



## Conference of European Churches (CEC) & Council of Bishops' Conferences of Europe (CCEE)

**First draft of the revised Charta Oecumenica for consultation**

Please share reactions, comments and further contributions  
by 15 October 2024, via the email address: [charta@cec-kek.be](mailto:charta@cec-kek.be)

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| Current Charta  | Revised Charta  |
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| <p><b>WE BELIEVE IN "ONE HOLY CATHOLIC AND APOSTOLIC CHURCH"</b></p> <p>"(Make) every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all" (Ephesians 4:3-6)</p>   | <p><b>WE BELIEVE IN "ONE HOLY CATHOLIC AND APOSTOLIC CHURCH"</b></p> <p>"(Make) every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all" (Ephesians 4:3-6)</p>   |
| <p><b>1. Called Together to Unity in Faith</b></p> <p>With the Gospel of Jesus Christ, according to the witness of Holy Scripture and as expressed in the ecumenical Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed of 381, we believe in the Triune God: the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Because we here confess "one, holy, catholic and apostolic church" our paramount ecumenical task is to show forth this unity, which is always a gift of God.</p> <p>Fundamental differences in faith are still barriers to visible unity. There are different views of the church and its oneness, of the sacraments and ministries. We must not be satisfied with this situation. Jesus Christ revealed to us on the cross his love and the mystery of reconciliation; as his followers, we intend to do our utmost to overcome the problems and obstacles that still divide the churches.</p> | <p><b>1. Called Together to Unity in Faith</b></p> <p>With the Gospel of Jesus Christ, according to the witness of Holy Scripture and as expressed in the ecumenical Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed of 381, we believe in the Triune God: the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We believe in Jesus Christ who in His cross and resurrection reveals to us God's love and the mystery of reconciliation. As our Lord and Savior, He sends us the Holy Spirit to live in <i>koinonia</i> with Him as brothers and sisters. We confess that the work of Christ and the mission of the Holy Spirit reaches their fullness within "one, holy, catholic and apostolic" Church.</p> <p>In obedience to Christ's final commission (Mt 28:18-20; Mk 16:15-18) we are ready to proclaim this common <i>kerygma</i> to "the whole creation", and especially to "all nations" of Europe; and to proclaim it together! We believe - and already experience - that the <i>kerygma</i> is a powerful sign - but also an overflowing source - of our unity, which is always a gift of God.</p> |

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| <p><b>We commit ourselves</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to follow the apostolic exhortation of the Letter to the Ephesians and persevere in seeking a common understanding of Christ's message of salvation in the Gospel;</li> <li>• in the power of the Holy Spirit, to work towards the visible unity of the Church of Jesus Christ in the one faith, expressed in the mutual recognition of baptism and in eucharistic fellowship, as well as in common witness and service.</li> </ul> | <p>We acknowledge the differences which are still obstacles to visible unity, among them those concerning the understanding of the Church, of the sacraments and of ministries. This is a cause of painful regret because we know that what we share together is deeper and greater than all the differences. We need to repent and seek forgiveness and reconciliation.</p> <p><b>We commit ourselves</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to do our utmost to overcome the problems and divisions that still separate the churches;</li> <li>• to follow the apostolic exhortation of the Letter to the Ephesians and to persevere in seeking a common discipleship of Christ;</li> <li>• to work towards the visible unity of the Church of Jesus Christ in the one faith, sharing one scripture, in obedience to God's Word, following the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This shall become visible in the mutual recognition of Baptism and in Eucharistic fellowship, as well as in common witness and service.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>II. ON THE WAY TOWARDS THE VISIBLE FELLOWSHIP OF THE CHURCHES IN EUROPE</b></p> <p>"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35)</p>   | <p><b>II. ON THE WAY TOWARDS THE VISIBLE FELLOWSHIP OF THE CHURCHES IN EUROPE</b></p> <p>"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35)</p>   |

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| <p><b>5. Praying together</b></p> <p>The ecumenical movement lives from our hearing God's word and letting the Holy Spirit work in us and through us. In the power of this grace, many different initiatives now seek, through services of prayer and worship, to deepen the spiritual fellowship among the churches and to pray for the visible unity of Christ's Church. A particularly painful sign of the divisions among many Christian churches is the lack of eucharistic fellowship.</p> <p>In some churches reservations subsist regarding praying together in an ecumenical context. But we have many hymns and liturgical prayers in common, notably the Lord's Prayer, and ecumenical services have become a widespread practice: all of these are features of our Christian spirituality.</p> <p><b>We commit ourselves</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to pray for one another and for Christian unity;</li> <li>• to learn to know and appreciate the worship and other forms of spiritual life practised by other churches;</li> <li>• to move towards the goal of eucharistic fellowship.</li> </ul> | <p><b>2. Listening to the Word of God and Praying Together</b></p> <p>The ecumenical movement is the work of the Holy Spirit who encourages individuals and churches into unity. It lives from our hearing God's Word and letting the Holy Spirit work in us and through us. In the power of this grace, many different initiatives seek, through services of prayer and worship, to deepen the spiritual fellowship among the churches and to pray for the visible unity of Christ's Church. Despite major efforts towards Eucharistic fellowship, Christian churches and inter-church families lament the remaining division.</p> <p>Knowing that "in one spirit, we were all baptised into one body" (1 Cor 12:13), we celebrate signs of hope: We listen to the Word of God together, some using joint bible translations and lectionaries. We study the Bible together, we worship together, we gather for ecumenical youth prayers, and we mark collaboratively the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.</p> <p><b>We commit ourselves</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to walk together, listening to the Holy Spirit and exchanging spiritual gifts;</li> <li>• to pray together, for one another and for Christian unity;</li> <li>• to learn to know and appreciate the worship and other forms of spiritual life practised by other churches;</li> <li>• to continue moving towards the goal of Eucharistic fellowship and hospitality.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>3. Moving towards one another</b></p> <p>In the spirit of the Gospel, we must reappraise together the history of the Christian churches, which has been marked by many beneficial experiences but also by schisms, hostilities and even</p>  | <p><b>3. Moving towards Common Witness</b></p> <p>In the spirit of the Gospel, we want to witness to Christian unity and community. Yet, we acknowledge our historical and present divisions, which hinder our joint testimony to this world.</p>  |

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| <p>armed conflicts. Human guilt, lack of love and the frequent abuse of faith and the church for political interests have severely damaged the credibility of the Christian witness.</p> <p>Ecumenism therefore begins for Christians with the renewal of our hearts and the willingness to repent and change our ways. The ecumenical movement has already helped to spread reconciliation.</p> <p>It is important to acknowledge the spiritual riches of the different Christian traditions, to learn from one another and so to receive these gifts. For the ecumenical movement to flourish it is particularly necessary to integrate the experiences and expectations of young people and actively encourage their participation.</p> <p><b>We commit ourselves</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to overcome the feeling of self-sufficiency within each church, and to eliminate prejudices; to seek mutual encounters and to be available to help one another;</li> <li>• to promote ecumenical openness and co-operation in Christian education, and in theological training, continuing education and research.</li> </ul> | <p>Ecumenism therefore begins for Christians with the renewal of our hearts and thereby creating a culture of love and fostering hospitality and trust.</p> <p>We have overcome mutual condemnations and walk together towards deeper understanding of each other's liturgies and theologies, all being grounded in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In our ecumenical journey, common witness is at the centre of evangelisation. In exchanging the spiritual gifts of the different Christian churches, we celebrate the many forms of worshipping God in the Spirit through Jesus Christ. A particular sign of hope consists in the prayers, experiences, and encounters of young people, for many of whom being Christian means being ecumenical.</p> <p><b>We commit ourselves</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to continue striving for Christian understanding across traditions and pursuing ecumenical dialogues;</li> <li>• to actively contribute to the joint study of our history of faith, to the healing of memories, and to reconciliation;</li> <li>• to overcome the temptations of self-sufficiency, indifference, or relativism within each church;</li> <li>• to seek mutual encounters and to be available to help one another;</li> <li>• to promote ecumenical openness and cooperation in worship, witness, charity, Christian education, and theological training.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>2. Proclaiming the Gospel together</b></p> <p>The most important task of the churches in Europe is the common proclamation of the Gospel, in both word and deed, for the</p>  | <p><b>4. Proclaiming the Gospel Together</b></p> <p>The most important task of the churches in Europe is the common proclamation of the Gospel, in both word and deed, for the</p>   |

salvation of all. The widespread lack of corporate and individual orientation and falling away from Christian values challenge Christians to testify to their faith, particularly in response to the quest for meaning which is being pursued in so many forms. This witness will require increased dedication to Christian education (e.g. catechism classes) and pastoral care in local congregations, with a sharing of experiences in these fields. It is equally important for the whole people of God together to communicate the Gospel in the public domain, which also means responsible commitments to social and political issues.

#### **We commit ourselves**

- to discuss our plans for evangelisation with other churches, entering into agreements with them and thus avoiding harmful competition and the risk of fresh divisions;
- to recognise that every person can freely choose his or her religious and church affiliation as a matter of conscience, which means not inducing anyone to convert through moral pressure or material incentive, but also not hindering anyone from entering into conversion of his or her own free will.

salvation of all. Considering the modern European history of secularisation and the manifold relations between states and religions in European countries, it is important to give witness in ways that respond to every need. This witness requires to spread the Good News of God's saving and healing for this world together and not against each other. It is important to jointly proclaim and live the Gospel in families, among friends, at workplaces, in congregations, in education, in pastoral care, in our societies, both in personal encounter and in digital spaces. Faith needs to be shared in ways that it can be experienced and provide orientation in life, including the public domain, social and political issues.

#### **We commit ourselves**

- to adopt a posture of receptivity towards the diversity of traditions, charisms, and ministries;
- to actively and openly approach churches in our contexts with whom we have no relations yet, to seek ways of joint witness and cooperation;
- to share in faith and evangelisation with other churches, entering into agreements with them and thus avoiding harmful competition and the risk of fresh divisions;
- to recognise religious freedom not only as fundamental to respond to the call of the Gospel, but also as a civil right of every person, which means not inducing anyone to convert through moral pressure or material incentive, but also not hindering anyone from entering into conversion of their own free will.

#### 4. Acting together

Various forms of shared activity are already ecumenical. Many Christians from different churches live side by side and interact in friendships, in their neighbourhoods, at work and in their families. Couples in interdenominational marriages especially should be supported in experiencing ecumenism in their daily lives.

We recommend that bilateral and multilateral ecumenical bodies be set up and maintained for co-operation at local, regional, national and international levels. At the European level it is necessary to strengthen co-operation between the Conference of European Churches and the Council of European Bishops' Conferences (CCEE) and to hold further European Ecumenical Assemblies.

In the event of conflicts between churches, efforts towards mediation and peace should be initiated and/or supported as needed.

#### 5. Continuing in Dialogue and Working Together

In recent decades, we have come a long way in dialogue and encounter between our churches. We are grateful to the Lord for what has been achieved.

Many Christians from different churches live side by side and interact in friendships, in their neighbourhoods, at work and in their families. Inter-church marriages have become a source and inspiration in their modelling of ecumenical life, pointing to issues that need to be addressed and opening paths of finding new ways together in love.

Bilateral and multilateral ecumenical bodies have been set up and maintained for cooperation at local, regional, national, and international levels. At the European level, it is necessary to further strengthen collaboration between the Conference of European Churches (CEC), the Council of European Bishops' Conferences (CCEE), and other interdenominational church organisations such as national forums pertaining to the Global Christian Forum.

In the event of conflicts between churches, efforts towards mediation and peace should be initiated and/or supported as needed. It is important to react in a spirit of honesty, repentance, and unequivocal commitment to the liberating Gospel of Christ towards any tendencies of fundamentalism or polarisation in the churches, or the misuse of religion.

In acknowledging that there are still some issues that cause difficulties in our dialogue, we are strengthened by the way we have walked together.



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| <p><b>We commit ourselves</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to act together at all levels of church life wherever conditions permit and there are no reasons of faith or overriding expediency mitigating against this;</li> <li>• to defend the rights of minorities and to help reduce misunderstandings and prejudices between majority and minority churches in our countries.</li> </ul>  | <p><b>We commit ourselves</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to act together at all levels of church life wherever conditions permit and there are no reasons of faith or overriding expediency mitigating against this;</li> <li>• to continue in conscientious, intensive dialogue at different levels between our churches, and to examine the question of how official church bodies can receive and implement the findings gained in dialogue;</li> <li>• to help reduce misunderstandings and prejudices between majority and minority churches in our countries;</li> <li>• in the event of controversies, particularly when divisions threaten in questions of faith and ethics, to seek dialogue and discuss the issues together in the light of the Gospel.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>6. Continuing in dialogue</b></p> <p>We belong together in Christ, and this is of fundamental significance in the face of our differing theological and ethical positions. Rather than seeing our diversity as a gift which enriches us, however, we have allowed differences of opinion on doctrine, ethics and church law to lead to separations between churches, with special historical circumstances and different cultural backgrounds often playing a crucial role.</p> <p>In order to deepen ecumenical fellowship, endeavours to reach a consensus in faith must be continued at all cost. Only in this way can church communion be given a theological foundation. There is no alternative to dialogue.</p> <p><b>We commit ourselves</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to continue in conscientious, intensive dialogue at different levels between our churches, and to examine the question</li> </ul> | <p><b>Included into 5</b></p>  |

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| <p>of how official church bodies can receive and implement the findings gained in dialogue;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in the event of controversies, particularly when divisions threaten in questions of faith and ethics, to seek dialogue and discuss the issues together in the light of the Gospel.</li> </ul>   |  |
| <p><b>III. OUR COMMON RESPONSIBILITY IN EUROPE</b></p> <p>"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" (Matthew 5:9)</p>   | <p><b>III. SPHERES OF ENCOUNTER IN EUROPE</b></p> <p>"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" (Matthew 5:9)</p>  |
| <p><b>7. Participating in the building of Europe</b></p> <p>Through the centuries Europe has developed a primarily Christian character in religious and cultural terms. However, Christians have failed to prevent suffering and destruction from being inflicted by Europeans, both within Europe and beyond. We confess our share of responsibility for this guilt and ask God and our fellow human beings for forgiveness.</p> <p>Our faith helps us to learn from the past, and to make our Christian faith and love for our neighbours a source of hope for morality and ethics, for education and culture, and for political and economic life, in Europe and throughout the world.</p> <p>The churches support an integration of the European continent. Without common values, unity cannot endure. We are convinced that the spiritual heritage of Christianity constitutes an empowering source of inspiration and enrichment for Europe. On the basis of our Christian faith, we work towards a humane, socially conscious Europe, in which human rights and the basic values of peace, justice, freedom, tolerance, participation and solidarity prevail. We likewise insist on the reverence for life, the value of</p> | <p><b>6. Participating in the Building of Europe</b></p> <p>The Church understands its commitment in the building of Europe as part of its mission in the midst of European peoples. Europe results from the sharing of the many riches of the diversity of its peoples. The Christian faith has shaped the culture of the continent and is inextricably bound up with its history.</p> <p>The churches support the integration of the European continent. Without common values, unity cannot endure. We are convinced that the spiritual heritage of Christianity constitutes an empowering source of inspiration and enrichment for Europe. Based on our Christian faith, we work towards a humane, socially conscious Europe, in which human rights and the basic values of the dignity of the human person, peace, justice, freedom, tolerance, participation and solidarity prevail. We condemn any form of violence against the human person, including gender-based violence, particularly against women and children. We likewise insist on the reverence for life, the value of marriage and the family, the preferential option for the poor, the readiness to forgive, and in all things compassion. We counteract tendencies of</p> |

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| <p>marriage and the family, the preferential option for the poor, the readiness to forgive, and in all things compassion.</p> <p>As churches and as international communities we have to counteract the danger of Europe developing into an integrated West and a disintegrated East, and also take account of the North-South divide within Europe. At the same time we must avoid Eurocentricity and heighten Europe's sense of responsibility for the whole of humanity, particularly for the poor all over the world.</p> <p><b>We commit ourselves</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to seek agreement with one another on the substance and goals of our social responsibility, and to represent in concert, as far as possible, the concerns and visions of the churches vis-à-vis the secular European institutions;</li> <li>• to defend basic values against infringements of every kind</li> <li>• to resist any attempt to misuse religion and the church for ethnic or nationalist purposes.</li> </ul> | <p>West-East and North-South divides within Europe. The hope of building a more just world, a more just Europe, worthier of the human person, must be coupled with an awareness that human efforts are of no avail if not accompanied by Divine Grace.</p> <p><b>We commit ourselves</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to contribute to the integrity of Europe on a religious, social, and political level;</li> <li>• to seek agreement with one another on the substance and goals of our social responsibility, and to represent in concert, as far as possible, the concerns and visions of the churches vis-à-vis the secular European institutions;</li> <li>• to defend basic values against infringements of every kind;</li> <li>• to strengthen the position and equal rights of women in all areas of life, and to foster partnership in church and society between women and men;</li> <li>• to condemn religious fundamentalism and everything that weakens the bonds that hold us together.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>10. Strengthening community with Judaism</b></p> <p>We are bound up in a unique community with the people Israel, the people of the Covenant which God has never terminated. Our faith teaches us that our Jewish sisters and brothers "are beloved, for the sake of their ancestors; for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable" (Rom 11.28-29). And "to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship and the</p>  | <p><b>7. Strengthening Community with Judaism</b></p> <p>We are bound up in a unique community with the people of Israel. Jewish-Christian relations remain an important part of every Christian's identity. Our Jewish sisters and brothers are the people of the Covenant which God has never terminated. Our faith teaches us that they are still "beloved" and chosen; "for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable" (Rom 11:28-29). "And from them, according to the flesh, comes the Christ" (Rom 9:5). The Jewish</p>  |

promises; to them belong the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, comes the Messiah" (Rom 9.4-5).

We deplore and condemn all manifestations of anti-Semitism, all outbreaks of hatred and persecutions. We ask God for forgiveness for anti-Jewish attitudes among Christians, and we ask our Jewish sisters and brothers for reconciliation.

It is urgently necessary, in the worship and teaching, doctrine and life of our churches, to raise awareness of the deep bond existing between the Christian faith and Judaism, and to support Christian-Jewish co-operation.

#### **We commit ourselves**

- to oppose all forms of anti-Semitism and anti-Judaism in the church and in society;
- to seek and intensify dialogue with our Jewish sisters and brothers at all levels.

people have never been replaced by the Church, the Hebrew Bible has never been replaced by the New Testament, and the first Covenant has not been replaced by the new one. They have never been replaced but fulfilled.

We acknowledge as a gift of the Holy Spirit the growing awareness of the deep familial bond existing between the Christian faith and Judaism. In this Spirit, the Jews are our parents in faith and our living and sustaining root (Rom 11:18). We can worship God and pray together, share not only the same Scriptures but also their understanding. We hope that genuine dialogue will bring us to know each other, and this knowledge will be followed by true love and common activity. It will also help us in our ecumenical dialogue.

In the same Spirit, we deplore and condemn all past and present manifestations of anti-Semitism, all outbreaks of hatred and persecution. We ask God for forgiveness for anti-Jewish attitudes among Christians, and we ask our Jewish sisters and brothers for reconciliation. Together with Jews, Christians must become guardians of the memory of Jewish presence and heritage in Europe, broken and nearly finished in most places by the Shoah. To forget it means to agree with its perpetrators and to allow for its reoccurrence.

#### **We commit ourselves**

- to oppose all forms of anti-Semitism and anti-Judaism in the Church and in society;
- to seek and intensify dialogue with our Jewish sisters and brothers at all levels;
- to strengthen awareness for Jewish heritage in our theology and liturgy;

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to look for opportunities of common (Jewish-Christian) work and activity in Europe and the world;</li> <li>• to resign from the institutional mission to the Jews - being still always ready to give personal testimony to Jesus.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>11. Cultivating relations with Islam</b></p> <p>Muslims have lived in Europe for centuries. In some European countries they constitute strong minorities. While there have been plenty of good contacts and neighbourly relations between Muslims and Christians, and this remains the case, there are still strong reservations and prejudices on both sides. These are rooted in painful experiences throughout history and in the recent past.</p> <p>We would like to intensify encounters between Christians and Muslims and enhance Christian-Islamic dialogue at all levels. We recommend, in particular, speaking with one another about our faith in one God, and clarifying ideas on human rights.</p> <p><b>We commit ourselves</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to conduct ourselves towards Muslims with respect;</li> <li>• to work together with Muslims on matters of common concern.</li> </ul> | <p><b>8. Cultivating Relations with Islam</b></p> <p>For Jews, Christians, and Muslims, Abraham is a founding figure. Reflections on the relations between Islam and Christianity enable Christians to deeper understand their position within the Abrahamic family. We share with Muslims the belief in one merciful God. However, the Christian belief in the divinity of Christ and in the Triune God also set us apart. Both our commonalities and differences can help us to better understand ourselves and each other.</p> <p>Muslims and Christians share both a history and a present in Europe, which has been marked by plenty of good contacts and neighbourly relations, but also by wars and painful experiences, strong reservations, and prejudices on both sides. To increase our understanding of each other and to improve our living together, we encourage an intensification of encounters between Christians and Muslims and the enhancing of Muslim-Christian dialogue at all levels.</p> <p><b>We commit ourselves</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to discern and pursue matters of common concern with Muslims;</li> <li>• to oppose Islamophobia in the Church and in society;</li> <li>• to work together with Muslims in the cause of peace against any forms of extremism or misuse of religion.</li> </ul> |

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| <p><b>12. Encountering other religions and world views</b><br/> The plurality of religious and non-confessional beliefs and ways of life has become a feature of European culture. Eastern religions and new religious communities are spreading and also attracting the interest of many Christians. In addition, growing numbers of people reject the Christian faith, are indifferent to it or have other philosophies of life.<br/> We want to take seriously the critical questions of others, and try together to conduct fair discussions with them. Yet a distinction must be made between the communities with which dialogues and encounters are to be sought, and those which should be warned against from the Christian standpoint.</p> <p><b>We are committed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to recognise the freedom of religion and conscience of these individuals and communities and to defend their right to practise their faith or convictions, whether singly or in groups, privately or publicly, in the context of rights applicable to all;</li> <li>• to be open to dialogue with all persons of good will, to pursue with them matters of common concern, and to bring a witness of our Christian faith to them.</li> </ul> | <p><b>9. Engaging Other Religions and World Views</b><br/> The spiritual landscape in Europe is constantly changing, with a plurality of religious beliefs and non-confessional ways of life, along with Eastern religions and new religious communities.</p> <p>In respecting each other, we take seriously the critical questions of one another, aiming for fair discussions. The churches have the opportunity to engage with individuals and communities so that mutual understanding may be fostered, and relationships may be strengthened and deepened.</p> <p><b>We commit ourselves</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to recognise the freedom of religion and the freedom of conscience and to defend the right to practise faith or belief, whether individually or in groups, privately or publicly, within the framework of rights common to all;</li> <li>• to be open to dialogue with all people of good will, to pursue with them matters of common concern and to share with them the witness of our Christian faith.</li> </ul> |
| -   | <p><b>IV. FIELDS OF COMMON ENGAGEMENT IN EUROPE</b></p> <p>“How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!” (Psalm 133:1)</p>   |

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| <p><b>8. Reconciling peoples and cultures</b></p> <p>We consider the diversity of our regional, national, cultural and religious traditions to be enriching for Europe. In view of numerous conflicts, the churches are called upon to serve together the cause of reconciliation among peoples and cultures. We know that peace among the churches is an important prerequisite for this.</p> <p>Our common endeavours are devoted to evaluating, and helping to resolve, political and social issues in the spirit of the Gospel. Because we value the person and dignity of every individual as made in the image of God, we defend the absolutely equal value of all human beings.</p> <p>As churches we intend to join forces in promoting the process of democratisation in Europe. We commit ourselves to work for structures of peace, based on the non-violent resolution of conflicts. We condemn any form of violence against the human person, particularly against women and children.</p> <p>Reconciliation involves promoting social justice within and among all peoples; above all, this means closing the gap between rich and poor and overcoming unemployment. Together we will do our part towards giving migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers a humane reception in Europe.</p> <p><b>We commit ourselves</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to counteract any form of nationalism which leads to the oppression of other peoples and national minorities and to engage ourselves for non-violent resolutions;</li> </ul> | <p><b>10. Striving for Peace in Europe</b></p> <p>The history of Europe proves that war is ultimately futile. As Christians, we need to implore peace from God as His gift, acknowledging that peace also needs to be built day by day, through works of justice and love. That is why we affirm that war is a defeat for humanity and that only in peace and through peace can respect for human dignity and its inalienable rights be guaranteed. There is no true peace without fairness, truth, justice, and solidarity.</p> <p>Furthermore, our Christian faith does not allow us to despair of our opponents. Inspired by faith, we do not equate our opponents with their error and do not lose hope for them.</p> <p>Peace causes minds to come together, to be ready for sincere and continual dialogue, preparing the ground for fresh advances in justice within the peaceful coexistence of all human beings.</p> <p><b>We commit ourselves</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to work for peace in Europe and in the whole world, as people made in the image of God, the Lord of Peace;</li> <li>• to deny misuse of religion to justify political purposes;</li> <li>• to encourage acts of forgiveness and reconciliation in the domain of our social, political and religious responsibilities;</li> </ul> |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to strengthen the position and equal rights of women in all areas of life, and to foster partnership in church and society between women and men.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to assume responsibility for each other and for the future.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>9. Safeguarding the creation</b></p> <p>Believing in the love of the Creator God, we give thanks for the gift of creation and the great value and beauty of nature. However, we are appalled to see natural resources being exploited without regard for their intrinsic value or consideration of their limits, and without regard for the well-being of future generations.</p> <p>Together we want to help create sustainable living conditions for the whole of creation. It is our responsibility before God to put into effect common criteria for distinguishing between what human beings are scientifically and technologically capable of doing and what, ethically speaking, they should not do.</p> <p>We recommend the introduction in European churches of an Ecumenical Day of Prayer for the Preservation of Creation.</p> <p><b>We commit ourselves</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to strive to adopt a lifestyle free of economic pressures and consumerism and a quality of life informed by accountability and sustainability;</li> <li>to support church environmental organisations and ecumenical networks in their efforts for the safeguarding of creation.</li> </ul> | <p><b>11. Safeguarding Creation</b></p> <p>Believing in God's original vision for humanity, we can see that we are called to be faithful stewards, careful cultivators, and generous lovers of all life on our planet. While religion has great potential to change our way of relating to the earth and all its creatures, in the past some believed that the biblical passage "be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it" (Gen 1:28) gave humans permission to plunder the earth.</p> <p>Together, we call on one another to get to know the natural world more thoroughly, understand what is threatening planetary boundaries and our shared future more fully, and do all we can to create a friendly world for every creature.</p> <p>We urge all Christians to care for and safeguard our common home.</p> <p>We encourage the faithful to treasure creation together all year round but especially during the month-long Season of Creation.</p> <p><b>We commit ourselves</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to make an ecological conversion at personal, ecclesial, social and community levels, so as to protect the whole of creation;</li> <li>to specifically instigate and support initiatives which encourage the flourishing of all God's creatures;</li> <li>to work together to support communities negatively affected by climate change.</li> </ul> |



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|  | <p><b>12. Migration and People on the Move</b></p> <p>The influx of migrants to Europe is changing the spiritual landscape of the churches, with many local Christian communities owing their existence to the presence of migrants. This phenomenon has reshaped the composition of congregations and is enriching the cultural and religious diversity. The biblical motif of being a stranger, including Jesus' own experiences of displacement, and the imperative of hospitality underscore the transient nature of human existence and the Christian call to welcome, protect, promote, and integrate migrants.</p> <p><b>We commit ourselves</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to express unity with migrants, recognising shared humanity and promoting a prophetic witness against unjust systems;</li> <li>• to engage in transformative actions that reflect the values of justice, love, and inclusivity inherent in the Christian faith;</li> <li>• to join in diaconia, establishing welcoming committees, offering orientation and language support, organising cultural exchange programmes, and fostering community building at a local level;</li> <li>• to advocate with a united voice that interfaces with political institutions to champion the rights and well-being of migrants, shaping policies, safeguarding human rights, heightening public awareness, forging alliances, addressing systemic challenges, offering pastoral care, and fostering international collaboration.</li> </ul> |
|  | <p><b>13. New Technologies and Digitalisation</b></p>  |

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|  | <p>Sacred Scripture testifies that God gave His Spirit to human beings so that they might have “ability, intelligence, and knowledge, and every kind of skill” (Ex 35:31). Human intelligence is an expression of the dignity with which we are endowed by the Creator, who made us in His own image and likeness (Gen 1:26). Science and technology are fascinating products of human creative potential that shape our ways of relating to the world, to each other, and to ourselves.</p> <p>Artificial intelligence and other digital tools change the face of human activity and responsibility, communication, public administration, education, consumption, personal interactions, and countless other aspects of our daily lives. The hopes and anxieties related to new technologies must be balanced with Jesus’ vision for a flourishing humanity (John 10:10), respecting the integrity and the innate dignity of the person and the value of personal relationships and human knowledge. Otherwise, inequalities could grow out of proportion, knowledge and wealth could accumulate in the hands of a few, and there would be grave risks for democratic societies and peaceful coexistence.</p> <p><b>We commit ourselves</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to defend the inalienable dignity of every person;</li> <li>• to promote integral development and the common good;</li> <li>• to encourage dialogue with all actors in the public sphere on ethical, political, economic, and social justice issues;</li> <li>• to promote ethical frameworks and guidelines in the consideration of digitalisation and the use of new technologies.</li> </ul> |
|  | <p><b>14. Europe and the World</b></p> <p>Christianity has played an essential role in the forming of European identity and culture. At the same time, we acknowledge that Europe</p>  |

is neither the root nor the centre of Christianity. Contrary to our colonising history, we have been recipients of the Christian faith both in the past and today. Christians in Europe are part of a global community. As churches and as international communities we must avoid Eurocentricity. We consider the diversity of our regional, national, cultural, and religious traditions to be enriching. At the same time, different cultural backgrounds can lead to controversies in questions of ethics and faith. As Christians, we engage with each other in a listening, discerning, and loving spirit. We care about building relationships and friendships with partners from other parts of the world.

**We commit ourselves**

- to work for the promotion of an integral vision of every person and of the world;
- to resist any tendency towards dehumanisation and disrespect for human life;
- to resist any attempt to misuse religion and the church for ethnic, nationalist, or populist purposes;
- to counteract any form of nationalism which leads to the oppression of other peoples and national minorities and to engage ourselves for non-violent resolutions;
- to defend human rights and the rights of minorities.

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