



GENSEC-2024-011

CEC Member Churches

12 February 2024

**Esteemed Church Leaders,
Dear Sisters and Brothers,
Dear Beloved in Christ,**

I have the pleasure of sending you my first update as President of the Conference of European Churches. CEC continues to flourish as a growing fellowship, uniting representatives from more than 114 churches of Orthodox, Protestant, and Anglican/Old Catholic traditions across Europe.

Once again, we reaffirm our Call and Witness strategy, focusing on promoting peace, justice, and reconciliation in Europe; strengthening ecumenical fellowship; and raising churches' voices in Europe and the European Institutions.

In November 2023, the CEC Governing Board convened to address various contemporary issues crucial for the organisation's future. During our discussions, we embraced the spirit of trust, authenticity, and courage. I emphasize the importance of courage, as it is integral for taking risks and making decisions that will shape the future of our organisation.

Decisions about our common future require courage, risk-taking, and a shared testimony. In a time marked by rising sectarianism, crises, and secularisation across Europe, we must broaden our perspective. Despite the challenges facing ecumenism globally, we must, now more than ever, reaffirm our common vision for peacebuilding, collective engagement in a changing world, and the pursuit of a shared future, as articulated in the Preamble of the Constitution.

General Secretariat

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Our recent policies and reforms have allowed us to grow and consider future projects. The addition of a new Member Church is a testament to CEC's relevance and its ability to attract new memberships. This underscores that our organisation has much to offer in the future.

Currently without a General Secretary, each of us is committed to compensating for this absence. Some have taken on additional responsibilities, highlighting the strength of our teamwork. Thanks to the contributions of each of your Churches, we can continue our mission seamlessly.

I would also like to update you on the ongoing process of electing a new General Secretary for CEC. We have received candidates' portfolios and anticipate the election in the coming months. The entire process follows CEC's regulations under the guidance of the Search Committee chaired by CEC Vice-President Rev. OKR Frank Kopania. At this stage of the proceedings, we ask for your understanding and respect for the necessary confidentiality in such an important process affecting people in your churches.

Regarding finances, our prudent measures, such as Presidents and Vice Presidents covering their travel expenses and moving some meetings online, have allowed us to remain on budget and even save resources. Responsible administration and fund distribution, coupled with the generous contributions of Member Churches, ensure a sustainable financial future. I kindly remind respected Member Churches that a call for contribution will be coming your way soon.

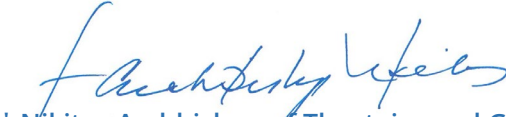
In accordance with the Call & Witness strategy confirmed by the incoming Governing Board at its November 2023 meeting, and in line with the decisions made at the 2023 General Assembly, CEC will work on a memorandum of understanding to secure cooperation with ECEN on Care for Creation in all its aspects. I will myself represent CEC in March at the Feast of Creation seminar in Assisi (IT).

The Governing Board appointed two Youth Advisers from its midst, Ms Kieryn Wurts, from the European Baptist Federation and Ms Maria Mountraki from the Orthodox Church of Finland. I am also delighted to announce that CEC has recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF) and the Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe, enhancing the ties between our organisations.

In conclusion, CEC seeks to bring together its Member Churches in a spirit of unity, hope, and

courage. All of your membership contributions, as always, will be accounted for and distributed properly and with transparency.

In Christ,


† Nikitas Archbishop of Thyateira and Great Britain
President

cc

The Rt Revd Dr Dagmar Winter, Vice-President

Rev. OKR Frank Kopania, Vice-President