

**Reformed Family Forum
eMseni Conference Centre (JHB) 13-16 October 2022**

1. In Attendance

**Address List 2022
Reformed Family Forum**

Church	Representative	e-mail	Telephone
(1) CCAP Harare Synod	Rev Kingstar Chipata	kingstarchipata@yahoo.com hresynodgs@gmail.com	+263 4 703719, +263712730408
(2) CCAP Nkhoma Synod	Rev Vasco Kachipapa	ccapnkhomasynod89@gmail.com	+265 997 957 801
(3) Dutch Reformed Church (DRC)	Dr Gustav Claassen	gustavc@ngkerk.org.za	+27 828561943
(4) Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (DRCA)	Rev Abel Marumo	dsmarumo@gmail.com	+27 730516110
(5) Dutch Reformed Church in Botswana (DRCB)	Me Letjani Moatshe	drcbsynod@btcmil.co.bw , lmoatshem@gmail.com	+2675777615/630 +26771460321(office) +26772260977 (personal)
(6) Igreja Evangelica Reformada de Angola (IERA)	Rev Alberto Daniel	adanieldaniel248@gmail.com secretariadogeral.iera@hotmail.com	+244 928 251 318 +244 912 213 291
(7) Igreja Reformada em Mozambique (IRM)	Rev Samuel Besitala	samuelbesitala@gmail.com	+258 869644825
- Mphatso Synod	Rev Joao Herbarth	pastor.herbarth@gmail.com irmtumbine@gmail.com	+258 86 130 3554
- Tumbine Synod	Rev Gabriel Marata	pastor@vivamaputo.org m.almeidachibota@gmail.com	+258843863324
- Novo Synod			
(8) Lesotho Evangelical Church in Southern Africa (LECSA)	Rev Nelson Posholi	khethangnp@gmail.com lecmaseru@ilesotho.com	+26658840123 +26666300123
(9) NKST (Nigeria)	Rev Ephraim Mbateren Shir	nksthq@yahoo.com revemshir64@gmail.com	
(10) Reformed Church in Africa (RCA)	Rev Ivan Akash Sirpal	akashsirpal@yahoo.com	+27 836287651
(11) Reformed Church in East Africa (RCEA)	Dr Luka Ariko	rceasynodi@yahoo.com	+254721241400 +254714415032
(12) Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ Zam)	Dr William Zulu	mbusazulu@gmail.com	+260 977 811 090
(13) Reformed Church in Zimbabwe (RCZ Zim)	Rev Tafadzwa Masimba	tmasimba@rcz.org.zw	+263772550388

(14) Swaziland Reformed Church (SRC)	Dr Arnau van Wyngaard	wyngaard@lando.co.za	+27829245632
(15) Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URCSA)	Me Desiree Brown	gensec.gs@urcsa.org.za	+27723384711
Organisation	Representative	e-mail	Telephone
Christian Literature Fund (CLF)	Me Charmaine Stoffberg Me Berlise Louwrens	Charmaine@clf.co.za berlise@clf.co.za	+27 21 8736974 +27 832270211 +27823392740 +27827054636
NetAct	Rev Hannes Theron		
Partners in Mission (DRC Free State)	Dr Nico Mostert	missio@ngkvs.co.za	+27 845604671
Witness Ministry (Cape Region)	Dr Daniel de Wet Me Mariëtte Odendaal	missio@kaapkerk.co.za kgakommunikasie@kaapkerk.co.za .za	+27 21 9577204 +27 37500866

Not attended:

NKST (Nigeria)	Rev Ephraim Mbateren Shir
Igreja Reformada em Mozambique (IRM)	Rev Gabriel Marata
Novo Synod	
Igreja Evangelica Reformada de Angola (IERA)	Rev Alberto Daniel

Resolution:

The meeting expresses their condolences with passing the grandfather of Rev Alberto Daniel.

2. Opening

3. Welcoming address – William Zulu RC Zambia

Ps 23

4. Constituting of the meeting

From the 2019 minutes:

12.9 New Executive Committee

Chairperson: Rev Nelson Posholi

Vice Chairperson: Mrs Tebatso Menyatso

Additional member: Dr Miguel Nobre

The offices of Drs Odendaal, Van der Watt and Claassen will take joint responsibility for the secretariat

Resolution:

1. Since there was no meeting for the past two years, and many of the office bearers elected on the previous meeting has since retired from their positions, the meeting approve that Rev Posholi chair the meeting until a new executive is elected at the end of the meeting.
2. The meeting expresses their gratitude to Dr Gideon van der Watt and Dr Kobus Odendaal for their service to the RFF. The meeting take note that Dr Nico Mostert and Dr Daniel de Wet are now the new persons in the respective offices.

5. Minutes of the previous meeting (2019)

The meeting reviews the minutes and attention is given to:

12.3 The ecology booklet did not materialise during the past 2 years. An ecology calendar will be added on the Wapp group and already available resources will be shared. Churches are encouraged to engage in setting up task teams or committees to raise awareness and create advocacy within the churches and communities. It is advisable to partner with other churches, NGO's, governments and civic organisations to create awareness and advocacy. The meeting proposed that the theme for the 2023 RFF meeting will be focussed on the ecology and the effect of climate change.

12.5 Pension schemes – we advise that it needs to be dealt with in the respective churches and the regulatory frameworks of the respective countries

12.6 Will be dealt with later in the agenda

12.7 Churches are reminded to respond quickly on requests for submissions. A calendar is proposed for the next year where the important dates of synod meetings and special celebrations are to be listed

Resolution:

Meeting moves to adopt the minutes and the proposals

Proposed by Vaso Kachipapa

Seconded by Kingstar Chipata

6. Covid-19: The challenges we had during the pandemic and the challenges we now have after the pandemic

The meeting gave an opportunity to each of the members to report on developments, challenges, and the aftermath of Covid within their respective churches.

Zambia

Negative:

Occurred huge financial losses and church is still trying to recover

Conducting funerals became a challenge

Positive:

Church learned to take responsibility and explore other options for raising funds

IT platforms became a useful help in reaching the congregants although not everyone had access to online church

Mozambique (Mphatso Synod and Tumbine Synod)

Police brutality increased and people were arrested for not complying to Covid regulations

The Covid regulations incurred high costs in terms of PPE and traveling both outside in inside the country the Covid testing being made compulsory.

Lesotho

Time restrictions hampered church activities and funerals.

On the positive side online presence increased and the church radio station proved to be a source of great help. Country had good response to the vaccination campaign and the church participated in that and also send out regular statements.

This is brief summary of what was reported:

Zimbabwe

RCZ

There was a lot of conflicting theologies going around which made the situation worse.

People were acting out of ignorance, and it worsened the infection rate and death toll

CCAP Harare Synod

Membership declined and so did income

Small businesses suffered as people were not able to sell on the streets

People were very hesitant to vaccinate

Malawi

Conflicting theologies were a huge problem

Tithing increased as contributions via cell phone networks were introduced

Swaziland

Congregations became innovative by limiting attendance inside the churches and putting speakers outside where safe distances could be maintained

Conflicting theologies and conspiracy theories abound that caused a slow vaccination rate

Kenia

Negative

Losses of family member were experienced (Luka lost his brother)

Burials were complicated

Positive

Wider reach of members through phones and internet

Radio and TV stations were established in this time successfully

Testimony of a Muslim who listed to the radio and got saved

Electronic payments of tithes increased tithing

Realisation that the church is bigger than the 4 walls of the buildings

Botswana

Vaccinations went well although the country waited to receive them

Food hampers were distributed to curb the crisis

South Africa

RCA

WhatsApp and Zoom were used widely although many did not have access due to the high cost of data

There was a lot of Covid-related funerals and in cases where whole families passed away

After Covid the return rate to churches is not that high

The pandemic was followed by severe floods and rioting that caused more damage to communities in KZN

URCSA

Rural congregations suffered the most with lockdown of the churches

The gap between the "haves" and the "have nots" widened during the pandemic

Grateful for outside partners who helped with food

Still trying to recover financially

DRC

Shutdown of church services had a huge impact on church attendance

Many congregations still struggle to regain attendance numbers

Congregations got involved with food distribution in their local communities

Meeting discusses the conflicting theologies that prevailed during the pandemic. There was an alarming negative response everywhere from youths towards vaccinations. The quick spread of conspiracy theories were experienced everywhere and is a matter of great concern that needs to be addressed by the respective synods.

7. Christian Literature Fund – working towards joint literature projects

Launching of: A Family of Reformed Churches in Africa 2 – Dr van der Watt and Mrs Odendaal. The program for morning were:

1. Introduction Dr Nico Mostert
2. Handing over of books to General Secretaries – Dr Mostert and Dr De Wet
3. Book discussion
 - a. Brief Introduction of book by Mariette Odendaal and Gideon van der Watt
 - b. Panel discussion: Dr Daniel de Wet and Dr William Zulu

Questions:

- (1) Why do you think this is an important book?
- (2) Please explain the book title and cover page – what is significant about it
- (3) What does the history of all the churches tell us?
- (4) As you compiled and wrote the book, what surprised you – what is the “remarkable” element in the title?
- (5) What are the main challenges facing the Family of Reformed churches?
- (6) Some churches grew exponentially, others dwindle – are there some reasons you identified?
- (7) What are the main themes of the respective stories (spiritual and cultural identity, context, agency, leadership and unity)

People from audience can also ask questions – lead the discussion from a focus on the book to a focus on the churches and the challenges they face today.

Resolution:

1. The meeting expresses its appreciation to Dr van der Watt and Mrs Odendaal for preparation of the 2nd edition of the book.
2. We encourage the churches to use the book as part of the church history of our Family and our connectedness to each other.
3. We encourage the members to start working on a third edition that might focus on our unity based on the Trinity and the entrenched African beliefs of ubuntu and community

8. Youth as the future church – Why are we missing the next generation in Reformed Churches? Dr Gustav Claassen introduced Rev Charlotte Sibanyoni as guest speaker for the session.

Topics for discussion:

- Discerning Conflicts of our times: The role of youth in Church and society.
- Africa youth leadership: Building local leaders to solve global challenges.
- Decision-making and the Christian leader, how do we prepare the next generation to become the new leaders of the church?
- Servant Leaders: Teaching how to serve and to love?
- When Tragedy Strikes: From natural disasters to family tragedies, they do occur. How to lead during times of grief?
- Young African leaders: Shaping a future with accountable leadership.
- Witnessing in the 21st Century.

The respective churches share what is happening in terms of youth ministry in their churches.

Resolution:

1. Work towards connecting the respective youth ministers and ministries with the aim of bringing about a youth network within the RFF.
2. Encourage our members to engage with the youths via conferences or brainstorming (by making use of online platforms) etc.

9. What kind of theological training does the churches need?

Dr Nico Mostert gave an overview of the trends in theological education in Africa followed by a discussion. See Addendum IV

Topics that need further discussion are:

What are our church requirements for ministry?

Lay ministers/Tentmaking ministers as an option to address financial challenges

How to differentiate between ministerial formation (a function of the church) and theological education (a function of a theological institution)

Training of preaching elders with a joint curriculum

Continuous Theological training for ministers

Resolution:

1. It is advised that sustainable Theological Training be the topic for a meeting (preferably in person) where the moderators of the respective churches are present.
2. The meeting requests the executive committee to investigate the organising of such a meeting
3. Churches are encouraged to follow-up with their respective theological institutions regarding their participation in the NetACT curriculum survey

10. Archive follow-up conversation

A facilitated discussion was held. All are advised of the need for good archival practices to ensure that the church's history is preserved.

11. Follow-up discussion on the role church orders in securing good church governance

The meeting welcomes Dr Dewyk Ungerer, Actuary of the DRC General Synod. The presentation given by him is attached in Addendum II. Issues raised include leadership, good church governance, principles of reformed church polity, mandates being given to church office bearers. In line with the King reports in South Africa, we encourage churches not to elect employees of the church in church leadership on Synod level to avoid conflict of interest

Resolution:

1. The meeting wants to thank Dr Ungerer for his time and the insights he brought to the meeting.
2. The members encourage one another to view church order documents as living documents that are to be reviewed regularly to ensure proper governance in our respective churches
3. Ask the secretariat to explore the possibility to include, in the next meeting, the moderators for a continuation of the discussion on good governance in our Reformed Churches
4. Ask the executive committee to investigate the possibility of conducting workshops that can assist the respective churches to better their church governance

12. Greeting messages from local Synod Moderators

Greeting was brought by URCSA: Prof L Modise and DRC Hoëveld Synod: Dr Andre Bartlett

Resolution:

The meeting expresses their gratitude towards the two moderators for taking time to attend the meeting and bringing greetings from their respective churches.

13. Business meeting

13.1 Joint projects

Currently the partnerships are mainly between individual churches and the DRC. Partnerships are not limited so members are encouraged to engage with other members closer to them.

Resolution:

1. It is suggested that for 2023 the respective churches focus on ecumenical visits with their Moderamen members among each other.
2. Explore the possibility of having a zoom conference online that include the moderators and other functionaries
3. We encourage the churches to make use of the speakers from the meeting to assist on local level
4. Review the suggested KPA's and tasks for a GS and provide feedback and comments (prepare a possible handover sheet for departing GS's) before end of 2022 (see addendum II)

13.2 Literature

The Tell Tell series developed by CLF is available for use in English. Members are encouraged to contact CLF and enquire about the possibilities to obtain the rights to print the books in their respective countries for use. There is a cost involved which should be covered by the respective churches. It is suggested that for the 2023 meeting, the churches are to present material that can of use by all. It will then be reviewed by all, and the possibilities explored of involving CLF in assisting with the publication for use by all. The focus will be material that is written in English.

13.3 Functioning of RFF – the way forward

13.3.1 Constitution – See Addendum I

The constitution is reviewed, and no changes is adopted. The current copy will be language edited and included in the minutes.

13.3.2 New Executive Committee (election)

The elects the following persons to serve on the executive meeting:

Chair: William Zulu (RCZ)

Vice chair: Luka Ariko (RCEA)

Additional members: Letjani Moatshe (DRCB)

13.3.3 Financial contributions – Western Cape and Free State Synod

The cost for the 2022 Meeting expresses their appreciation to the two synods for their financial support of the RFF meeting

13.3.4 Next Year's meeting: Propose Malawi, 12-15 October 2023

Topics for the conference:

Finances for non-financial managers

Good governance

Ecology and climate change

Resolution:

Guest speakers will be asked to introduce the topics and two additional papers on the topic will be prepared and presented by 2 GS's

14. WCC Feedback session

Feedback is given from the members who were attending the meeting. Desiree Brown, Tafadzwa Masimba, William Zulu and Nico Mostert. See Addendum III for pastoral letter coming from the WCC.

Resolution:

1. The meeting conveys its congratulations to Prof Jerry Pillay of the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa upon his appointment as the new General Secretary of the World Council Churches
2. The meeting conveys its congratulations to William Zulu and Gustav Claassen for their election to serve on the Central Committee of the World Council Churches

15. Closure

**CONSTITUTION
REFORMED FAMILY FORUM (ENCONTRO DA FAMILIA REFORMADA)**

1. Name

The organisation hereby constituted shall be called **REFORMED FAMILY FORUM (ENCONTRO DA FAMILIA REFORMADA)** or abbreviated RFF.

2. Characteristics (nature of organisation)

The Reformed Family Forum has the characteristics of a “forum”. The concept “forum” is understood to be a loosely structured meeting, medium (body) or network constituted by representatives of participating churches where ideas and views on particular issues are exchanged, relationships/partnerships are built and joint projects of mutual assistance are initiated/planned. A forum has no authority over any of the participating churches.

3. Statement of faith as basis of membership

The Reformed Family Forum adheres to the following statement of faith:

- 3.1 We confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour, according to the Bible.
- 3.2 We share in the Reformed confessional basis of the participating churches.
- 3.3 We share historical ties as a family of churches, continuously striving towards greater visible unity.
- 3.4 We share in the identity and calling of being missional churches in our joint and respective contexts in Africa.
- 3.5 And therefore we seek to enter into fellowship with each other (and with other churches and Christian traditions) through the Reformed Family Forum serving as witness to our commitment to a common ministry to the glory of the one God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

4. Objectives

The Reformed Family Forum has the following objectives:

- 4.1 Celebrating and fostering our shared Reformed and missional *identity* as the one body of Christ with particular historical and confessional ties within a shared geographical context (Africa).
- 4.2 Discerning our joint *calling* in our shared African-, but also diverse national contexts, in serving the Kingdom of God in our countries and across our borders.
- 4.3 Initiating and building *liaison/networks/partnerships* between this particular group of churches and their representatives.
- 4.4 Serving as *communication channel disseminating relevant information* amongst the participating churches through the internet and other forms of media/publications.
- 4.5 Creating opportunities for the participation of representatives of churches in *regular joint meetings, workshops, conferences, mutual visits and correspondence* between the churches.
- 4.6 Jointly *discerning our changing contexts* (doing research) and assisting one another to meet the challenges churches face regarding their ministry through publications, projects and programs of capacity building.
- 4.7 Raising a credible *prophetic voice / engaging in public theology* in our region.

5. Membership

5.1 The Reformed Family Forum is structured by representatives (mostly General Secretaries or Scribes) of the participating churches.

5.2 The participating churches are:

- 5.2.1 Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP Harare Synod, Zimbabwe)
- 5.2.2 Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP Nkhoma Synod, Malawi)
- 5.2.3 Dutch Reformed Church (DRC)
- 5.2.4 Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (DRCA)
- 5.2.5 Dutch Reformed Church in Botswana (DRCB)
- 5.2.6 Igreja Evangelica Reformada de Angola (IERA)
- 5.2.7 Igreja Reformada em Mozambique (IRM)
 - Mphatso Synod
 - Tumbine Synod
 - Novo Synod
- 5.2.8 Lesotho Evangelical Church (LEC)
- 5.2.9 Nongo u Kristu u I Ser u sha Tar or *Universal Reformed Christian Church* (NKST Nigeria)
- 5.2.10 Reformed Church in Africa (RCA)
- 5.2.11 Reformed Church in East Africa (RCEA)
- 5.2.12 Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ Zambia)
- 5.2.13 Reformed Church in Zimbabwe (RCZ Zimbabwe)
- 5.2.14 Swaziland Reformed Church (SRC)
- 5.2.15 Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URCSA)

5.3 The following are organisations are associate member (with no voting rights)

- 5.3.1 Christian Literature Fund (CLF)
- 5.3.2 NetAct
- 5.3.3 Partners in Mission (DRC Free State)
- 5.3.4 Witness Ministry (Cape Region)

5.4 The annual meeting may decide on inviting churches (representatives of churches) or associate organisations to become participating members.

5.5 Any participating church or organisation may decide to withdraw their participation, but only after consulting with the executive committee and explaining the reasons for this action.

6. Functioning/structure

6.1 Annual General Meeting

- 6.1.1 The core (kernel/hub) structure of the Reformed Family Forum is the Annual General Meeting (AGM) consisting of General Secretaries (or their deputies or seconding them) of the participating churches
- 6.1.2 The Annual General Meeting:
 - 6.2.1.1 adopts or change the constitution
 - 6.2.1.2 appoints new office bearers and the secretariat
 - 6.2.1.3 adopts a budget and receives financial reports when applicable
 - 6.2.1.4 decides on membership fees and the utilisation of any funds that might be available

6.2 Executive committee

6.2.1 The Annual General Meeting of the RFF appoints a new Executive Committee for the following year consisting of:

- 6.2.1.1 A chairperson
- 6.2.1.2 A vise-chairperson
- 6.2.1.3 One additional member

Members of the Executive Committee may not serve in the same position for more than three consecutive years.

6.2.2 The Executive Committee gives effect to/implement decisions of the Annual General Meeting and takes responsibility for the day to day managerial matters of the RFF.

6.2.3 The Executive Committee meets as and when the need requires them to meet.

6.3 Secretariat

6.3.1 The Annual General Meeting appoints one or two persons to be responsible for the administration (Secretariat) for a specific term (not exceeding 3 years), after which the appointment can be renewed.

6.3.2 The persons responsible for the Secretariat also serve on the Executive Committee and reports to the Executive Committee

6.3.3 The Secretariat takes responsibility for all the administration (correspondence, reports, logistics, finances, etc.).

7. Termination or changing of constitution

The Annual General Meeting may change the constitution or terminate the existence of the RFF with a two thirds majority vote of the participating churches.

Addendum II

REFORM FAMILY FORUM GENERAL SECRETARIES GUIDE

Key performance areas

- Administration – financial budget, human resource, church assets/records.
- Executive officer responsible for daily routines of the church.
- Coordinates different departments.
- Responsible for Communication.
- Spearheads the vision of the Church (brand ambassador)
- Responsible for ecumenical relationships.
- Facilitate Pastoral environment.

Don'ts

- Not Over control but rather facilitate.
- Think out work/ or create an necessary work.
- Manipulate/be careful of promoting own agenda.
- Not personalize on church issues.
- Do not burn out but balance your life.
- Remember that we are not the saviour/general manager of the universe.

Detailed Description of the above key performance areas of the General Secretaries

- Execute the decision of the General Synod or Council and Executive Committee/ Council.
- Executive Officer of the church.
- Head of the secretariat.
- Church Ecumenical relation officer.
- Attend the management meeting (composed of Head of church institutions).
- Prepare and present the secretariat/executive committee report to the General Synod.
- Sits in the Executive Committee as the ex-officio member.
- Linkage of the church nationally.

- Coordinate and enhances church work at the synod level.
- Custodian of the church assets/ Property.
- Responsible for keeping and administration of church records
- Monitors and manages the church budget.
- Works closely with the Synod Moderator who is the supervisor.
- Responsible for administration of the church funds.
- Prepares a press statements/speak on radio on behalf of the church/in some churches, this is the preserve of the Synod Moderator as trustee.
- In supervisor of all the departments of the church/synod.
- Coordinates biannual pastor's conferences for theological reflection.
- The head of church programs.
- In charge of human resource of the church, advertise positions, plan interview schedules, recruitment and inducting of workers of the church.
- Responsible for needed policies and implements after the vetting and approval of the same.
- Scouts and recommends Board members through the Presbyteries to the Synodical Committee and Leadership.
- H/she is the convener on State and Non State Actors' engagement such as on issues of Pastoral letters.
- He/she is the liaison link for capacity building of Ministers in terms of scholarships and in service training.
- Coordinates research on topics that are relevant to the church.
- Responding to enquiries of the church's stand on challenging topics.
- Coordinates task teams and monitoring their progress on core business.
- Responsible for the personnel of the office in terms of contracts and other labour issues.
- Responsible for the condition of buildings and other fixed assets of the office.
- Prepare handover notes when the term of office expires.
- Adhering to the transitioning process of the office.
- Information dissemination to the whole church.
- Represent the church both locally and internationally as approved by the Synod Executive.
- Custodian of the church workers personal files.
- He/she advises the different commissions of the church on the role they can play in enhancing the church work.

Addendum III

Message from WCC 11TH Assembly

A Call to Act Together

“The Love of Christ urges us on.”

(2 Cor. 5:14, NRSV)

“Come, follow me!”

1. From the time he journeyed on earth, and even in this present moment, Jesus unceasingly addresses these words to every human being. Jesus’ life, words, and actions are a constant invitation to movement – from one physical place to another, from one group of people to another, from one mindset to another. Above all, amid the problems of the world, Jesus calls us to come to him and to abide in his love, a love which is offered for all the world (cf. Matt. 11:28).
2. The very last book of the Bible, Revelation, speaks of ancient forces of human suffering at work in the world: war, death, disease, and famine. As the assembly of the World Council of Churches gathered in Karlsruhe in 2022, we were conscious of their manifestations in the world today. In their wake come injustice and discrimination, where those who have power often use it to oppress others rather than to build inclusion, justice, and peace.
3. Individuals, peoples, and countries also face catastrophes arising directly from an irresponsible and broken relationship with creation that has led to ecological injustice and climate crisis. As the climate emergency accelerates, so does the suffering experienced by impoverished and marginalized people.
4. Yet continuing our pilgrimage together as an assembly of the World Council of Churches, our mood has been one of anticipation and hope, and even joy, because through the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ’s invitation remains open to everyone, in fact to the whole of creation.
5. *“Christ’s love moves the world to reconciliation and unity.”* This love, in answer to the cries of those who are suffering, compels us to come to him in solidarity and to respond and act for justice. We are summoned to be reconciled in God’s love, and to witness to that love revealed in Christ (1 John 4:9-11).
6. Reconciliation is a movement toward God and toward each other. It implies a readiness to listen to God and to one another. It is a conversion of the heart, from selfishness and apathy to inclusion and service, acknowledging our interdependence with creation. We confess that, even as we desire with our whole hearts to serve God and our neighbour, we have found ourselves failing, disagreeing, and sometimes walking in opposite directions. We confess that we need the transformative power of Christ’s love to move to a world truly reconciled and united.
7. Christians, and the structures that we have built, have been complicit in the abuse of others, and we must repent and join in this movement of reconciliation. In the face of war, inequality, and sins against creation today, Christ’s love calls us all to repentance, reconciliation, and justice.

Our journey together

8. Amid all our diversity, we have relearned in our assembly that there is a pilgrimage of justice, reconciliation, and unity to be undertaken together.

Meeting together in Germany, we learn the cost of war and the possibility of reconciliation;
Hearing the word of God together, we recognize our common calling;
Listening and talking together, we become closer neighbours;
Lamenting together, we open ourselves to each other's pain and suffering;
Working together, we consent to common action;
Celebrating together, we delight in each other's joys and hopes;
Praying together, we discover the richness of our traditions and the pain of our divisions.

“Go into the whole world”

9. From the time of his ascension into heaven, and even in this present moment, Christ unceasingly gives this command to all who follow him.

10. As reconciliation brings us closer to God and each other, it opens the way toward a unity founded in God's love. As Christians we are called to dwell in Christ's love and to be one (John 17). Such unity, which is a gift from God, and which arises from reconciliation and is grounded in his love, enables us to address the world's urgent problems. We will find a strength to act from a unity founded in Christ's love, for it enables us to learn the things that make for peace, to transform division into reconciliation, and to work for the healing of our living planet. Christ's love will sustain all of us in the task of embracing everyone and overcoming exclusion.

11. We have tasted the experience of such love as we gathered from 352 member churches with our ecumenical partners, friends from other faith communities, and from all regions of the world to seek unity amid our diversity. Together we have listened to voices often marginalized in the world: women, youth, people with disabilities, Indigenous peoples.

12. We long for a wider movement, the reconciliation and unity of all humanity, and indeed of the entire cosmos. This would be a unity in which God establishes justice, an equal place for all, through which creation may be renewed and strengthened. We rely on Christ's love as we act and advocate for climate justice. We join our voices with the Amsterdam assembly (1948) that “war is contrary to the will of God,” and the Nairobi assembly (1975) that “racism is a sin against God.” We lament that we have to repeat these statements.

13. In our assembly, we have used many words, but from these we have fashioned a new resolve. Now we ask God's assistance to transform our commitments into action. We commit ourselves to working with all people of good will. As we reflect on the fruits of our work in Karlsruhe, we invite all to become pilgrims together. For in Christ, all things will be made new. His love which is open to all, including the last, the least, and the lost, and is offered to all, can move and empower us in a pilgrimage of justice, reconciliation, and unity.

Addendum IV

Trends in Theological education

- **Ecumenical trend in theological education:**
 - Financial challenges of “sending” and “owner” churches,
 - the cost of higher education in relation to what a church owned institution can afford
 - access to resources to ensure that institutions provide quality, accredited and contextual higher education
 - slower growth in churches sending students
- Ecumenical training requires a paradigm shift towards a more generic approach in curriculum
- Ecumenical training inevitably creates a gap between “church own/specific” training and institutional academic advancement trajectories
- Growing interest (from a variety of groups including Pentecostal and Charismatic) for post graduate studies which creates opportunities for institutions in research and student numbers
- Church/Denomination “owned” institutions struggle to embrace ecumenical focussed training
 - Separate dogma and theological education
 - Staff appointments are church controlled and not academic envisioned
- **Accreditation is becoming more prominent (both for institution and the qualification’s offered)**
 - In-country accreditation bodies are collaborating
 - Accreditation is becoming an expensive necessity
 - Where does ACTEA fit in? The question of single or double accreditation

Institutions are moving towards diversification of courses as they offer such as Agriculture, Education, Development studies, Leadership and Business Studies - Address broader needs for ministry training, provide a more sustainable financial model

- **Global trend in online training effects local institutions**
 - Competition and cost
 - Rethinking your own pedagogy within the online environment
- Sharing of resources – difficulty to have full curriculum with staff in all disciplines
- Collaboration between institutions
- Search for fluent relevant contextual curriculum
- Rethinking of “university status” as a means of theological training
- Growing conversation between church, university and seminaries
- Rethinking of “university status” as a means of theological training
 - University functioning demands a different management approach, skill set and governance
 - Lines between church (owner) and university not always well defined and clarified, causes tension and drop in quality and academic credibility and poor governance
 - Degree program curriculum (content) are in cases prescribed by in-country accreditation authorities
 - A growing gap between church needs and academic advancement creates tension
 - Difficulty to help church with under-graduate education if focus is academic advancement
- Growing triangular conversation between church, university and seminaries
 - The role of a seminary for ministerial formation to bridge the gap between theological institution and church
 - How can Theological institutions develop programs for the church at a pre-graduate level?
 - How can alumni be used other than to make them post-graduate students?
 - Lay minister training for example