MELLOMKIRKELIG RÅD **OSLO** **08.-09.05.2001**

MKR-SAK 35/01: **ORIENTERINGSSAKER**

Saksbehandler: **Stig Utnem**

Dokumenter: Endelig utgave av Charta Oecumenica *(tidligere utsendt)*
Rapportliste – Mellomkirkelig råd *(vedlagt)*

a) Charta Oecumenica

b) Rapportliste Mellomkirkelig råd

Forslag til vedtak:

Orienteringssakene tas til etterretning.

Cardinal Lehmann and Rev. Dörr, who opened the Encounter with a dialogue, will now share in a closing dialogue their impressions as to whether it has been given to us to reach the agreed goals of the Encounter, and whether the ecumenical movement has gained new strength and a new perspective. The session will then be closed by the two Presidents.

Fifteenth Step: Evening prayer according to the Oprthodox Tradition (19h15)
We will praise God together and give thanks for the fruits which this day has borne, in a Vesper service according to the Orthodox tradition.

Sixteenth Step: "Promenade en bateau"
There will be an opportunity to strengthen our ecumenical fellowship by sharing a boat trip around Strasbourg at night.

Sunday, 22 April 2001

Seventeenth Step: Confessional celebrations (8.00 – 10.00)
The churches in Europe have not yet found their way to unity. Each confession will celebrate the Eucharist in its own church in Strasbourg. But we are on the way together towards unity, which we will demonstrate following these worship services as we make our separate pilgrimages to one meeting point, St. Thomas' Church, and gather there for common prayer in a Closing Worship Service.

Eighteenth Step: Closing worship – Signature of the Charta Oecumenica
At the end of the Closing Worship Service, the Charta Oecumenica will be signed by the two Presidents of CCEE and CEC. This way both Organisations (CCEE and CEC) will reaffirm the concerns of the Charta Oecumenica and commend it as a basic text to all Churches and Bishops' Conferences in Europe, that they may seek to receive and implement it in their own contexts.
If the Spirit of Jesus is given to us during the Encounter, urging us towards unity and giving us courage to take steps towards the unity of the churches and toward helping to build Europe, then the participants in the Encounter, the church leaders and young Christians, are the first witnesses to this new start in the ecumenical movement. They are also the first messengers to be sent out with the concerns of the *Charta Oecumenica*; therefore, after the signing of the *Charta*, a copy of it in a backpack will be given to each participant, as a sign of his or her willingness to be sent in this way. For all participants in the Closing Worship Service and also for the representatives of the media, the backpacks are an image of our being sent forth on the roads throughout Europe with the message of the Gospel and with the concerns of the *Charta Oecumenica*. We are placing ourselves publicly and visibly within the tradition of the first sending forth, when Jesus entrusted to his disciples the ever new message: The kingdom of God is near!

EMBARGO UNTIL 22.4.2001

Charta Oecumenica

Guidelines for the Growing Cooperation among the Churches in Europe

"Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit"

As the Conference of European Churches (CEC) and the Council of European Bishops' Conferences (CCEE)[1] we are, in the spirit of the Messages from the two European Ecumenical Assemblies of Basle (1989) and Graz (1997), firmly resolved to preserve and develop the fellowship that has grown up among us. We give thanks to the Triune God for guiding our steps towards an ever deeper fellowship through the Holy Spirit.

Various forms of ecumenical co-operation have already proved themselves. Christ's prayer is: "...that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me" (John 17:21). If we are to be faithful to this prayer, we cannot be content with the present situation. Instead, aware of our guilt and ready to repent, we must strive to overcome the divisions still existing among us, so that together we may credibly proclaim the message of the Gospel among all people.

Listening together to God's word in Holy Scripture, challenged to confess our common faith and to act together in accordance with the perceived truth, let us bear witness to the love and hope which are for all people.

Europe - from the Atlantic to the Urals, from the North Cape to the Mediterranean - is today more pluralist in culture than ever before. With the Gospel, we want to stand up for the dignity of the human person created in God's image and, as churches together, contribute towards reconciling peoples and cultures.

In this spirit, we adopt this charter as a common commitment to dialogue and co-operation. It describes fundamental ecumenical responsibilities, from which follow a number of guidelines and commitments. It is designed to promote an ecumenical culture of dialogue and co-operation at all levels of church life, and to provide agreed criteria for this. However, it has no magisterial or dogmatic character, nor is it legally binding under church law. Its authority will derive from the voluntary commitments of the European churches and ecumenical organisations. Building on this basic text, they can formulate their own local addenda, designed to meet their own specific challenges and resulting commitments.

[1] *To the Conference of European Churches (CEC) belong almost all Orthodox, Protestant, Anglican, Old-Catholic and independent churches in Europe. In the Council of European Bishops' Conferences (CCEE) are represented all Roman Catholic Bishops' Conferences in Europe.*

I

WE BELIEVE IN "ONE HOLY CATHOLIC AND APOSTOLIC CHURCH"

"(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)

1. Called Together to Unity in Faith

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.

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.

We commit ourselves
- 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;
- 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.

II

ON THE WAY TOWARDS THE VISIBLE FELLOWSHIP OF THE CHURCHES IN EUROPE

"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35)

2. Proclaiming the Gospel together

The most important task of the churches in Europe is the common proclamation of the Gospel, in both word and deed, for the 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.

3. Moving towards one another

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 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.

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.

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.

We commit ourselves
- 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;
- to promote ecumenical openness and co-operation in Christian education, and in theological training, continuing education and research.

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.

We commit ourselves
- 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;
- to defend the rights of minorities and to help reduce misunderstandings and prejudices between majority and minority churches in our countries.

5. Praying together

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.

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.

We commit ourselves
- to pray for one another and for Christian unity;
- to learn to know and appreciate the worship and other forms of spiritual life practised by other churches;
- to move towards the goal of eucharistic fellowship.

6. Continuing in dialogue

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.

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.

We commit ourselves
- 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;
- 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.

III

OUR COMMON RESPONSIBILITY IN EUROPE

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God"
(Matthew 5:9)

7. Participating in the building of Europe

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.

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.

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 marriage and the family, the preferential option for the poor, the readiness to forgive, and in all things compassion.

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.

We commit ourselves
- 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;
- to defend basic values against infringements of every kind;
- to resist any attempt to misuse religion and the church for ethnic or nationalist purposes.

8. Reconciling peoples and cultures

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 also an important prerequisite for this.

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.

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.

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.

We commit ourselves
- to counteract any form of nationalism which leads to the oppression of other peoples and national minorities;
- 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.

9. Safeguarding the creation

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.

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.

We recommend the introduction into European churches of an Ecumenical Day of Prayer for the Preservation of Creation.

We commit ourselves
- to strive to adopt a lifestyle free of consumerism and a quality of life informed by accountability and sustainability;
- to support church environmental organisations and ecumenical networks in their efforts for the safeguarding of creation.

10. Strengthening community with Judaism

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 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.

11. Cultivating relations with Islam

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.

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.

We commit ourselves
- to conduct ourselves towards Muslims with respect;
- to work together with Muslims on matters of common concern.

12. Encountering other religions and world views

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.

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.

We commit ourselves
- 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;
- 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.

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Jesus Christ, the Lord of the one Church, is our greatest hope of reconciliation and peace. In his name we intend to continue on our common path in Europe. We pray for God's guidance through the power of the Holy Spirit.

"May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." (Rom 15.13)

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As Presidents of the Conference of European Churches and the Council of European Bishops' Conferences, we commend this Charta Oecumenica as a Basic Text to all the churches and Bishops' Conferences in Europe, to be adopted and adapted in each of their local contexts.

With this commendation we hereby sign the Charta Oecumenica, on the occasion of the European Ecumenical Encounter, on the first Sunday after the common celebration of Easter in the year 2001.

Strasbourg, 22 April 2001

Metropolitan Jérémie
President
Conference of European Churches

Cardinal Vlk
President
Council of European Bishops' Conferences

MKR-sak 35/01 b) **RAPPORTLISTE – MELLOMKIRKELIG RÅD**

Nedenstående rapporter kan fås ved henvendelse til Mellomkirkelig råds sekretariat:

Rapport nr. 4/2001	**Hans Morten Haugen** Report from Working Seminar on "Global Budget Priorities Campaign – an international inter-faith Initiative (preliminary title), New York 5th and 6th of February 2001
Rapport nr. 5/2001	**Hans Morten Haugen** Report from Second Substantive Preparation Committee on UN High-level Event on Financing for Development, New York 12th to 20th of February 2001
Rapport nr. 6/2001	**Hans Morten Haugen** Rapport fra seminar: "Europeiska Unionen – En ny arena för kyrkans samhällsansvar og samhällsengagement", Brüssel, 21.-24. februar 2001
Rapport nr. 7/2001	**Ørnulf Steen** Rapport fra 4. generalforsamling (14.-19. jan. 2001) og misjonskonsultasjon (12.-14. jan. 2001) i Conselho Latinoamericano das Igrejas Cristãs (CLAI – Det Latinamerikanske Kirkeråd) , Baranquilla, Columbia
Rapport nr. 8/2001	**Ørnulf Steen** Rapport fra Centralkonferansen for United Methodist Church i Nord-Europa Karis, Finland 7.-11. mars 2001
Rapport nr. 9/2001	**Ole Chr. Kvarme** Rapport fra Borg-delegasjon til ELCJ med besøk i Jerusalem, Betlehem og Amman 16.-20. februar 2001
Rapport nr. 10/2001	**Hans Morten Haugen** Rapport fra FNs 57. Menneskerettighetskommisjon, Geneve, 2.-10. april 2001

Kommunal- og regionaldepartementet
Postboks 8112 Dep
0032 Oslo

Att.: Statsråd Sylvia Brustad

Oslo, 9. april 2001

ÅPENT BREV

RETUREN AV FLYKTNINGENE FRA KOSOVO

Organisasjonene har den siste tiden fulgt utviklingen fra dag til dag med tanke på returen av flyktninger til Kosovo. Vi ser nå et behov for å understreke nødvendigheten av at man i returprosessen i større grad tar hensyn til den enkeltes rettssikkerhet, samt betydningen av en gradvis, faset retur. Vi ønsker i denne anledning å belyse de følgende aspekter.

1. Vurderingen av asylsakene - Høykommissærens anbefalinger

Helsingforskomiteen, Flyktningerådet, NOAS og andre organisasjoner har meldt fra om eksempler på brudd på de anbefalingene som har kommet fra FNs høykommissær for flyktninger (UNHCR): Både etniske minoriteter, kvinnelige forsørgere, traumatiserte personer og vitner til forbrytelser mot menneskeheten har fått avslag av UDI. Dette stiller norske myndigheters ønske om å få folk tilbake før klagebehandlingen i et dårlig lys. Vi viser i denne anledning til UNHCRs oppdaterte anbefaling fra mars 2001, som fremholder at det stadig er et beskyttelsesbehov for flere grupper. Vi ønsker spesielt å trekke frem beskyttelsesbehovet for albanere fra serbiskdominerte områder, herunder Nord-Mitrovica, som nevnes spesifikt av UNHCR. Vi har også observert at Utlendingsnemnda har gitt avslag i tre saker vedrørende albanere fra Sør-Serbia. Etter hva vi kan se er dette i strid med UNHCRs gjeldende vurdering.

Det er organisasjonenes vurdering at returen forutsetter vesentlig større varsomhet fra norske myndigheters side i vurderingen av de enkelte asylsaker enn det vi har sett til nå.

2. Retten til klagebehandling

I forhold til klagebehandlingen har to bekymringer gjort seg gjeldende. For det første synes det å være tilfelle at det i et større antall saker nektes utsatt iverksettelse. **Sett på bakgrunn av betydningen av å sikre en reell oppfølging av Høykommissærens anbefalinger, og på bakgrunn av den stadig spente situasjonen i deler av Kosovo, stiller organisasjonene seg sterkt tvilende til om norske myndigheter her utviser den nødvendige varsomhet i vurderingen av spørsmålet om utsatt iverksettelse.**

Videre er organisasjonene kritiske til norske myndigheters bruk av tilbakevendingsstøtten som et pressmiddel for å få flyktningene fra Kosovo til å reise tilbake før klagen er behandlet. Det er all grunn til å reagere på at Kommunaldepartementet benytter et økonomisk incitament for å utøve et press på flyktningene til ikke å benytte sin grunnleggende, lovfestede rett til en fullverdig klagebehandling. En vesentlig komponent i klagebehandlingen er adgangen til

personlig å møte i Utlendingsnemnda. Dette vil åpenbart være umulig for de som reiser tilbake til Kosovo.

Organisasjonene insisterer på at retten til en fullverdig asylbehandling må være en forutsetning for returen, og at også personer som får avslag i klageomgangen må gis den samme retten til tilbakevendingsstøtte. Organisasjonene ber i så måte om at norske myndigheter setter inn ekstra ressurser for å få en raskere saksbehandling, spesielt i klageomgangen, uten at rettssikkerheten til den enkelte settes i fare.

3. Utdanning og helse

Organisasjonene vil gjenta oppfordringen til å la de som går siste året i videregående, eller som har annen avsluttende eksamen, få bli til skoleårets slutt. Vi oppfordrer også myndighetene til å ta hensyn til om barn og ungdom vil få rimelig anledning til utdanning og helse.

4. En løpende vurdering av sikkerhetssituasjonen

I brev til Utlendingsnemnda av 8. mars d.å. går UNHCR imot retur av albanere til Presevo-dalen i Sør-Serbia. Ifølge UNHCR vil det nå være uforsvarlig å sende disse tilbake. Situasjonen i dette området har med andre ord endret seg fra trygg til uforsvarlig i løpet av bare noen måneder. På tross av regionale forskjeller i sikkerhetssituasjonen, demonstrerer dette den uforutsigbare situasjonen som råder i området. I tillegg til at norske myndigheter her bør ta til følge UNHCRs oppfordring om ikke å returnere noen til Presevo-dalen på det nåværende tidspunkt, bør dette være en påminnelse for myndighetene om forpliktelsen til å ha et fremtidsrettet perspektiv i vurderingen.

Slik situasjonen de siste ukene har utviklet seg i grenseområdet Makedonia/Kosovo, ønsker organisasjonene å understreke at norske myndigheter også har et ansvar for den fremtidige sikkerheten til de som returneres, og vil spesielt insistere på norske myndigheters ansvar for å følge situasjonen nøye og til umiddelbart å stanse returen dersom konflikten skulle spre seg inn i selve Kosovo.

Med vennlig hilsen

Morten Tjessem /s/
Fung. generalsekretær, NOAS

Stig Utnem /s/
Generalsekretær, Mellomkirkelig Råd

Atle Sommerfeldt /s/
Generalsekretær, Kirkens Nødhjelp

Bjørn Engesland /s/
Generalsekretær, Den norske Helsingforskomité

Steinar Sørlie /s/
Generalsekretær, Flyktningerådet

Marianne Borgen /s/
Leder Redd Barnas Rettighetssenter

Petter Eide /s/
Generalsekretær, Amnesty Norge

Halle Jørn Hansen /s/
Generalsekretær, Norsk Folkehjelp

DEN NORSKE KIRKE
Mellomkirkelig råd

TIL BISKOPENE

Arkiv: 515.34

Dato	Vår ref.	Deres ref.	Deres dato
02.05.01	98/77-27 SU		

Den voldelige situasjonen i Israel, Jerusalem og de palestinske selvstyreområdene er en daglig kilde til uro - og bønn om fred. I denne situasjonen har Borg bispedømme tatt et prisverdig initiativ. Som en frukt av samarbeidsavtalen mellom Den evangelisk-lutherske kirke i Jordan (ELCJ) og Borg bispedømme er det nå etablert en bønnering i Borg. Hver eneste dag resten av dette året vil en menighet i dette bispedømmet ha ansvar for å be for den lutherske kirken i Midtøsten. Denne kirkens menigheter i Betlehem, Beit Sahour og Beit Jala berøres daglig av volden på Vestbredden.

I samråd med Borg biskop og bispedømmeråd sender jeg en utfordring videre til de øvrige bispedømmene: Vær med på å organisere fram forbønn for fred med rettferdighet i Midtøsten. Mens bønnetjenesten i Borg konsentrerer seg om forbønn for den lutherske kirken, kan dere i de andre bispedømmene mer spesifikt be om fred, slutt på okkupasjonen, sikkerhet for Israel, rettferdighet for palestinerne, forsoning mellom folkene, dialog mellom religiøse ledere og respekt, forståelse og vilje til samliv mellom Abrahams barn.

Alle disse forbønnsemnene kommer til uttrykk i "Et palestinsk litani" som er skrevet av den lutherske biskop Munib Younan. Mellomkirkelig råd har oversatt litaniet og gjør det på denne måten tilgjengelig for dere. *(Se vedlegg).*

Mellomkirkelig råd finner ikke i utgangspunktet å ville antyde mer konkrete føringer for deltakelse i denne bønneringen, men overlater til den enkelte biskop å vurdere hvorvidt og på hvilken måte en ser mulighet til å følge opp dette. Vi mottar svært gjerne en tilbakemelding dersom så er tilfelle

Vennligst gi også melding dersom dere ønsker å stå på biskop Younans adresseliste ettersom han sender regelmessige nyhetsbulletiner.

Med hilsen

Stig Utnem
generalsekretær

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Palestinsk litani fra Jerusalem

Av Bishop Munib A. Younan, Luthersk Biskop i Jerusalem, mars 2001.

Allmektige og evige Gud, Fader, Sønn og Hellig Ånd, vi ærer og priser ditt navn.
Du er vår eneste tilflukt i en vanskelig verden.

- Vi ærer og priser deg, vår Gud.

Nådige Gud, ved din sønn Jesu Kristi fødsel i Betlehem ble du en av oss.
Du deler og forstår det menneskelige, vår lidelse og våre problemer.

- Vi ærer og priser deg, vår Gud.

Vi takker deg for at du ble korsfestet i Jerusalem og identifiserte deg med hver person som lider og lever under okkupasjon og urettferdighet. På korset bar du synden og lidelsen til alle mennesker og forsonet oss med deg og våre medmennesker.

- Vi takker deg, vår Gud.

Vår himmelske Far, vi kommer til deg med alle de vansker og problemer vi erfarer her i Midt-Østen.

- Herre, miskunne deg over oss.

Vi ber for alle ofre for urett og vold i den nåværende situasjon.
Vi ber også for de som er ansvarlige for urett og alle former for vold.

- Herre, miskunne deg over oss.

Jesus, vår Frelser, våre øyne er vendt til deg, vår eneste hjelp i denne vanskelige tid.

- Herre, hør vår bønn.

Vi ber at du må åpne øynene på verden - og israelerne og palestinerne til rettferdighet og forsoning. Hjelp oss alle til å se at sikkerhet og frihet for ett folk er avhengig av sikkerhet og frihet for det andre.

- Herre, hør vår bønn.

Vi ber for politikerne, at de må innse at den sikkerhet og fred vi alle lengter etter ikke kan komme ved bruk av våpen og makt, men ved å gjøre rett slik at begge folk kan bli forsonet og sammen arbeide fram en likeverdig sameksistens for fremtiden.

- Herre, hør vår bønn.

Herre Jesus, du har kalt oss til å være dine etterfølgere. Gi oss din kjærlighet til være medmennesker. Fri oss - og våre barn - fra hat, bitterhet og fornektelse av de andres rettigheter; og fyll oss med kjærlighet, sannhet og rettferdighet, slik at vi kan anerkjenne og respektere verdigheten og rettighetene til hverandre.

- Herre, hør vår bønn.

Herre Jesus, du har vist oss at tilgivelse ikke er å fornekte rettigheter, men å bekrefte dem. Vi vet at tilgivelse er å se Kristus i våre fiender, og å elske dem som vår neste.
Hjelp oss palestinere å se deg i israelerne, og hjelp israelerne å se deg i oss. Led oss alle til å understreke og respektere vårt menneskeverd som en gave fra deg. Vi er alle skapt i ditt bilde, gi oss mot til gjensidig å anerkjenne hverandres menneskelige, religiøse, sivile og politiske rettigheter.

- Herre, hør vår bønn.

Hellige Ånd, giver av liv og ny start, hjelp oss til trofast å svare på Guds kall til å være tjenere for forsoning.

- Kom, Hellige Ånd, forny oss alle.

Styrk med din makt de som midt i alle vansker i det stille bygger en kultur av forsoning, rettferdighet og fred. De er kanskje ikke mange akkurat nå, men vi husker at arbeidet for Guds rike iblant oss startet med bare en håndfull trofaste og overgitte mennesker.

- Kom, Hellige Ånd, forny oss alle.

Kom, Helende Ånd, endre oss og åpne veier for oss til å endre andre. Ta bort all urett, og fyll vårt land med rettferdig fred. Ta bort alt hat, og fyll oss med sann kjærlighet.

- Kom, Hellige Ånd, forny oss alle.

Ta bort all usikkerhet og gi oss sann sikkerhet. Ta bort all okkupasjon og gi frihet til alle.

- Kom, Hellige Ånd, forny oss alle.

Nådige Gud, hør vår bønn og vår klage. Du er den eneste styrke vi har. Ingen kan ta bønnens styrke fra oss.

I navnet til Jesus - vår Frigjører og Forsoner - ber vi.

Amen.