vinod Peacock and Phil Tanis were in attendance, with Philip making a presentation on the justice work of the organization, Phil providing support for the entirety of the assembly, along with communication work, and both presenting the Strategic Plan to the assembly. Phil has also provided some support for CANAAC communications since their assembly, as a new website was built (with generous assistance from the Christian Reformed Church in North America). Phil also continues as the staff liaison to CANAAC.

Strategic Mission Partnerships

Council for World Mission (CWM)

106. The WCRC continued with its strategic and focal partnership with the Council for World Mission. For the last two years we have worked on a renewed memorandum of understanding and help a second leadership summit to articulate our vision for common work together. This is an extremely important and dynamic relationship for WCRC as we are closely linked by both common member churches and a very tightly aligned common mission vision. CWM has generously provided one million pounds sterling in the past for a capital fund to stabilize WCRC finances and to form the basis for an income generating capital fund. In 2018 CWM reaffirmed their support with a generous annual contribution to ensure the ongoing justice work. We have also recommitted to joint planning and program work which we realize that in last few years has not been as active as had both hoped. Collin Cowan, CWM general secretary, and several senior staff played active roles in our strategic planning

process. A recent joint staff meeting led to a commitment to joint programmatic work between the WCRC and CWM in over ten areas of common priorities. The joint program work will include common work on discerning empire, theological networking and women's ordination. The CWM and WCRC general secretaries collaborate closely as co-conveners of the Taiwan Ecumenical Forum.

Otto per Mille/Tavola Valdese

107. The *Tavola Valdese*, through the *Otto per Mille* program generously make available 350,000 euros annually for specific service, humanitarian and peace and justice initiatives. We are in our final year of our first contract with *Otto per Mille*, and it has been a significant success for us. Not only has it provided significant funding for our priority justice work (most notably several NIFEA initiatives) but it has also allowed us to meaningfully engage in Global Peace Initiatives, including in Colombia, the Middle East, the Korean Peninsula, South Sudan and elsewhere. This support has allowed us to significantly impact and contribute the WCRC vision and justice focus to the world ecumenical world. *Otto per Mille* money is also currently the primary funding source for the Reformed Partnership Fund, and notably is a principle source for the important emergency relief and response funds we are able to share in times of disaster and humanitarian crises. A second, three-year contract has been agreed and will commence beginning in 2020. A special thank you to Claudio Pasquet and the Waldensian Evangelical Church for entrusting us with these funds, which are having such a positive impact in so many places.

108. In addition, we have been in dialogue with the *Tavola Valdese* with a view to opening a Reformed Community office in Rome as a focal point for relations with the Vatican and international ecumenical events in Rome. The Waldensian Church has generously offered to provide the office space, a church space for large public events and to assign staff to represent us in events and relationships in Rome.

Evangelisches Missionswerk (EMW)

109. Similarly, we have successfully concluded one contract period with EMW and begun finalizing the next one. These monies are utilized primarily in mission-focused projects, regional council development and our internship program. In wrapping up the first contract by the end of 2019, it should be noted—and thanks given—to EMW for allowing us to utilize some of the money in our strategic planning process, as well as for the “Church, State, and Politics” conference being held on Saturday in Horgen, as a part of our Executive meeting.

110. A summit we hosted with EMW's leadership last summer underlined the importance of this partnership, with them noting that they were “very satisfied that this common journey continues as a companion on the way”—saying that it is indeed a partnership that can continue to be expanded and deepened. 2019 is a bridging year between the conclusion of the old contract and the start of the next, which we anticipate will be settled for the period 2020-2025.

Bread for the World/Brot für die Welt (BfdW)

111. I am less pleased to have to report that while we remain aspirationally in partnership with *Brot für die Welt* (BfdW), we are still working to finally conclude several old contracts. This has been an extended process, with BfdW having provided funding for several projects to us over these last few years, including monies for the Reformed Partnership Fund, the General Council and the Global Institute of Theology (GIT). The funding for travel support to General Council delegates from the Global South was finally closed in February. The three contracts still in process are one for the GIT and two for the Partnership Fund. We hope that

these will be successfully finished very soon but understand that there are several approval levels within BfdW.

112. Until these contracts are wrapped up, we have agreed with BfdW that we will not proceed on any other funding fronts. This has meant that money for the Partnership Fund has not been forthcoming (and we thus rely on others to provide it currently). But it has not meant that we have ceased planning with them. I had an enlightening and encouraging talk with Cornelia Füllkrug-Weitzel, BfdW president, this spring, and we foresee several exciting possibilities for partnerships. Once the contracts are settled we will hold a summit to agree broad terms and then proceed with developing specific programs and projects with them.

Finance

113. The financial situation of the WCRC as the appended Finance Report shows real progress and stability with the increase of several membership contributions. 2018 finished with a small surplus. Notwithstanding significant donations to our core budget, including subsidies for staff salaries notably from the Church of Westphalia and CWM the projections for 2019 show that we continue to struggle to meet our core budget expenses for staff, office and governance every year.
114. The general treasurer notes the strong project fund contribution and the fundraising initiatives that are underway. Great thanks to the general treasurer and to Gerhard Plenter and Anna Krüger for the work of the strong financial results.
115. The report underlines the imperative to address the ongoing structural challenges of the core budget.
116. The program funds are solid and also at a limit that until we increase staff capacity we cannot responsibly expand our programs even if so doing would increase contributions to our core budget.

Reformed Partnership Fund

117. This last year has seen us take a closer look at the Reformed Partnership Fund (RPF). After the challenges we have had in properly utilizing the funding from Bread for the World, and with a new Strategic Plan approved, we thought it an opportune moment to hire an outside consultant to review how the RPF functions, including the staff it demands and its strategic benefits.
118. Asir Ebenezer, now general secretary of the National Council of Churches in India, was the consultant. He spent a week at the Hannover office in September doing a comprehensive assessment of the RPF and issued a report with several recommendations. His overall assessment was that the RPF “can be a useful instrument in accompanying the mission of the member churches particularly the smaller churches and churches with no direct access to resource partners.”
119. The report will go to the Partnership Fund Committee at their meeting this week for review. It is anticipated that much of it will be implemented in the coming months, under the direction of the executive secretary for communion and theology and with support from the executive secretary for communications and operations.

120. Even as the RPF was reviewed and despite less money for its operation in the last year, it did continue to support a number of projects. With money from the Evangelical Church of Westphalia and the *Otto per Mille* program of the *Tavola Valdese*, both of whom we thank for their continuing support, the fund assisted in several emergency responses, including flooding in Kerala, India; Tsunami Sulawesi in Indonesia and Cyclone Idai in east Africa. These emergency grants are designed to provide rapid assistance in the aftermath of disasters, granting up to 7500 euro to member churches. The RPF was also able to fund a peace building and conflict transformation project in South Sudan, a women's education program in South Africa and support theological dialogues.
121. Werner Joecker continues to provide able administrative support to the functioning of the RPF and has prepped more than a dozen applications to be considered by the Partnership Fund Committee at its meeting this week.
122. The Partnership Fund continues to be an important means through which we can strengthen our communion.

Staffing

Current Staff

123. Katrina Mertz, Anna Küger and Werner Joecker continue in their administrative roles. Amritha Bosi Perumulla has returned from parental leave. We thank Emelda Ndipewah for her work in Amritha's absence.
124. As of February 2019, Phil Tanis has assumed his expanded role as executive secretary for communications and operations following the Executive Committee decision last year for his second five-year term. Thanks to Phil for his significant contributions in a new and challenging position.
125. Gerhard Plenter continues as the financial coordinator on the basis of a volunteer consultancy. We extend great thanks to him for his extraordinary contribution.
126. Philip Vinod Peacock is in his second year as executive secretary for justice and witness. Great thanks to him for his hard work and contribution to the strategic planning process and advancing the justice work. The team relationship with the communication and theology secretary has worked very well.
127. Hanns Lessing is in his second year as executive secretary for communion and theology. He has made a strong contribution to the strategic planning process and the program planning work as well as advancing the ecumenical dialogues, relationships with German churches and as part of his role attending to significant and difficult issues inherited from 2013 concerning the reporting to Bread for the World and the Partnership Fund which we have discussed above. The JDDJ and Wittenberg Witness follow-up have also been his responsibility. The team relationship with justice and witness has gone well. Hanns is currently on medical leave until June 5. Great thanks to Hanns for his work and contribution.
128. The staff as a team are dedicated and committed and we are indeed fortunate to have them.
129. As part of the Strategic Plan review, we are re-examining the Reformed Partnership Fund as mentioned above and have enlisted the services of a consultant to review our current staffing model and structure to maximize staff capacities and to ensure that the

configuration of staff resources is the best placed to achieve our organizational objectives. The consultant has finished his first report and this will be discussed by the Executive Staff Council in early June.

Increasing Staff Capacities

130. We are committed to increasing our executive staff capacity by two full time women from the Global South. The process has been to seek special partnerships or staff secondments rather than general contributions to an already challenged core budget.
131. We have created concept notes and basic position descriptions for the two positions. We have three possible sources for funding, with one coming from the PC(USA) and Presbyterian Women. This has been a long process of dialogue but with real commitment and we expect to have positive results soon in this year. The other would be a shared initiative with UEM with Bread for the World funding. The third option is to submit a direct request for funding to Bread for the World. This requires first closing our outstanding contracts with them, which we expect to be completed within the next month.

Interns

132. Our internship program continues to provide diversity and depth to our office staff and provide excellent experiences to young church leaders. We continue with two interns in the office at all times, though now one intern begins her service in January while the other in September, thus providing continuity in the program. We are grateful to EMW, Presbyterian Church of Korea and the Evangelical Reformed Church of Bern, all of whom provide financial support to the program.

Gender Policy

133. The General Council required the WCRC General Secretariat and Executive Committee to prepare a Gender Policy with implantation strategy and accountability metrics by 2019. The first draft of the Gender Policy is being presented at the 2019 Executive Committee meeting.

Ethical Investment

134. The Finance Committee has been developing an Ethical Investment Policy. The officers reviewed the progress at their meeting in November, and additional work has been done since. It will be presented to the Executive for consideration later this week.

Communications

135. The last year was focused on maintaining a consistent presence online, reporting on the many activities of the organization and developing new communication materials based on the Strategic Plan.
136. An initial WCRC Strategic Plan document in English is ready for the Executive Committee. It provides a brief overview of the work based on the Strategic Plan for the coming several years. This document will be utilized in a number of ways, including forming the basis for Power Point presentations, smaller brochures and a redeveloped website. It will also be translated into several languages (requests are welcome!).
137. Social media continued its steady growth year-to-year. Those “liking” or “following” the WCRC Facebook page has grown 20% from March 2018 to March 2019 while the weekly

average “reach” has grown 12% and those “engaged” by 60%. The increased growth in the “reach” and “engagement” over the “likes/follows” indicates that those interested in the WCRC are even more interested than previously, as they interact with the posts, whether through comments, reacting or sharing.

138. In addition to the main WCRC Facebook page (which is primarily English, though articles in other languages are also linked to from that page), a French-language CMER page continues to be used, along with (sporadically) a German page (which had been established for the General Council). Pages for the GIT and Theology office are also maintained and utilized when there is pertinent information.
139. Twitter, which is fully multi-lingual, has seen slower growth, but more attention is being given to it with liking and retweeting partner and member posts to increase engagement. Both Twitter and Facebook are posted to at least daily (except on the weekends).
140. The monthly WCRC eNewsletter features articles posted to the WCRC website from the previous month and continues to attract new subscribers each month. It is sent not only to subscribers but to all member churches (and usually multiple people within each church). The website itself is maintained in eight languages (Arabic, Bahasa Indonesia, English, French, German, Korean, Mandarin and Spanish). A redesign of the website is planned to now happen later this year, based on the Strategic Plan.
141. *Reformed Communiqué*, the WCRC’s thrice-yearly print newsletter, contains the best articles posted to the website in each edition, along with an original message from the general secretary and several pieces about member churches. The *Communiqué* contains articles in the eight languages of the website.
142. *Reformed World*, the WCRC’s theological journal, is a joint effort between the offices of communion/theology and communication/operations, with the latter handling the production and distribution of the publication. Due to other demands, its publication was suspended last year. It is anticipated that a new editorial board will be constituted this year, and that the publication will better support the objectives of the Strategic Plan moving forward. The first edition of this year will feature the Lombard Prize winning essays and is currently in production.

Database

143. The database has been a long-standing operational process. While it is in better condition than it has been since the move from Geneva, it is still not in a state that it can be fully utilized to its potential and it is now planned to move the data to a new system, CiviCRM in the coming year with a special grant from the EKD.
144. In Geneva, the WCRC shared a database system with the World Council of Churches (WCC) and other organizations within the Ecumenical Centre. This system, however, was bound to the WCC and could no longer be utilized after the move. In addition, the heavy staff turnover and focus on the move meant that the upkeep of the data was not properly attended to for some time.
145. This thus presented two challenges as the WCRC settled in Hannover: 1) the need for a new database system and 2) outdated data. Consulting with several member churches, the

WCRC decided on Salesforce, a for-profit global customer relationship management (CRM) system, which it has used for the last three years.

146. While the structure of the data was cleaned up in the transition to Salesforce and much of the data itself updated in and around the 2017 General Council (as well as through ongoing work with member churches), there remains much data maintenance work to do. In addition, Salesforce has been found to be too business-oriented for the WCRC's needs and budget, as Salesforce enhancements and consultants are geared toward for-profit companies rather than non-profit organizations, especially in Germany.
147. In light of this the WCRC has explored options to Salesforce, again consulting with member churches, and has decided to move its database to CiviCRM, a web-based, open source CRM system dedicated to ensuring "all organizations—regardless of their size, budget, or focus—have access to an amazing CRM to engage their contacts and achieve their missions."
148. Given its dedication to non-profit organizations, it's no surprise that CiviCRM also offers the necessary enhancements to meet the needs of the WCRC; not only is it a cloud-based database but it will handle email newsletters, event management, membership invoicing, online donations/payments and subscription management, and it will also seamlessly integrate with the WCRC's website.
149. Moving to CiviCRM thus will provide the WCRC with a fully functioning CRM, not just a database, integrating systems that are now separate. The WCRC will also take the opportunity to do a thorough updating and cleaning of its data while it is moved from Salesforce to CiviCRM and will put in place global systems that allow for WCRC regional bodies to assist in the upkeep of the data, as well as utilize the system's functions.
150. An application to the EKD for funding assistance on this project is pending at the time of writing, but initial discussions with EKD have given us great hope that the grant will be awarded. Anticipating this work will commence with a Bonn-based consultant later this year, preparatory work for the move will begin in the summer.
151. An added aspect of this project is that it will be an ecumenical effort. With the financial support of the EKD, the WCRC is inviting the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE) and the Conference of European Churches (CEC), along with several member churches, to join in the database project with us, allowing us to pool resources while meeting each organization's specific needs and explore possibilities of future data sharing and cooperation.

Future Meetings

2020 Executive Committee

152. The member churches in South Africa, led by the UPCSA, have invited us to hold the 2020. The dates are INSERT DATES. The exact venue will be announced soon. This invitation has been warmly accepted by the officers.

2021 Executive Committee

153. We have received an invitation from Indonesian member churches to host the 2021 Executive Committee.

2024 General Council

154. It is time to begin the 2024 General Council planning process. A letter has been sent out to member churches asking them to consider hosting the General Council and explaining the expectations of the host church or region.
155. Several member churches in Asia have been approached but so far there has not been a clear expression of interest.
156. The officers have recommended beginning the process of setting the General Council Planning Committee to begin work in 2020 even as the venue is being sought.

General Secretariat and Officers

157. The officers meet by Skype periodically throughout the year and had a face-to-face meeting in Hannover in November 2018. It has requested that the GS and President send regular update reports to the Executive Committee throughout the year. This we will gladly do.
158. As general secretary, I have represented the WCRC through visits to member churches in the Czech Republic, United States, Argentina, Colombia, Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Equatorial Guinea, Rwanda, Singapore, Italy, Indonesia and Mexico. I have participated in ecumenical initiatives with the GCF, ACT Alliance, WCC, CWM and others. Additionally, I have accompanied churches in times of conflict. Working in this way to strengthen the communion and contribute the WCRC perspective and passion for justice to the wider family.
159. As more of the peace and reconciliation and regional work is expressed through program areas, I will be taking a different role in the peace and reconciliation work in Israel-Palestine, the Middle East, Colombia and the Korean Peninsula and South Sudan.
160. I continue to carry lead regional relations with the Middle East, Latin America and Pacific.
161. It is important for me to focus more on the leadership within the Hannover office and globally to focus on communication-wide representation and strengthening by devolving much of my heavy program responsibilities to the program staff as capacity allows.
162. The new responsibilities assumed by Phil Tanis in the area of operations will also allow an increased focus in my role as general secretary.
163. The officers have played a vital role in leadership and have represented the WCRC regionally at key events and regional councils. A special mention of the role of our president, Rev. Najla Kassab, who has traveled, written, preached and prayed, conveying her strong vision of WCRC's role and mission.
164. Again, special gratitude to our general treasurer.
165. To the Executive Committee who with the officers have played a key role between meetings in the strategic planning, reference group and working group structures.

Conclusion

166. We have put in place a solid vision and program plan. We are attending to inherited administrative and financial challenges. We are having a global impact. We need urgently to attend to our financial stability and our staff gender balance.
167. We are accompanying each other faced with a world of scandalous injustices to people and planet.
168. We have set in place processes to attend to the problems of the past and effectively meet challenges of the future.
169. The staff and interns, the Executive, the officers, Reference Groups, networks, regional councils—we are living into the fullness of a global *koinonia*—we have a long way to go but thanks be to the God of Life by whose grace we are fully engaged in discerning, witnessing, confessing and reforming as a global *koinonia* called to communion and committed to justice, confessing to the God of Life in a world fallen among thieves.

**Addendum:
Accountability Report
Justice and Witness**

Introduction

Three important pillars have shaped the justice work of our Reformed Family

1. Reading the signs of the times as the first steps in understanding and discerning the will of God and where we have to come together in collaboration with God's plan. Reading the signs of the times is the imperative that Jesus calls his disciples into and implies that we must address questions of structural inequality in the world. To circumvent this is to avoid the roots of the problem and is a refusal to allow the radically inclusive love of God to reach all of God's creation.
2. Justice issues are all interconnected. They cannot be separated and treated individually but is undergirded that the prerequisite of true peace is inclusive social, political, ecological and economic justice
3. The mission of the church can be summarized in working with God in building the "Kin-dom". To build the kin-dom is to be committed to the building of just and inclusive communities that are alternative spaces of resistance and hope in the midst of Empire that turns us against each other and breaks solidarity and human community. Specifically, this means that that justice has to be at the core of the theology we produce to help churches in their mission. Justice has to be at the core of our passion to become a communion. It further means that there is a necessity to forge a communion that has justice at its very heart.

With this background the General Council 2017 resolved that the primary areas that drive the justice work of the WCRC will be economic justice, ecological justice, gender justice and inclusive communities (Action 23).

Overarching Objective

The Strategic Plan 2018-2024 of the WCRC stated that the overarching objective for Justice would be that the WCRC will seek to engage the whole Communion to discern the signs of the times in order to effectively witness to transformative reformation in the areas of economic, social, gender and ecological justice so that member churches will be able to faithfully confess to the God of life in a world fallen among thieves (John 10:10).

It further stated that the WCRC will seek to deepen and strengthen its existing commitments to justice while at the same time expanding and growing in accordance with the vision of the General Council 2017.

The Justice and Witness desk of the WCRC seeks to work both intersectionally and collaboratively. In its intersectional work it seeks to not only hold the four areas of justice work together but to also engage critically and creatively with the theology and communion desk. In the strategic plan 2018-2024, and in particular response to the General Council 2017, the General Secretariat evolved a Programme Desk that would work on cross cutting dimensions of work together.

In the strategic plan it stated that

The WCRC programme desk will hold an annual event beginning in 2018 that highlights an issue that cuts across several of the interlocking dimensions.

The three areas that the Programme Desk worked together since the General Council were

Race, Authoritarianism and Nationalism

The Strategic Plan stated that:

- a) In response to the rise of systems and structures that threaten human beings and the whole creation and in the midst of rising authoritarian and populist ideologies the WCRC will seek to critically engage with the issue of nationalism, rising fundamentalism and authoritarianism and how these are perceived from below. It will particularly consider how these are being played out in the Middle East, South Asia and the North American contexts and how these impacts other regions of the world.
- b) The WCRC will seek to conscientize its membership through naming and understanding the new systemic and ideological formulations of the new political economy.
- c) It will seek to strategically link as well as work towards creating networks of church leaders, theologians, activists, children, youth/young adults and the elderly so as to be able build resistance movements.

In implementing this objective, the Programme Desk organized a two-part consultation in December 2018 in Bangalore, India and Bangkok, Thailand that sought to bring together activists, ideologues and theologians from among Black and Dalit communities that will think together on ways to name as well as address the present rise of fundamentalism and authoritarianism. The first part will be an exposure to Dalit reality in India followed by a consultation in Thailand. The consultation will seek to evolve a position paper on Resisting Cultures of Discrimination, Authoritarianism and Nationalism from below.

The consultation worked with the objectives of:

1. Conscientizing the membership of the WCRC through naming and understanding the new systemic and ideological formulations of the new political economy.
2. To create networks of resistance among and between Black and Dalit communities
3. To assess whether a process of confession is required for Reformed thinking on the church and the state.

The consultation resulted in:

1. A message from the participants addressing the issues of cultures of discrimination, authoritarianism and nationalism from below
2. Papers that will be published in the September 2019 issue of the Reformed Communion
3. A network of Black and Dalit Theologians/Activists

Strengthening Communion

The WCRC recognizes that:

- a) At the core of the identity of the WCRC is our self-understanding of being a communion and that division and separation is scandal. In this context we seek to address all that threatens to divide us particularly the issue of human sexuality by creating covenantal spaces for constructive dialogue.
- b) To develop a method of talking about human sexuality that is respectful, just and able to bring everyone to the table.

With this objective the Programme Desk of the WCRC held a consultation in Chennai in November 2017.

The consultation affirmed the following commitments:

- Commit to the Bible
- Commit to critical Reformed theological engagement
- Journeying together seeking God's voice
- Commit to the radical hospitality that Jesus called us to
- Commit to continued conversation
 - respect
 - love
 - trust
 - listening to a variety of voices including those most affected
- Commit to praying for and with one another

Mission in the context of Crisis and Marginalization

The Strategic Plan recognized that

- a) Many of our member churches live and witness in a context where they are minorities and suffer persecution. The WCRC is committed to working to establish a framework for the peaceful co-existence and protection of the rights of the minorities.
- b) It further acknowledged that many of our member churches are on the frontlines of peace processes and we therefore seek to strengthen the activities of our member churches around peace building, reconciliation and mission.
- c) And it sought solidarity with our member churches and other communities who live in contexts of religious violence.

To this end a consultation on Mission in the context of crisis and marginalization is being planned to be held between the 7th and the 11th of November 2019 and a working/planning group has already been set up to work towards this.

Further a consultation on reconciliation and peace is being planned in Kirkuk, Iraq (on invitation of the governor) for 2020.

NIFEA

In its collaborative work it seeks to work with similarly minded ecumenical organizations and other partners. A major part of this work is the NIFEA process.

Objectives: NIFEA

1. The WCRC will advocate for a democratic global system of economic governance through partnerships with like-minded ecumenical organizations, people's movements and civil society networks. This will be done through building resistance movements by coordinated campaigns and with participation at the local, national, regional and international levels.
2. By 2024 the WCRC will have equipped its congregations for worship, study, political and economic action by specifically working in the regions.
3. The WCRC will continue to support, strengthen and deepen the curriculum and participation in the Governance, Economics and Management (GEM) School.

GEM School

Realizing that our churches' ethical, moral and theological perspectives on the global economy have a minimal impact on financial and economic policies, business practices and ways of thinking. The GEM school was initiated as an attempt to build competencies in global economics in the churches. The aim of the GEM school is to build economic literacy within churches by equipping participants with the tools and language to effectively advocate for urgent transformation in the global financial and economic realm. The primary objective of the GEM school is to develop economic empowerment for transformation within the ecumenical movement.

Objectives

The School is held with the following objectives in mind.

1. To identify theological starting points for economic justice and to understand the nature and logic of the relationship between theology, ethics and economics.
2. To provide a basic understanding of mainstream economic thinking
3. To identify, relativize and contextualize methodologies and normative fundamentals of economics.
4. Widen the horizon of economics by introducing ecological, feminist and other pluralistic approaches.

Third GEM School in Mexico City, Mexico

The second GEM school was held in Mexico City, Mexico between the 19th of August and the 1st of September bringing together seventeen participants for a ten-day programme. Rev. Chris Ferguson and Rev. Philip Peacock served as faculty bringing in the WCRC perspectives to the NIFEA process.

GEM School Evaluation

The respective coordinating staff of the WCRC, WCC and CWM had a GEM school evaluation and planning meeting. The major recommendations that evolved were a streamlining of the GEM school curriculum in order to meet the objectives of the GEM school. The evaluation also called for an overhauling of the GEM school faculty.

Fourth GEM School, Jakarta, Indonesia

A fourth GEM school is in the process of being planned in Jakarta, Indonesia in the last two weeks of August 2019.

Coordination of Regional Activities

As part of the ongoing process of NIFEA the WCRC is committed to strengthening the work in the regions around economic and financial architecture. To this end the WCRC supported a process on Ethics, Economics and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean along with the regional ecumenical centre (CREAS)¹.

¹ CREAS is a multidisciplinary ecumenical organization of Christian professionals whose mission is to strengthen the capacity of the ecumenical movement, churches and social organizations in the promotion of human, civil, political, economic, social, cultural and environmental rights. It contributes to the scope of this mission through collaborative actions, capacity development and knowledge production to generate and sustain processes of change in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

G20 Inter-religious meeting and Ethics and Economy Dialogue

CREAS, in partnership with the Secretariat for Latin America and the Caribbean of the Social Pastoral – Caritas (SELACC), The Department of Justice and the Solidarity of the Latin American Episcopal Advisory Board (DEJUSOL- CELAM) the International Program on Democracy, Society and New Economics of the University of Buenos Aires (PIDESONE – UBA/Seube) and World Network of Ethics (Globethics) organized a high level dialogue in preparation for advocacy leading up to and during the G20 meeting in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 2018. The goal of the consultation was to contribute to the multidisciplinary, ethical-economic reflection from a human rights perspective with the presence and active leadership of AIPRAL. The WCRC supported the meeting through its partner CREAS

Objectives of the Meeting

The objectives of the consultation were to

1. Create spaces for inter-institutional and inter-disciplinary reflection and analysis.
2. To promote inter-institutional dialogue among organizations, academia, social and religious leaders with public bodies and governments at the national, regional and international levels within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 and the road to the G20 meeting in Argentina in 2018
3. Form a group of experts in Latin America and the Caribbean who will provide advice and recommendations to the different social and religious leaders from human rights-based perspective.

Rev. Chris Ferguson, General Secretary and Rev. Philip Peacock, Executive Secretary for Justice and Witness brought the meeting's attention to the premises and goals of the NIFEA process to this important consultation.

NIFEA Core Committee Meeting

In preparation for the meeting of the Global Ecumenical Panel on a New International Financial and Economic Architecture which was to be held in New York on the 21st and 22nd of April 2018 an ad hoc panel was put into place.

The Objective of the Ad Hoc Panel were:

1. To evaluate the NIFEA process and specific programmes
2. To prepare directions and perspectives that should be pursued at New York
3. To discern programmatic directions for the WCRC NIFEA work which may also inform the Strategic Planning Process of the WCRC

The Proposed Outcomes were:

1. A clear direction for the WCRC work
2. A NIFEA working document in preparation for New York and beyond. It is envisaged that this document will both evaluate the NIFEA process so far as well as propose future programmatic directions.

The meeting met in Hannover on the 2nd and 3rd of April 2018 and brought together five persons (one absentee due to illness) to discuss and deliberate NIFEA process and enable the WCRC to strategically plan for the NIFEA Panel meeting to be held in New York as well as to incorporate these insights into WCRC's own strategic planning process.

NIFEA Panel Meeting

The 3rd meeting of the Ecumenical Panel on a NIFEA took place in New York to connect with the United Nations 3rd Economic and Social Council Forum on Financing for Development (FfD) which took place from 23-26 April 2018 at the UN headquarters.

Following two meetings in August 2013 and January 2014, the Ecumenical Panel on a NIFEA produced the report titled, "Economy of Life for All Now: An Ecumenical Action Plan for a New International Financial and Economic Architecture". The NIFEA Plan maps out areas for advocacy and engagement by churches in the areas of financial sector regulation, public finance and debt, and global economic governance, with a view to transforming the international financial architecture by relinking finance to the real economy, countering greed and embedding economy in society and ecology.

Since it was drawn up in January 2014, there have been significant and interconnected developments in global economic, political, social and ecological landscapes that bear on the NIFEA Plan. The NIFEA Ecumenical Panel met with the following objectives

Objectives:

1. To analyse the signs of the times for the economy and the earth
2. To identify emerging and persisting elements of economic and climate injustice and the key issues ahead
3. To set up a process to update the NIFEA Plan, especially the priority actions, in light of the above and our findings so far
4. To strategise new actions and partnerships as we advocate the analysis and transformation of NIFEA

The 3rd Meeting of the NIFEA Panel

The third meeting of the NIFEA panel met in New York City between the 21st and 22nd of April 2018. In addition to the NIFEA panel members also present were the General Secretaries of the WCRC, CWM and LWF. As the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches was unable to be present due to personal reasons he sent his representative. Also present were representatives from the Roman Catholic Church and Non-Governmental Agencies and Social Movements. The meeting produced future directions and programmatic trajectories. It also discussed and came to agreements on the following:

1. The importance of creating a culture of accountability, putting financial observatories in place, and developing new, just financial structures
2. Forgiveness as the starting point to pave the way for reconciliation, restitution and recovery
3. Strengthening the coalitions of different movements (economical, ecological, social) and not compartmentalizing them; linking poverty, ecology, and inequality as a single issue
4. Encouraging governments to invest in ecological advancements
5. Mobilizing by informing communities, bringing shocking data to the fore to stir people into action
6. Working on taxation issues at the national and global level; joining with other civil society groups like Oxfam
7. Changing the narrative by working together with the sciences and other faiths, with a sense of humility and openness, and joining forces with particular social movements which are our allies

8. Changing our own lifestyles by examining gender justice and ecological living within the Church
9. Continuing to rally against things that obscure the Gospel

These recommendations of the NIFEA panel were worked into an action plan for the next three years by the respective staff of the WCRC, WCC and CWM.

Campaign on Just Taxation and Reparation

The Action plan of the NIFEA panel called for a campaign on Just Taxation and Reparations which will be launched in June this year. Preparations for the campaign are underway including a planning meeting in March 2019 with the objectives of

- Deepening churches' understanding of tax justice and reparations as a means to tackle worsening socio-economic inequalities and ecological challenges, not least climate change
- Sharing, exchanging and learning from church engagement and initiatives from around the world to promote just taxation and reparations
- Developing a joint ecumenical campaign or action on just taxation and reparations

The consultation will develop an ecumenical campaign to stimulate church actions for tax justice and reparations.

A campaign on tax justice under the banner of "Zacchaeus Tax" is underway and the intention is that one of the launching sites would be at the UN High Level meeting on the SDG's in New York in July 2019.

The justice section of the strategic planning document sought to work with the four verbs of Discerning, Witnessing, Confessing and Reforming. The following sections of the accountability report will follow the same format as the strategic plan as a template for reporting.

Discerning

Vision and Mission Consultation

The justice dimensions of the strategic plan were particularly strengthened by a Vision and Mission consultation held in March 2018 with the specific objectives of

1. Providing a meta-reading of the President's and General Secretary's report and the actions of the General Council 2017 in order to insightfully reflect on and shore up the vision implicit in these into a consolidated language.
2. Producing an advisory document that will offer a contextual basis, theological vision and programmatic direction toward strategic planning for the next seven years.

The consultation not only fed directly into the strategic plan but also worked to specify the direction of the justice work of the WCRC.

The consultation was intended to bring the three streams of finding a contextual basis, a theological vision and a programmatic direction into a consolidated document. It worked through short white paper presentations and plenaries that foregrounded the various perspectives. Three working groups, each working on one particular aspect was established. Each group had a listener who would serve as part of a writing group. Working groups worked to develop the trajectories into concrete language that was constructive and contributed to the larger strategic planning process. Sufficient effort was taken to ensure cross-fertilization of the various streams and work them together into an integrated

whole. A listening/writing group worked towards gleaning from the different groups and worked the results into a document by the end of the consultation.

Critical Reflections on Empire

It is strategically significant for all the programmatic work of the WCRC to use the lens of empire as a means for understanding the context. The WCRC will therefore strengthen and deepen a critical theological study process of engaging empire in the present context. This will be undertaken through an intersectional lens by organizing consultations and conferences, particularly in the regions. These will be done with a view to the establishing of resources which foreground voices from the Global South on empire and:

1. to enhance regional critical thinking on empire and encourage cross fertilization among the regions;
2. to engage in campaigns that highlight the continuing legacy of empire in our societies and congregations. The WCRC will seek to live out the Accra Confession by concentrating on the specific ways in which empire changes who we are and the contexts in which we live. It will also seek to work with alternatives and seek to lift up those areas and contexts in which alternatives are being worked out;
3. to grow and expand our continuing work around economic justice by engaging in study processes in which the interconnections between macroeconomic processes and everyday lived reality are exposed. This will particularly seek to engage with the issues of land, labour, unemployment, the economic underpinnings of race, wages, etc.

Critical Reflections on Empire

A joint programme office consultation was held in Manila to enable thinking on current reflections on Empire. See the report of the Theology and Communion Desk for further details.

Regional Consultation on Empire

A regional consultation on Empire and Reading the Accra Confession was held in Jakarta, Indonesia at the end of October 2018 with the following objectives

1. Understanding the message of the Accra Confession in the current global geo-political context and its social, economic, cultural, political and security impact for the global community
2. To identify the position and agency of the WCRC member churches in Indonesia in addressing the impact of change and global geo-political dynamics for Indonesia through the lens of the Accra Confession
3. Affirming the commitment and theological praxis of the Indonesian churches in doing theology from the perspective of the victims of globalization

The consultation brought 45 Church leaders from all Indonesian member churches to think strategically of doing mission in the context of Empire. The consultation had the impact of drawing enthusiasm from the Indonesian churches in using Empire as a lens to discern the signs of the times.

Witnessing

Objective: The WCRC will strengthen its advocacy work with the United Nations and ecumenical bodies and associations. The WCRC will also specifically focus on the following areas of advocacy:

1. Ecological Justice

Working with our member churches on the issue of ecological justice to care for God's creation through worship, study and ecumenical and political advocacy. (General Council Action 68)

2. Gender-Based Violence

Advocacy work directed towards churches to engage with the issue of gender-based discrimination and gender-based violence through consultations, production of resources and directed campaigns by member churches. This will directly feed into and draw from our mandate for a gender policy by 2019 (General Council Action 31). This work will seek to address the issue of sexual violence in our churches, as well as strengthen the existing work of our member churches on this issue. It will also seek to engage with the entire burden of the problem and include women, men, children and the family and work with other faith groups that are working on the same issue.

3. Engaging Churches on Disability

Regionally based advocacy work on disability so as to ensure that all our churches are safer and more accessible spaces for people with disabilities.

Ecological Justice

The WCRC, in accordance with its Strategic Plan, and the call of the General Council has become an active member in the Season of Creation Ecumenical Programme. It has decidedly asserted its position by shaping the message from the Season of Creation 2018 as well as by occupying a position on the steering committee and the advisory committee.

Gender Based Violence and Disability Advocacy were identified as priorities for 2019 onwards.

Objective: Seeking Peace and Reconciliation

The WCRC will strengthen and deepen peace and reconciliation work through partnership, pastoral visits, engaging with other ecumenical institutions and advocacy in these regions:

1. Korean Peninsula, working with member churches, the National Council of Churches in Korea and WCC, as well as the Korean Christian Federation, focused on strong advocacy for dialogue instead of posturing and military provocations.
2. Colombia, supporting member churches and regional leadership in the peace process, including advocacy, accompaniment, empowerment and behind-the-scenes international ecumenical diplomacy.
3. South Sudan, working with member churches in South Sudan, Sudan and internationally to deepen advocacy and education efforts.
4. Middle East, including Israel-Palestine, supporting member churches and WCC consensus advocacy.

North Korean Solidarity

A solidarity visit was made to the Korean Peninsula before the 2018 Executive Committee meeting. The visit to North Korea was with the WCC. This visit resulted in the WCRC making a strong commitment to and the calling of all its member churches and ecumenical partners in supporting the Panmunjom declaration.

The WCRC also supports 8 women theological students at the Pyongyang Theological Seminary as well as supporting other activities of the Korean Christian Federation and has been an active participant of the Korean Ecumenical Forum.

Iraq Solidarity

The WCRC along with its member the PCUSA made a high level solidarity visit to churches in Iraq in October 2018. The delegation included the President and the General Secretary. Apart from

encouraging the churches in the region by this visit the visit also resulted in an invitation to conduct a peace and reconciliation consultation in Kirkuk. Preparations are underway for the organization of this meeting in 2020.

Palestine Solidarity

The WCRC continues with its policy of supporting the cries of the Palestinian people as outlined in Action 55 of the General Council Actions. It is in the process of putting together a study guide that uses resources from member churches that speaks to the cry of the Palestinian people. The guide will be ready the Executive Committee meeting 2019.

Witness at the Border

The WCRC through its regions (AIPRAL and CANAAC) and with its member churches in North, Central and South America are planning for a high level solidarity visit to the Mexico-USA border in the first week of April 2019. The visit will include education, awareness and advocacy for/on migration and particularly its root causes. It will also involve worship at the border and advocacy activities in Washington D.C.

The specific objectives of this solidarity visit are

1. The conscientization of our member churches and the societies in which they find themselves over the issues involved
2. Making Visible
 - a. the multiple and underlying causes that make forced migration a growing reality in the region
 - b. the hardships of the migrants on the way to the Mexican-United States Border
 - c. the laws that violate human rights and the manipulation of legal systems
3. Weaving a wide ecumenical and social network in pursuit of the defense of human rights.
4. Advocating in different areas so that the actions are not merely palliative, but that a true transformation of the causes of forced migration is sought.

The Witness at the Border was intended to send out a strong message of the Church's advocacy for human rights and particularly the rights of migrants and those seeking asylum.

Reforming

Declaration of Faith on the Ordination of Women

1. By 2019, the WCRC will ensure that all member churches have received, been made aware of and studied the Faith Declaration on the Ordination of Women.
2. The WCRC will strengthen and deepen the work around the Faith Declaration on the Ordination of Women particularly through both deepening and expanding the theological and Biblical insights in the document.

Ordination of Women

On March 8th 2019, International Women's Day the WCRC will launch a communication strategy for communicating the Faith Declaration. The communication strategy will include

1. Series of stories on women who have been ordained posted on the web page with link to the declaration
2. Email with a set of six questions on the faith declaration on the ordination of women for churches to study

3. Prepare and post document on the faith declaration to specific churches

Further a series of consultations particularly for the 41 member churches who do not ordain women is being planned. Already a consultation is being planned along with the CWM for the month of October on the ordination of women.

Objectives: Accompaniment of Women in Theology

1. The WCRC will strengthen and deepen the existing Theological Education Scholarship Fund for Women in the South so as to be able to accompany young women in theology through scholarships and education and training programmes.
2. The WCRC will explore ways in which to connect women theologians with each other through a network and with the Global Institute of Theology (GIT).
3. Through a series of publications, both existing (e.g. Reformed World) and new, the WCRC will make space for theological reflections from Reformed women theologians. This will particularly emphasize and work with and within the regions.
4. The WCRC will work with theological institutions of its member churches in all of the above work, as well as explore additional ways in which to empower women theologians.

TESF and Beyond

In the year 2018/2019 the WCRC began supporting sixteen new women candidates through its Theological Education Scholarship Fund. With this the present fund is over and plans are in place to initiate a new fund with the specific goals of not just scholarships but also education and training programmes.

Objective: Gender Policy

By 2019 a gender policy for the WCRC and its constituency will be created. This will involve a review of existing policies, as well as the preparation of a strategy for implementation. It is necessary that the creation and implementation of such a policy will involve a high degree of participation of all the regions (General Council Action 31).

Gender Policy

Two Gender Policy Consultations have already taken place and a gender policy and implementation strategy are ready to be presented to the Executive Committee in its May 2019 meeting.

Confessing

Being a communion that is committed to the full and just participation of all. To attain the goal of full and just participation the WCRC is committed to working with youth and people living with disabilities. Both priorities of Confessing full and just participation have been prioritized for end 2019 and 2021 respectively.

**Addendum:
Communion and Theology
Accountability Report**

Introduction

The General Council yielded a new framework for the programme work of the WCRC: The desks of Communion and Theology and that of Justice and Witness should cooperate and develop an integral approach that will express the cross-sectionality of the WCRC's vision as it is expressed in the tag line "Called to Communion, Committed to Justice." According to the biblical witness, justice is an integral expression of God's living presence in the creation. The justice work, therefore, cannot be reduced to an ethical addendum to a theological core. At the same time, theology cannot be pursued in an isolated sphere, but should be conducted in a way that it can lead the Communion to processes of confessing to address the present reality. In these processes, the theology work should draw from the Reformed tradition and contextual theologies.

The General Council Actions 20 and 21 defined the direction of this new approach:

- The theology work shall take up the "unfinished agenda" of the Reformation and lead to justice, peace, reconciliation, care and unity among Christians, people of different religions and the whole earth.
- Theological engagement shall be based upon the *sola scriptura* principle and the confessions of Barmen, Belhar and Accra.
- The theological work shall represent the diversity of the communion and shall be carried by the commitment to give voice to the faith experiences of people from all continents, giving preference to the voices of women and young people.

Theology Programme

Overarching Objective for Theology

Hearing the cries of wounded communities and engaging with them (General Council Action 21) the theological work of the WCRC shall lead the whole Communion in theologically-rooted processes of confessing the faith, drawing on the Reformed tradition and contextual theologies to address the present reality.

RAN (Racism, Authoritarianism and Nationalism)

Programme Objectives:

- Engaging with rising authoritarianisms over the world and in particular how they engage with religion, nationality, race and caste to disenfranchise and pauperize the most vulnerable. This is to be done through a series of consultations on the question of nationalism, religion, and race/caste (see also Justice, Objective: Cross-Cutting Dimensions, 1. Race, Authoritarianism, Nationalism, page 9).
- Consulting with churches in all regions to discern whether authoritarian and populist ideologies shall be denounced in the form of a confession.
- Developing a theology of a sanctuary (General Council Action 51) that offers radical hospitality, solidarity and ethical accountability to all our neighbors and, particularly, the most vulnerable communities.

Under the auspices of these objectives and along with the Justice and Witness desk, a two part consultation was conducted in Bangalore and Bangkok. Please see the Justice and Witness report for details.

Global Network of Theologians

The WCRC will form a Global Network of Theologians that will engage the leadership and the membership of member churches and the theological communities within the Communion to pursue the “unfinished agenda” of the Reformation by organizing consultations and conferences, theological publications, exhibitions and other resources.

A meeting in October 2018 brought together a group of theologians from across the globe to reflect on contemporary thinking about empire. This consultation resulted in initial formation and thinking about a network of theologians.

Global Institute of Theology (GIT)

The Global Institute for Theology will continue to nurture and encourage the work of young theologians and scholars. Planning for the next GIT, to be held in 2020, is well underway. An academic dean has been selected (HyeRan Kim-Cragg) and the location decided (the Philippines).

Reformed World

Reformed World will be further developed as a vehicle for incorporating and sharing widely the best work done in these areas of our committed conversation, revolving around those priorities noted in the Strategic Plan. After a year’s hiatus, the first issue of *Reformed World*, Volume 68, has been printed and the second is in the planning process (*Reformed World* is produced three times each year).

Mission and Ecumenical Engagement

Mission in the Context of Crisis and Marginalization

The “Mission in the Context of Crisis and Marginalization” programme will accompany member churches in situations of religious tensions (General Council Action 53). Initial target regions will be the Middle East, West Africa and Indonesia.

The programme will consist of the following:

- Solidarity visits;
- Engagement with religious actors in the conflict;
- Engagement with political actors;
- Consultations and conferences that engage with the following:
 - analysis of the tensions and the strategies of conflict resolution;
 - joint development of mission strategies for conflict resolution, justice and peace;
 - formulation of a message on the role of the church in conflict resolution in religious tensions;
- Publications on the situation in the respective regions and the results of the consultations.

(See also Justice, Objective: Cross-Cutting Dimensions, 3. Mission in the Context of Crisis and Marginalization)

A Mission in the Context of Crisis and Marginalization consultation is being planned in Egypt for November 2019. A working group has been set up and planning is underway.

Overarching Objective for Ecumenical Dialogues and Cooperation

The ecumenical engagement of the WCRC with other Christian communions aims to promote the visible unity of the larger church in its common witness to the world. In dialogues and other programmes, the WCRC will emphasize the interconnectedness of theology, communion, mission and justice and will foreground voices and perspectives of Christians in the Global South.

Objective: Ecumenical Relationships

To promote Christian unity in a world marked by increasing fragmentation the WCRC will engage in the following relationships:

- Dialogue sessions to be concluded: Anglican Communion, Pentecostal churches.
- Dialogues to begin: Mennonite World Conference, World Methodist Council, Ecumenical Patriarchate (Orthodox)

International Reformed-Anglican Dialogue (IRAD)

The IRAD met at the Vancouver School of Theology 24-30 August 2018 under the leadership of the co-chairs Elizabeth Welch (WCRC) and Howard Gregory (Anglican Communion). The dialogue focused on *koinonia*. The scope of the theme is both exciting and challenging said report participants. *Koinonia* is adopted within the New Testament to push in a number of ways the commonality of inheritance and calling through faith. The first draft of the report discerned a tripartite structure namely, where does *koinonia* come from? How has it been embodied? And how can *koinonia* shape the priorities of the church and world? A drafting meeting was further conducted in London at the offices of the Anglican Communion.

Reformed-Pentecostal Dialogue

The fifth session of the Reformed-Pentecostal dialogue took place in Legon, Accra, Ghana, under the theme, “Ministering to the Needs of the World: Mission and Eschatology.” This year the dialogue focused on the significance of eschatology to mission. The dialogue will present its report by end of 2019.

The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification

In Wittenberg, the WCRC had associated with the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (JDDJ). Lutherans and Catholics signed this document in 1999 and afterwards offered it to other Christian communions for association. The association of the World Communion was the conclusion of a discussion that lasted for more than 15 years. Several points had to be clarified before the association could take place:

- Associating is different from signing: If the WCRC had been asked to sign the JDDJ it would have been obliged to fully own a document that clearly speaks the languages of the Lutheran and the Catholic churches and does not acknowledge the Reformed tradition at all. Such a step would have been impossible for the WCRC. An association, on the other hand, allowed the Reformed to add their voice to the bilateral conversation about the understanding of justification between Lutherans, Catholics and Methodists who had already associated in 2006. This methodology made it possible to contribute a particular Reformed emphasis to the ecumenical discussion. The WCRC’s statement of association therefore particularly stressed the link between justification and justice.
- A communion differs from an alliance: Traditionally the WCRC and its predecessors had been reluctant to engage in doctrinal matters, because confession and doctrine were seen as the prerogative of the member churches. This approach began to change with the condemnation of apartheid as a heresy 1982 at the Ottawa General Council and finally with the adoption of the Accra Confession in 2004. The WCRC understands itself more and more as a confessing communion that—after thorough consultation with the member churches—can engage with other Christian communions also in matters that touch the area of confessions and doctrine.

Member churches are invited to adopt these decisions, but they are not obliged to do so. This procedure was applied in the process of drafting of the statement of association to the JDDJ: The Executive Committee adopted the statement of association after an intensive process of consultation of the member churches and the association was celebrated in Wittenberg during the General Council. In the meantime, one of the churches that was quite critical about the association has started its own dialogue process with the Catholic Church based on the JDDJ. This a good example for our communion at work!

After the General Council, the Anglican Communion celebrated its decision to welcome and approve the substance of the JDDJ in an ecumenical ceremony on Reformation Day 2017 in Westminster Cathedral.

This vibrant ecumenical activity has led to the revival of the proposal to use this momentum to develop the JDDJ format into a multilateral ecumenical forum. The five communions are currently defining the terms of reference of this process. First results were presented at a conference in March 2019 at Notre Dame University in the United States, and a statement issued from the participants (see annex) reaffirms the progress made and looks toward next steps.

The Wittenberg Witness

The Wittenberg Witness that was celebrated during the General Council is a prominent example for this emphasis on joint witness. The Witness was based on a dialogue report that stated that there are no theological obstacles that would prevent communion between Lutherans and Reformed. The Wittenberg Witness was a first step to live out this theological unity. Both communions are committed to explore steps that would allow them to move more closely together.

Dialogue with the Mennonite World Conference

During the Wittenberg day, the Mennonite World Conference had invited the WCRC for a dialogue process. In the meantime, preliminary talks have begun to frame the project in more detail. It was agreed that the dialogue should lead to an act of reconciliation that should address the history of 500 years of conflict where Mennonites were victims of persecution by other Christian churches including the Reformed. A first important step on this way will be the Executive Committee meeting 2019 in Zürich where Mennonites and Reformed will visit the locations of the first persecutions and start a process of “right remembering” that will allow them to tell their difficult history together in a way that does justice to the sentiments of both sides. This emerging reconciliation shall be lived out in steps of common witness conducted jointly by the two communions.

Reception of the Catholic-Reformed Dialogue report “Justification and Sacramentality: The Christian Community as an Agent for Justice”

At this point, the WCRC has not had a chance to consider and adopt this report. Unfortunately, illness has again prevented the necessary preliminary steps to prepare the discussion process for the Executive Committee at its 2019 meeting. It is anticipated that this will be taken up in 2020.

Objective: Deepen the Communion with the Lutheran World Federation

Based upon the dialogue report *Communion: On Being the Church* and the Wittenberg Witness the WCRC will continue to intensify the collaboration with the LWF and deepen the communion between LWF and WCRC.

On going meeting with the LWF have helped strengthen the relationship with them and other ecumenical partners.

Annex

NOTRE DAME CONSULTATION STATEMENT

Who we are and why we are here

In a broken, divided and contentious world, we as representatives of five world communions, Anglican, Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist and Reformed, have met at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana USA, from 26th to 28th March, drawn by a common urgency to present the message of God's liberating grace and hope for this world. We are convinced of the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ to transform us and the world and we are committed to witness more effectively together to the salvation given to us in Christ (Romans 1:16).

We believe that the Holy Spirit has brought us together following our agreement on the doctrine of justification, expressed in the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (JDDJ) which states that: "Together we confess: By grace alone, in faith in Christ's saving work and not because of any merit on our part, we are accepted by God and receive the Holy Spirit, who renews our hearts while equipping and calling us to good works" (para.15). This Trinitarian approach is important for us in understanding justification and sanctification fully.

Our communions are witnesses that through JDDJ we are overcoming centuries-old controversies. We are now five world communions that adhere jointly to the JDDJ. And we rejoice in the fresh and new ways in which our five communions can with vigour, trust and confidence work in realising a deeper communion towards the full visible unity of the Church and to make manifest the growth in communion which we have already been experienced.

What we affirm together

Experiencing a deep sense of our commonality in the time we have spent together:

We re-affirm the basic truths of the doctrine of justification which are expressed in JDDJ, emphasising that the message of God's grace is powerful and urgently needed in our time. We commit ourselves to communicate this message to people of our time in meaningful and relevant ways through our common witness and service.

We affirm that justification calls for sanctification, a holiness of life which is both personal and social, and advances a common commitment to resisting and overcoming injustices, which should lead to a life of justice in the world, recognising and defending human dignity and the integrity of all that God has created.

We affirm through our discernment that the Holy Spirit uses one another's ministries, worship and church life, in order to do the Holy Spirit's work to create its fruit, in faith, hope and love.

We affirm that all our activities should be guided by the first imperative of From Conflict to Communion (Lund 2016): We "should always begin from the perspective of unity and not from the point of view of division in order to strengthen what is held in common even though the differences are more easily seen and experienced." We will continue to review how the Lund imperative is being addressed in our church programmes and ecumenical engagement. We rejoice that we are given fresh perspectives of seeing one another and given a new dynamic in our inter-relationships, helping us to find undiscovered fruit in what has already been done before. This will enable us to address further more fully the various

questions among us requiring additional clarification as indicated in JDDJ.

We have found that the method of the differentiating consensus has proved to be a fruitful means of overcoming controversies by identifying common substance and distinguishing from its different confessional expressions. Thus this type of consensus encompasses both agreements and differences. It is a creative way to deal with past, present and future complexities, holding together differing perspectives without reducing them to one perspective. We are convinced that we should apply this method to other controversial questions within and between the churches but also to conflicts in the wider society.

We realise that ecumenism proceeds at different levels that are inter-related with each other. Sometimes local ecumenism is lively and is able to inspire theological reflection. In other cases theological reflection challenges ecclesial practices and calls for changes.

What we want to do together

Our churches face similar challenges in communicating the meaning of justification to today's society in ways in which meet the experiences and needs of the world. We are gripped with the imperative of proclaiming the good news of salvation, through compassion and working for justice.

Yet the message has not reached and engaged with all humankind. There is a challenge for us to witness to God's liberating grace in ways which provoke and convey the hope and grace of the gospel.

To proclaim God's grace in our time requires connecting the distinct horizons of justification in biblical times with contemporary perspectives. Language from our traditions about the human person before God, grace and sin, forgiveness and righteousness, must come alive for people today. This work requires careful ecumenical study at all levels, locally, regionally and globally. Such bridging work results also in fresh proclamation. The world is in need of the message of God's liberating grace. In a time of individualism and commodification, we want to stand together to offer the message that God's salvation, human beings and creation are not for sale.

We will work to strengthen our witness to the common bond of baptism we share. We propose to work on creating appropriate resources for celebrations of baptism and renewal of baptismal vows where they do not exist already. In a similar way liturgies to celebrate justification and our common baptism around 31st October, the eve of All Saints, should be offered more widely. Common themes for spiritual edification and ecumenical reflection for each year should be identified.

In all these ways we wish to make more visible our common witness, in worship and service, on our journey together towards visible unity, walking together, praying together and working together. In this new reality in our common life, we shall review the application of the Lund Principle of 1952: "that churches should act together in all matters except those in which deep differences of conviction compel them to act separately" which we have all affirmed.

Next Steps

We will establish a Steering Committee to take forward the momentum generated by our meeting through promoting and monitoring the process of developing relationships among the adherents of JDDJ, comprising at least two persons from each world communion, to meet annually at the time of the Conference of Secretaries of Christian World Communions.

We propose a follow up forum, following the affirmations made, to review progress after a further three years.

We propose to develop a range of catechetical tools and resources, in various forms, written and visual, including a dedicated common webpage, to be used in all aspects of church life and theological education.

Conclusion

We thank God for the opportunity to experience the fellowship of our five communions in this new way. We are grateful for the generous hospitality offered to us by the University of Notre Dame which has enabled us to move forward together on our journey, inspired and energised to proclaim anew the good news of God`s liberating grace.

May the Holy Spirit bring to completion the work that we have begun.

March 2019

The University of Notre Dame, South Bend

Addendum:
WCRC Implementation Plan
= WORKING DRAFT =

Program Title: Foundations of Just Communion

Objective

The programme evaluates the WCRC's programme work in the 2017-2024 period, assesses the advances and shortcomings in the conceptualising and implementation of the principle of "just communion" and prepares the background paper on communion for the 2024 General Council.

Timeline: 2023

Program Title: Youth – Dreaming & Engaging in a Transformed Communion

Timeline: Planning: as from 2019; 2020: Regional activities; 2021: Youth summit

Program Title: People Living with Disabilities

Program Title: Communicating the Communion

Objective

The WCRC is a relatively new organisation. The understanding of what it means to be part of a communion is not yet very deeply rooted in the member churches. The programme wants to communicate the Barmen, Belhar and Accra Confessions as central pillars of the WCRC's communion identity. The programme wants

- to create awareness of what it means to belong to a communion;
- to encourage to live as a discerning, confessing, witnessing communion prepared to be reformed by the Word of God;
- to promote the commitment to prophetic discipleship.

Program Title: Empire (Living Out Accra)

It is strategically significant for all the programmatic work of the WCRC to use the lens of empire as a means for understanding the context. The WCRC will therefore strengthen and deepen a critical theological study process of engaging empire in the present context. This will be undertaken through an intersectional lens by organizing consultations and conferences, particularly in the regions. These will be done with a view to the establishing of resources which foreground voices from the Global South on empire and:

4. to enhance regional critical thinking on empire and encourage cross fertilization among the regions;
5. to engage in campaigns that highlight the continuing legacy of empire in our societies and congregations. The WCRC will seek to live out the Accra Confession by concentrating on the specific ways in which empire changes who we are and the contexts in which we live. It will also seek to work with alternatives and seek to lift up those areas and contexts in which alternatives are being worked out;

to grow and expand our continuing work around economic justice by engaging in study processes in which the interconnections between macroeconomic processes and everyday

lived reality are exposed. This will particularly seek to engage with the issues of land, labour, unemployment, the economic underpinnings of race, wages, etc.

Program Title: Gendering Leadership, Enabling Empowerment

Objective

By 2024, the WCRC will create a process to ensure that all member churches are theologically equipped to ordain women and to specifically concentrate on those churches that do not ordain women. By this time the WCRC will have contacted, engaged and dialogued with the churches that do not ordain women (General Council Action 48). This will be done by:

1. Initiating a participatory study process of the status of women in member churches through regional consultations. This will be particularly directed towards studying the number of churches that ordain women and those which do not. At the same time, it will seek to study the status of ordained women in those churches that do ordain women.
2. Encouraging a process of intercultural learning between regions particularly to address the cultural, social and theological reasons women are not ordained.

Program Title: Towards a safe world for all persons: WCRC member churches commit themselves to work against violence and discrimination of LGBTQ persons

Objective

WCRC member churches have different views on human sexualities, but the General Council in Action 56 condemned “all acts of violence against LGBTQ persons, regardless of our theological views, around the globe”, confessed “complicity in supporting violence through its silence” and committed itself “to working for justice, freedom and a safe world for all persons to flourish.” In continuation of the process that had started in November 2017 in Chennai, the programme will bring churches with different views on human sexuality together on the basis of the rejection of violence against and discrimination of LGBTQ people. The programme will sensitise against violence and discrimination of LGBTQ people and encourage activities that ensure “justice, freedom and a safe world for all persons to flourish”

Program Title: Race, Authoritarianism, Nationalism

Objectives

- d) In response to the rise of systems and structures that threaten human beings and the whole creation and in the midst of rising authoritarian and populist ideologies the WCRC will seek to critically engage with the issue of nationalism, rising fundamentalism and authoritarianism and how these are perceived from below. It will particularly consider how these are being played out in the Middle East, South Asia and the North American contexts and how this impacts other regions of the world.
- e) The WCRC will seek to conscientize its membership through naming and understanding the new systemic and ideological formulations of the new political economy.

- f) It will seek to strategically link as well as work towards creating networks of church leaders, theologians, activists, children, youth/young adults and the elderly so as to be able build resistance movements.

Program Title: Mission in the Context of Crisis and Marginalization

Objective

Many of our member churches live and witness in a context where they experience religious tensions and suffer persecution. The WCRC is committed to accompany these churches in the search for mission strategies that will guide them in crisis and marginalization.

The intended impact of the consultation would be to work together to offer to our member churches and the wider ecumenical community a framework for the peaceful co-existence and protection of the rights of minorities.

Objectives

- A comprehensive contextual and global analysis of the crisis
- Development of mission strategies for conflict resolution, justice and peace building and peaceful coexistence
- Formulation of a message on the role of the church in conflict resolution in the context of religious tensions.

Program Title: NIFEA

Objectives

4. The WCRC will advocate for a democratic global system of economic governance through partnerships with like-minded ecumenical organizations, people's movements and civil society networks. This will be done through building resistance movements by coordinated campaigns and with participation at the local, national, regional and international levels.
5. By 2024 the WCRC will have equipped its congregations for worship, study, political and economic action by specifically working in the regions.
6. The WCRC will continue to support, strengthen and deepen the curriculum and participation in the Governance, Economics and Management (GEM) School.

Program Title: Ecological Justice

Working with our member churches on the issue of ecological justice to care for God's creation through worship, study and ecumenical and political advocacy.

Program Title: Gender Based Violence

Program Title: Seeking Peace and Reconciliation

The WCRC will strengthen and deepen peace and reconciliation work through partnership, pastoral visits, engaging with other ecumenical institutions and advocacy in these regions

Objectives

5. Korean Peninsula, working with member churches, the National Council of Churches in Korea and WCC, as well as the Korean Christian Federation, focused on strong advocacy for dialogue instead of posturing and military provocations.
6. Colombia, supporting member churches and regional leadership in the peace process, including advocacy, accompaniment, empowerment and behind-the-scenes international ecumenical diplomacy.
7. South Sudan, working with member churches in South Sudan, Sudan and internationally to deepen advocacy and education efforts.
8. Middle East, including Israel-Palestine, supporting member churches and WCC consensus advocacy.

Program Title: Ordination of Women

The 2017 General Assembly adopted “The declaration of faith on the Ordination of Women” and pledged to journey with those members who do not yet ordain women.

Objective

3. By 2019, the WCRC will ensure that all member churches have received, been made aware of and studied the Faith Declaration on the Ordination of Women.
4. The WCRC will strengthen and deepen the work around the Faith Declaration on the Ordination of Women particularly through both deepening and expanding the theological and Biblical insights in the document.

Program Title: Accompaniment of Women in Theology

Objectives

5. The WCRC will strengthen and deepen the existing Theological Education Scholarship Fund for Women in the South so as to be able to accompany young women in theology through scholarships and education and training programmes.
6. The WCRC will explore ways in which to connect women theologians with each other through a network and with the Global Institute of Theology (GIT).
7. Through a series of publications, both existing (e.g. *Reformed World*) and new, the WCRC will make space for theological reflections from Reformed women theologians. This will particularly emphasize and work with and within the regions.
8. The WCRC will work with theological institutions of its member churches in all of the above work, as well as explore additional ways in which to empower women theologians.

Program Title: Gender Policy

Objective

By 2019 a gender policy for the WCRC and its constituency will be created. This will involve a review of existing policies, as well as the preparation of a strategy for implementation. It is necessary that the creation and implementation of such a policy will involve a high degree of participation of all the regions (General Council Action 31).

Program Title: Indigenous People

Objective

1. The WCRC will create an Indigenous Peoples Working Group that will focus on completing the tasks as assigned in General Council Action 57.
2. The WCRC will focus its advocacy work around the doctrine of discovery with member churches through the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People (General Council Action 57).

Program Title: Engaging Theology: Theologians in the Service of WCRC

Objective

To form a bank of resource people with theological expertise and capacity to draw upon Reformed tradition and contextual theology to address the present reality faithfully.

Program Title: Global Institute of Theology

Timeline: 2020, 2022, 2024

Program Title: Revitalizing *Reformed World*

Objective

The Reformed World to become a vehicle of communication, sharing widely the best work in our areas of committed conversation and action in the five dimensions of our work: Communion, Justice, Theology, Mission, and Witness.

Program Title: Clarifying Missional Foundations

Program Title: The RUTH-Project: Refuge – Underlying Causes – Theological Perspectives – Human Rights

Objective

To call churches: to challenge forces and systems that displace people; to advocate the rights of migrant people; to offer refuge.

Program Title: Redeeming Religion

Program Title: Strengthening the relationship with the Anglican Communion

Objective

Strengthening the relationship with the Anglican Communion

Program Title: Strengthening the Relationship to Evangelical and (Neo-) Pentecostal Movements

Program Title: Strengthening the relationship with the Mennonite World Conference by preparing steps towards reconciliation and joint witness.

Objective

The Mennonite World Conference and the WCRC will set up a joint process that will prepare steps of reconciliation between the two communions and identify areas of joint witness and collaboration.

Program Title: Strengthening the relationship with the World Methodist Council

Objective

Based upon the dialogue reports the WCRC will continue to intensify the collaboration with the World Methodist Council and deepen the communion between WMC and WCRC.

Program Title: Strengthening the Relationship with the Ecumenical Patriarchate

Program Title: Strengthening the Relationship with the Lutheran World Federation: Living out the Wittenberg Witness

Objective

Based upon the dialogue report Communion: On Being the Church and the Wittenberg Witness the WCRC will continue to intensify the collaboration with the LWF and deepen the communion between LWF and WCRC.

Program Title: Strengthening the Relationship with the Roman Catholic Church

Objective

Guided by the papal encyclical “Laudato si” and the Accra Confession, as well as by the dialogue report Justification and Sacramentality: The Christian Community as an Agent for Justice, the WCRC will continue to strengthen its relationship with the Roman Catholic Church and focus particularly on church unity and justice.

Program Title: Exploring the Ecclesial Consequences of the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification

Objective

The five signatories of the JDDJ seek to clarify further the ecclesial implications of that agreement and formulate the consequences for church-communion.

Program Title: Clarifying Theological Foundations of Interreligious Cooperation

Program Title: Dialogues for Life

Program Title: Cameroon

Program Title: Partnership with World Alliance of Christian Communicators

Program Title: Inviting Churches

Objective

Expanding WCRC membership (as per criteria in WCRC constitution article V.G.) by inviting churches into the Communion.

Program Title: Increasing Member Church Contributions

Objective

Encouraging an increase in the level of contributions and special donations to the core budget from those member churches who have the potential to do so by developing Executive Committee-led work groups in each region.

Program Title: Pursuing Funding Partnerships

Objective

Pursuing mutually beneficial partnerships with like-minded organizations, from which the WCRC could obtain not only administration fees but increases in funding for core, programme and regional council budgets.

Program Title: Annual Appeal

Objective

Extending the annual appeal to the whole of the English-speaking world while developing contextual fundraising appeals in other areas.

Program Title: Exploring Fundraising Methodologies

Objective

Exploring contextual and creative fundraising methods, including possibilities for an endowment fund.

Program Title: Budget Funding

Objective

Continuing other fundraising work to ensure the annual core budget is balanced.

Program Title: Maximize Current Staff Capacities

Objective

The WCRC will maximize current staff capacities by making the necessary adjustments to job responsibilities on both executive and administrative levels—after study and review—by February 2019.

Program Title: Expand Staff through Partnerships

Objective

By 2024, staff capacities will be expanded and gender and regional representation balanced. Additional projects taken on by the WCRC will include sufficient increases in capacity. This will be done in the following ways:

1. The WCRC will pursue partnerships to expand staff capacities through seconded staff, co-opted staff and/or mission partners/missionaries.
2. Two new female executive staff members, along with sufficient administrative support, will be added, either through secondment or with guaranteed financial support to cover the duration of their contracts.

3. Two female executive advisors will be added to create the Extended Executive Staff Team, which also comprises the general secretary and executive secretaries. The advisors will be compensated for their time and have all expenses covered.

Program Title: Question of Location

Objective

Organizational stability will remain the priority in the short-term. By 2023, however, the organization will return to the question of its physical location.

Program Title: Work and Witness with Council for World Mission

Objective

The WCRC commits with CWM to a common mission partnership to journey together on issues of justice and prophetic witness, including resource sharing, joint staff planning and programming and common visioning and strategizing.

Program Title: Communicate Vision and Work

Objective

The WCRC will communicate its vision and work, doing so in such a way as to strengthen the Communion and witness to the world.

Program Title: Plan for General Council

Objective

In order to ensure that the planning of the next General Council carries out the objectives of this strategic plan, the officers will explore possibilities for the next General Council and present options, and take decisions, to the 2019 Executive Committee, including a planning timeline.

Program Title: Regional Networking

Objective

The Communion will be strengthened by empowering active and practical relationships among all levels—secretariat-regions-members—and by making the regions a necessary point of relationship between the secretariat and member churches.

Other Addendums

See also (already posted and on stick):

- Finance Report
- SPPG Executive Summary
- Gender Policy Draft
- Ethical Investment Guides
- WCRC Strategic Plan: An Introduction

No	Programme	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Prog 1	Foundations of Just Communion							Consultation (Concept paper for GC)	
Prog 2	Youth: Dreaming & Engaging in a Transformed Communion					Summit			
Prog 3	People Living with Disabilities, Network								Publication (to be launched at GC)
Prog 4.1	Communicating the Communion			Planning Workshop					Publication (to be launched at GC)
Prog 5	(Gender) Leadership and Power				Consultation		Consultation		Publication (to be launched at GC)
Prog 6	Towards a safe world for all persons: WCRC member churches commit themselves to work against violence and discrimination of LGBTQ persons	Chennai Consultation		Towards a safe world Consultation	Consultation				
Prog 7	RAN: Resisting Cultures of Discrimination, Authoritarianism & Nationalism		Consultation	Consultation	Publication	Consultation		Consultation	Publication (to be launched at GC)
Prog 8	Mission in the Context of Crisis and Marginalization			Consultation	Consultation		Consultation		Publication (to be launched at GC)
Prog 9	NIFEA	GEM	Gem, NIFEA Panel	Consultation&GEM&Cam paign	Consultation&Panel&GE M&Campaign	Consultation&GEM&Cam paign			
Prog 4.2	DREAM: Discipleship: Resisting Empire as Mission		Preparation	Consultation	Publication	Consultation???			
Prog 11	Ecological Justice		Season of Creation	Season of Creation	Season of Creation	Season of Creation	Consultation	Season of Creation	
Prog 12	Gender Based Violence				Consultation	Consultation	Publication		
Prog 13	Korea								
Prog 14	Colombia								
Prog 15	South Sudan								
Prog 16	Middle East								
Prog 17	Ordination of Women			Consultation on Zionism					
Prog 18	Accompaniment of Women in Theology			Consultation	Consultation (with GIT)			Consultation	
Prog 19	Gender Policy		Consultation	Consultation, Publication					
Prog 20	Indigenous Peoples					Advocacy Week			
Prog 21	Engaging Theology: Theologians in the Service of WCRC				Consultation		Consultation (with GIT, concept paper for GC)		
Prog 22	Global Institute of Theology			Planning Workshop	GIT		GIT		GIT
Prog 23	Revitalizing Reformed World								
Prog 24	Theological Institutions				Consultation (with theology network)		Consultation (with theology network)		
Prog 25	Christian Worship and Spiritual Life						Consultation (launch GC worship team)		
Prog 26	Clarifying Missional Foundations							Consultation (with interreligious, Concept paper for GC)	
Prog 27	The Ruth Project: Refuge – Underlying Causes – Theological Perspectives – Human Rights					Consultation (end of year)			
Prog 28	Redeeming Religion								
Prog 29	Conference of Secretaries	Consultation	Consultation	Consultation	Consultation	Consultation (with RAN)	Consultation	Consultation	Consultation
Prog 30	Global Christian Forum		Consultation						
Prog 31	Religions for Peace	Consultation	Consultation	Consultation					
Prog 32	Strengthening the Relationship to the Anglican Communion	Consultation	Consultation	Consultation					
Prog 33	Strengthening the Relationship to Evangelical and (Neo-)Pentecostal Movements	Consultation	Consultation	Consultation					
Prog 34	Strengthening the Relationship to the Mennonite World Conference		Consultation (CWC)	Consultation (Executive)	Consultation	Consultation	Consultation	Consultation	Consultation
Prog 35	Strengthening the Relationship to the World Methodist Council		Consultation (CWC)	Consultation	Consultation	Consultation	Consultation	Consultation	Consultation
Prog 36	Strengthening the Relationship to the Ecumenical Patriarchate					Consultation	Consultation	Consultation	Consultation
Prog 37	Strengthening the Relationship to the Lutheran World Federation, Living out the Wittenberg Witness							Consultation	Consultation

No	Programme	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Prog 38	Strengthening the Relationship to the Roman Catholic Church								
Prog 39	JDDJ Process		Consultation (CWC)	Consultation					
Prog 40	Clarifying Theological Foundations of Interreligious Cooperation							Consultation (with mission, Concept paper for GC)	
Prog 41	Dialogues for Life						Consultation		
Prog 42	Cameroon								
Prog 43	Partner with WACC								
Org 1	Inviting Churches			Regional Working Groups					
Org 2	Increasing Member Church Contributions			ExCom agenda item					
Org 3	Pursuing Funding Partnerships			Coordinated work	Coordinated work	Coordinated work	Coordinated work	Coordinated work	Coordinated work
Org 4	Annual Appeal			Develop database	Research methodologies	Launch wider appeal			
Org 5	Explore Fundraising Methodologies			Working Group	Proposal/Plan				
Org 6	Budget Funding			Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing?	Ongoing?		
Org 7	Maximize Current Staff Capacities		Ongoing	Implement review recommendations					
Org 8	Expand Staff through Partnerships		Coordinated work	Coordinated work					
Org 9	Question of Location								
Org 10	Work and Witness with CWM			Annual staff/planning meeting	Annual staff/planning meeting	Summit		ExCom agenda item	
Org 11	Communicate Vision and Work		Complete MOU	Comms plan, new website, etc.					
Org 12	Plan for General Council			Initial report to ExCom	ExCom decisions on theme, location, staffing				
Org 13	Regional Networking		Ongoing	Ongoing: SPFG audit	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing

Vision Statement

The World Communion of Reformed Churches is called to communion and is committed to justice.

Through robust engagement with the Word of God and the call of the Holy Spirit, the World Communion of Reformed Churches is always being transformed as it strives for the full and just participation of all. In our diversity, we seek to be a living expression of "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3).

We work to renew and restore the economy and the earth, so that all humanity and the whole of creation might live life in its fullness (Deuteronomy 30:19; John 10:10).

Overarching Goal

By 2024, the World Communion of Reformed Churches will strive to be significantly strengthened and increasingly effective in living out God's call to communion and commitment to justice.¹ As a global *Koinonia*,² we are marked by discerning, confessing,³ witnessing and being reformed together.

The World Communion of Reformed Churches, with all the partners God provides, serves its member churches and also works for the transformation of the whole world, which is so loved by God but still trapped by multiple injustices and death, having fallen among thieves (John 10:10).

As it strives to fulfil its vision, the World Communion of Reformed Churches works through two strategic trajectories:

- Strengthening and deepening the *Koinonia*.
- Growing and expanding its work for a greater global impact.

These strategic trajectories are applied through five interlocking dimensions:

- Communion
- Justice
- Theology
- Mission
- Ecumenical Engagement and Interreligious Cooperation

¹ "Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other (Psalm 85:10).

² The Greek word *Koinonia* means joint participation in a communion, in which one has a share in anything. According to Acts 2:42 it identifies the state of fellowship and unity that should exist within the Christian congregation.

³ In the spirit of the Barmen Declaration and the confessions of Belhar and Accra.

