

# EMS INSIGHTS

1/2023



Be reconciled to God.  
On the path to peace.

## **MAIN FEATURE** KOREA: 70 YEARS ARE ENOUGH

Peace is more than silencing the weapons

## **TALKING TO CHILDREN ABOUT PEACE**

Online workshop for educators

## **FACTS, FIGURES, PROJECTS**

The EMS Financial Report 2022



Evangelical Mission  
in Solidarity



## ALAS, T'IS WAR

T'is war! T'is war! O God's angel intercede  
And speak thou thy word!  
Alas, t'is war – and I have no wish  
To bear the guilt for it!

This is the beginning of the „Song of War” by Matthias Claudius, a German poet from the 18th century. “Alas, t'is war” is what many people worldwide are sighing these days. Last year, the United Nations reported 164 violent crises and wars. Many of them are affecting EMS member churches or partner churches of EMS mission societies in China, Korea, India, Cameroon, Nigeria, South Sudan and the Middle East. The war in Ukraine has an impact on all the countries in the world.

So where can we still find hope in all of this? In this issue, Reverend Shin Seung-min describes how the Korean churches have been working for peace for the past 70 years. A few weeks ago, we paid them a visit. We brought them two fragments of the Berlin Wall as signs of hope that one day the walls that have separated people for 70 years will fall in Korea too.

Matthias Claudius places hope in God against violence: “O God's angel intercede And speak thou thy word!” This is also the task of the churches in these times of war. To stand together for peace and to resist violence wherever we encounter it. The Jewish theologian Shalom Ben Chorin once called this peace strategy in the Sermon on the Mount the „love of reconciliation”. So that at some time or other, only fragments will remain of the walls in the world.

Reverend Dr Dieter Heidtmann  
General Secretary of the EMS

### The Evangelical Mission in Solidarity (EMS)

The 25 member churches and 5 mission societies in the EMS form an international association with equal rights. Together they connect about 25 million believers in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Europe.

#### Donation account: Evangelical Mission in Solidarity (EMS)

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Cover: Peace appeal at the  
WCC Assembly in Karlsruhe 2022.



## BE RECONCILED TO GOD. ON THE PATH TO PEACE.

Jesus' call to love one's enemies is one of the main messages in the New Testament. But how are peace and reconciliation possible? What can each and every one of us actually do to achieve this? In this issue of EMS Insights, we present various examples from the peace and reconciliation work of the international EMS Fellowship.

### MAIN FEATURE

#### KOREA: 70 YEARS ARE ENOUGH

In Korea, the weapons have been silent since 1953. But the divided peninsula is still far from a genuine peace.

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Theological reflection by Stefan Schwarzer, pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Württemberg.

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Litany of Reconciliation of Coventry Cathedral

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*Peace march along the demilitarised zone.*

## KOREA: 70 YEARS ARE ENOUGH

PEACE IS MORE  
THAN SILENCING THE WEAPONS

Korea bears a heavy burden from its past. The divided country still suffers from the consequences of the Korean War and finds itself in the cross-hairs of the nuclear powers. Together with the worldwide ecumenical community, the South Korean churches are working for peace, disarmament and reunification. „70 years are enough and it is time for an end to the war,“ is their demand.

In the course of its eventful history, Korea has repeatedly been a pawn in the power interests of other states. In 1945, it gained its independence from Japan after 36 years of oppressive colonial rule. However, only a few years after World War II, Korea was ultimately divided into a capitalist South and a socialist North. This division eventually triggered the Korean War. The ruthless fratricidal war lasted from 1950 to 1953 and cost the lives of at least 2.5 million people, 65% of whom were civilians. It tore apart millions of families, resulted in the destruction of almost all of Korea's major cities and caused countless massacres on both sides.

*„70 years are enough and it is time for an end to the war.“*

The actual aim of the war, i.e. to bring about a reversal in the division of Korea, was not achieved. What was even more disastrous is that at the end of the Korean War there was an armistice agreement, but no peace treaty was signed between North and South Korea. So, officially, the two countries are still in a state of war. As a result of the armistice agreement, a 250-kilometre-long and approximately four-kilometre-wide demilitarised zone (DMZ) was established to separate the Korean peninsula near the 38th parallel north. The division is maintained by the ongoing state of war and the ceasefire agreement. Repeated efforts to bring peace to the Korean peninsula have been thwarted by the hegemonic ambitions of the major powers.

## EMS MEMBER CHURCHES IN KOREA

More than a quarter of the population of South Korea belongs to a Christian church and 19% of them are Protestants. This is the highest percentage in any Asian country. Two Protestant churches are members of the EMS association.

The **Presbyterian Church of Korea (PCK)** consists of 6,300 congregations with over 2.2 million church members and about 8,600 pastors. This makes it one of the largest churches in the country. By comparison, the **Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK)** is one of the smaller churches in South Korea with roughly 340,000 church members. Ministry is provided by 1,900 ministers and over 2,800 church elders serving the approximately 1,450 congregations. The work of the PROK and PCK focuses on the issues of peace, nuclear disarmament and reunification.



*PROK performance of peace.*

The two EMS member churches are affiliated in the **National Council of Churches in Korea (NCKK)**, an association of nine Christian churches of different denominations. The NCKK is a member of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA).





*Standing strong in unity for peace: human peace chain in Chulwon, April 2019.*

## THEOLOGICAL VISION

For over fifty years, the National Council of Churches in Korea (NCK) has been working for peace and reunification together with the worldwide ecumenical community. NCK members include the Korean EMS member churches PROK and PCK (see Info box on p. 5). The professed goal of the NCK is to finally end the Korean War and build a lasting peace – by changing the armistice into a binding peace treaty. Towards this end, the churches are guided by the following theological vision:

**God's kingdom of reconciliation, peace and liberation is the core of the Christian mission (Lk 4:18).** Due to the division, the people's lives on the Korean Peninsula over the past 70 years have been dominated by hostility, violence and conflict. However, instead of proclaiming peace and reconciliation, we, the Korean Church, have promoted hatred and hostility, upholding the division system. Therefore, we have continuously urged the Korean Church – including ourselves – to repent of our sin of not practicing the radical love of Jesus to our neighbours, especially to the people in the North.

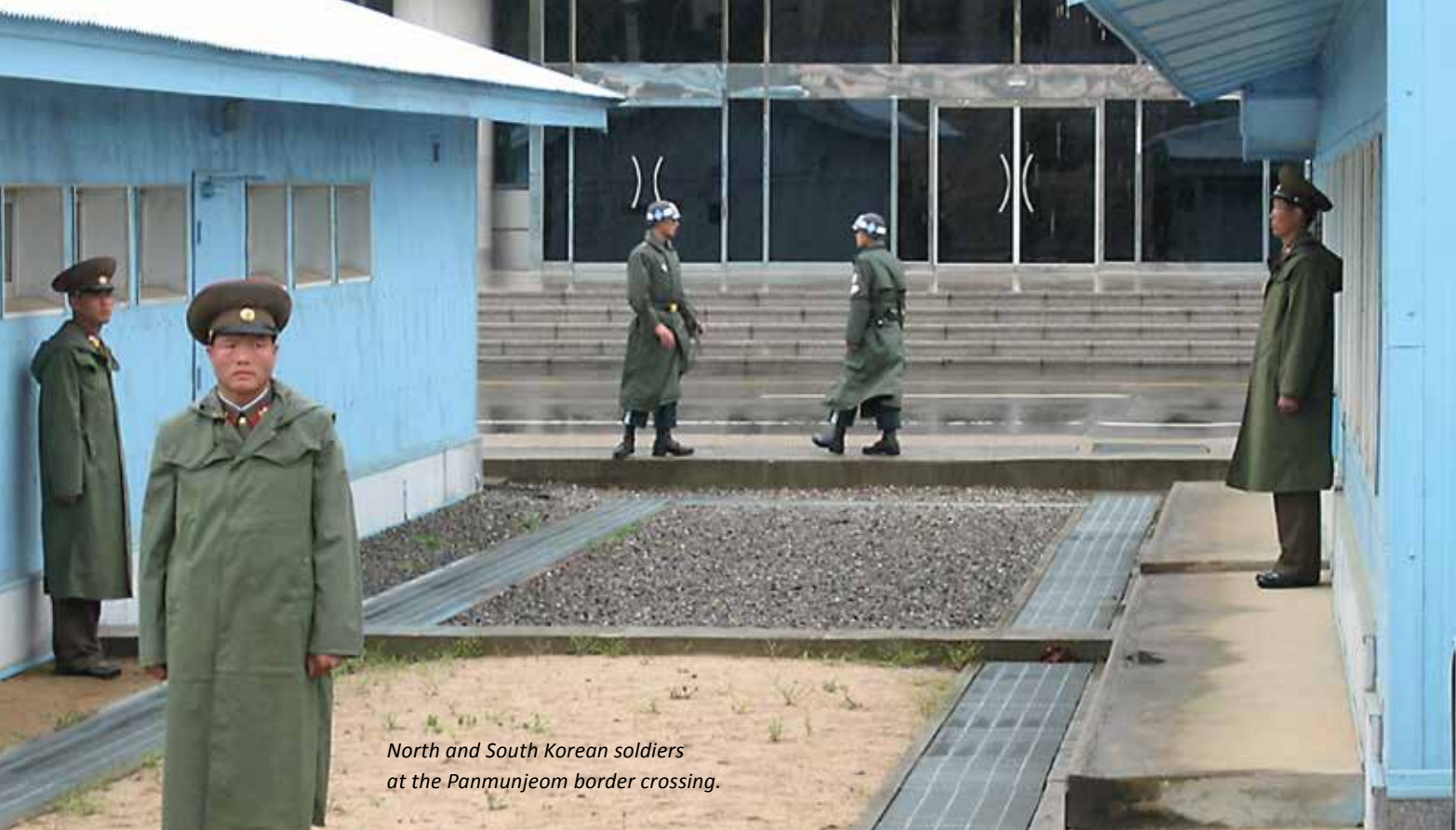
**The reconciliation and national reunification cannot be achieved by force.** We confess that the Korean War proves this truth as it brought neither reconciliation nor reunification but division and another form of violence (Psalm 33:16-20). Therefore, we have proclaimed that peace is the only way to reconciliation and national reunification.

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*„The Korean War has brought neither reconciliation nor reunification, but only more violence.“*

**Difference is not a punishment, but a blessing from God (Gen 9).** As difference has been considered problematic and dangerous, it has been suppressed through the process of assimilation and its accompanying violence. The North and South have demonised each other, condemning difference as evil. There has been no room for hospitality in the Korean Church.

**We rejoice in God's grace through sharing.** In God's grace, there are no absolute donors, or absolute recipients, but all have needs to be met and gifts to give. But we have turned away from each other. Especially, we South Koreans have rarely shared what we have with the people in the North when they need us in their pain (Mt 25:35).



*North and South Korean soldiers  
at the Panmunjeom border crossing.*

## WORLDWIDE SOLIDARITY

In 1988, the NCCK published the „Declaration of the Churches of Korea on National Reunification and Peace“. This declaration formed the basis for a major campaign to end the war and conclude a peace agreement. The 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Busan (South Korea) in 2013 was a turning point because for the first time the NCCK was able to expand its peace campaign to an international level by collecting a large number of signatures.

Since then, many ecumenical communities, including the EMS Fellowship, have joined in prayer, campaigns and signatures. In 2021, the campaign was finally transformed into the Korea Peace Appeal (KPA), which currently involves over 400 religious and civil society organisations. The “Korea Peace Appeal” expresses the desire to finally end the Korean War and establish a peace agreement; create a Korean Peninsula and a world free from nuclear weapons and nuclear threat; resolve the conflict with dialogue and cooperation instead of sanctions and pressure; break from the vicious cycle of the arms race and invest in human security and environmental sustainability.

## RISING TENSIONS

On 27 July 1953, the armistice between North and South Korea was signed at the Panmunjeom border crossing. This date in 2023 marks the 70th anniversary of this event. The campaign aims to collect one million signatures from supporters around the world by this symbolic date. The signatures will be handed over to the United Nations and the governments of the countries involved in the Korean War, including the Republic of Korea, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, the United States and the People’s Republic of China.

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*For more information on the campaign, go to  
[en.endthekoreanwar.net](https://en.endthekoreanwar.net)*

Time is running out. Whereas until a few years ago there were still hopeful signs of reconciliation and rapprochement between North and South Korea, the situation inside and outside the Korean peninsula is once again moving towards an increase in aggression. South Korea’s rhetoric towards North Korea is becoming more hostile, while North Korea is constantly conducting new missile tests. In addition, the deteriorating relations between the USA, China and Russia threaten to trigger another war on the Korean peninsula – raising fears of causing further escalation.



## DWINDLING SUPPORT

It is also worrying that young South Koreans tend to be disinterested when it comes to the issue of North Korea. A survey conducted in 2021 by the Institute for Reunification and Peace at Seoul National University found that 44.6% of respondents said reunification was necessary, while 26% did not think it was necessary, a drop of 19.2% in answers to the same question (63.8%) in 2007. The survey revealed that there was a dramatic increase in the percentage of those who view reunification negatively or are indifferent to it, especially among the young generation. However, if the young generation loses its vision of peace and reunification, there is no real future for Korea.

We find ourselves in extremely critical times. We must hold on all the more to the hope of peace and reunification. Peace is the only way for our people, our nation and even the entire North East Asian community to survive: “Where there is no prophecy, the people cast off restraint.” (Proverbs 29:19) The continuous solidarity we have received from the EMS for over 50 years has given us strength and enriched us in the hope of a more peaceful world. We are confident that the EMS Fellowship will continue to accompany us on our joint journey towards peace, reconciliation and unity.

*Shin Seung-min*



*Shin Seung-min is a pastor of the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK). He was General Secretary of the National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCK) from 2015 to 2022.*



## BRIEF HISTORY: KOREAN WAR

**The Korean War began in 1950 and lasted until 1953. It was an armed conflict between North Korea, supported by China and the Soviet Union, and South Korea, supported by the United States and other allies. The Korean War is considered one of the largest proxy wars during the Cold War.**

After World War II, Korea, which had been annexed by Japan in 1905, was divided into two occupation zones. The Soviet Union occupied the area north of the 38th parallel. The United States occupied the southern region. Each of the two Korean states that had emerged from the occupation zones considered themselves the only legitimate successors to the former Korean Empire.

After border violations by both sides, the war began on 25 June 1950 with an attack by North Korea that wanted to use military force to reunify the country under its leadership. It is still unclear how many people died – estimates put the death toll at up to 4.5 million. The war finally ended on 27 July 1953 by the signing of an armistice agreement and establishment of the demilitarised zone between North and South Korea. However, a peace treaty was never concluded. It means there has been no formal end to the Korean War to this day.



## “MAKE PEACE!”

**Sometimes when I’m really going up the wall, I could shout this to my sons. But what a ridiculous thing to say! As if you could order feelings about. No, we all know that life is not so simple.**

Reconciliation is not a rational matter. It is highly emotional. My sons have a conflict of interests, things get out of hand and the situation escalates. But how can I deal with these feelings so that when things calm down, they can start again? Yes, how do you do that? This is where reconciliation comes in. The conflict will continue to smoulder as long as anger is suppressed and frustration is simply brushed aside.

It’s okay for sparks to fly, and as a father I try to deflect the most dangerous of these sparks. It’s okay if there’s silence afterwards and everyone withdraws to their own room, exhausted to suffer in silence. Exhaustion is the state in which our heart is ready to open up again and find peace – first within ourselves. Time does not heal all wounds, but children teach us it does have the power to heal many wounds. They open the doors to their rooms much faster than adults can ever manage to do – even if the boys’ signs of reconciliation are usually rather hesitant to begin with.

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*Trust must first prove itself and this then leads to life continuing as normal but with an uncertain future.*

Reconciliation means that the conflicting parties have found peace within themselves and, with this peace, they trust each other again. Trust must first prove itself and this then leads to life continuing as normal but with an uncertain future – it’s a gift from heaven. In the Bible we read about many things that are all too human and do not end well. One brother kills his brother instead of being his guardian. One nation attacks another and denies them the right to exist. People are deported, enslaved, dehumanised – it all sounds remarkably familiar, doesn’t it? The things that happen here are inconceivable in the literal sense of the word. All talk of reconciliation can be easily perceived as cynical. But we will never live a good life together if we are not reconciled.

As a Christian, I find it reassuring that as humans we are often unable to reconcile at this kind of level, or we can only do so with immense difficulty, but that we believe in a power that can do just this. We are God’s children and one of our most beautiful Christian ideas is expressed by Paul when he writes: “In Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God!” (2 Corinthians 5:19-20)

Ask for reconciliation in Jesus’ name. To do what can be done in small ways. Find peace even when there was cause for anger. Trust God for what I cannot do myself. And be grateful. Children show us how reconciliation works and how things can always begin again together.

*Stefan Schwarzer*



*Rev. Stefan Schwarzer is Peace Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Württemberg.*



### LESS GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN CHURCH AND SOCIETY

The Near East School of Theology (NEST) in Beirut, Lebanon, recently hosted a three-day workshop on gender-based violence – a first in the church community in the Middle East. The workshop was funded by the Evangelical Mission in Solidarity (EMS), which has been actively addressing this issue for many years.

„We are all confronted with gender-based violence in our churches. Sometimes the religious aspect itself even contributes to gender-based violence – for example in the way we interpret certain Bible texts, how we implement them or how we teach these texts,“ said Rev. Dr Rima Nasrallah in her event opening address. She is a lecturer at the NEST which is part of the EMS study programme. Since 2018, Nasrallah has also been the spokesperson of the international EMS Women’s Network.

The aim of the workshop initiated by Reverend Nasrallah was to reflect on gender-based violence from biblical and theological perspectives as well as to provide practical knowledge and skills on how to cope with it. Professors from the NEST gave lectures which critically examined biblical texts and theological concepts that contribute to gender-based violence. A specialist psychologist and a professor of drama education also used creative and interactive methods to reflect on gender, gender roles and behaviour, and violence.

A total of some 25 people from different age groups took part in the workshop. Among them were numerous volunteers who work mainly with women, children and young people, and there were also people who work in church schools and institutions. The discussion was greatly enriched by the diversity of their personal backgrounds and experiences.

The group also went on an excursion to a local NGO specialising in the issue of gender-based violence. There, the group were presented with new horizons and they made new contacts. “It’s about time that our religious community stands up for people who are afflicted by violence,“ said Hala Bitar, one of the participants. In addition, other NGOs working in social, psychological and activist fields presented their work in one of the panel discussions.

„We hope that this workshop will be followed by other similar ones in the region and we hope to continue the work that has been achieved through this workshop,“ said Reverend Nasrallah. *Ulrike Pfab*



### SOUTH KOREA: MOURNING REV. LIM BORAH

At the beginning of February, the Korean theologian and activist Lim Bora passed away in Seoul at the age of 55. She leaves behind a husband and two daughters.

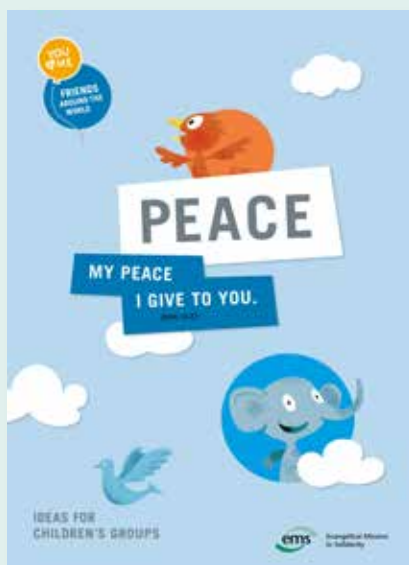
As a pastor of the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK), Lim Borah had been associated with the Evangelical Mission in Solidarity (EMS) since 2017. Through her work on human sexuality and her social engagement, especially for the LGBTQ community, she was in close contact with the „Women and Gender“ and „East Asia“ units at the EMS. Lim Borah was the first female pastor in South Korea to openly advocate for the rights of sexual minorities.

Her Soemdol Hyangrin Church in Seoul which she founded in 2013 specifically targeted LGBTQ Christians who were not yet welcome in many other churches. Lim Borah also gave a voice to people with disabilities, campaigned for animal welfare and took to the streets for peace and disarmament. „Lim Borah stood up for the rights of the vulnerable within society against all odds.

She stood up for what she believed in. Her advocacy for sexual minorities and human rights will be remembered for generations to come,” said EMS East Asia Liaison Secretary Solomon Benjamin.

The Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK) is one of the two EMS churches in the Republic of Korea together with the Presbyterian Church of Korea (PCK). More than a quarter of the population in the South East Asian country adheres to the Christian faith.

*Thorsten Krüger*



## TALKING TO CHILDREN ABOUT PEACE

Peace is a topic that concerns children all over the world. But what is peace actually? What does peace mean for children in various countries of the world? And what does the Bible say about this?

If you are looking for answers to questions like these, the workbook „Peace“ from the EMS children’s programme YOU+ME: FRIENDS AROUND THE WORLD is just the right one for you. At the moment, the international „FRIENDS“ team is also offering seminars in Indonesia and Germany. For example, the online workshop „Peace Worldwide“ which took place in March 2023. The „Projektstelle Faire Kita Saarland“ (Saarland Fair Daycare Project Office) invited participants from all over Germany to this event. The workshop, which was attended by 25 educators and multipliers from elementary schools, focused on the Peace booklet published in 2021. In the booklet, girls and boys from Asia, Africa and Europe talk about what peace means to them. A special focus is on South Korea and

how they deal with the pressure to perform and on the importance of „inner peace“.

It quickly emerged how relevant the issue of the pressure to perform is for children in German kindergartens and children’s groups as well – and how helpful it can be to read a story aloud or play a game from the peace booklet. The question of how to talk to children about the war in Ukraine was also addressed. There was also plenty of time to exchange ideas and to collect ideas for the participants’ own children’s groups. „We are very happy to have offered this very inspiring course in cooperation with the EMS,” said Peter Weichardt, the workshop’s organiser. Several institutions were now planning to use the peace booklet for their children’s groups, Weichardt said.

The 16-page booklet „Peace“ is available in German, English, Indonesian and Korean and can be ordered free of charge at [info@ems-online.org](mailto:info@ems-online.org). It is suitable for children of pre-school and primary school age. For adults there is a lot of background information as well as a theological reflection on the topic of peace in the Bible.

*Annette Schumm*

<https://ems-online.org/en/get-involved/childrens-programme>







*Rescue workers in the heavily destroyed northern Syrian city of Idlib.*

## EMS EMERGENCY RELIEF: WHEN EVERY MINUTE COUNTS

**After an earthquake, famine, flood or any natural disaster or humanitarian crisis, the rescuers and relief organisations are faced with a race against time. Medicines, temporary shelters, food and drinking water have to be brought to the affected areas as quickly as possible. The Evangelical Mission in Solidarity (EMS) is committed to helping people in acute emergencies through its member churches and their networks.**

Many EMS member churches are situated in regions that are regularly hit by natural disasters. Indonesia is a high-risk zone for earthquakes whereas India experiences regular flooding or periods of drought. Climate change is causing an increasing occurrence of weather extremes, especially in countries in the Global South. However, man-made crises such as wars, environmental catastrophes or accidents are also increasing worldwide at an alarming rate.

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*Climate change is causing an increasing occurrence of weather extremes, especially in the Global South.*

On the night of 6 February 2023, severe earthquakes shook large swathes of the Turkish-Syrian border region. The numerous aftershocks terrified the population. The latest figures report that more than 56,800 people were killed and over 110,000 were injured.

The material damage was also devastating: in Turkey alone, some 173,000 apartment buildings and public buildings were completely or partially destroyed. In northern Syria, the earthquake affected millions of people who had already lost everything due to the ongoing war.

### ACTING WITH FORESIGHT

Such disasters and humanitarian crises are unpredictable and virtually impossible to prevent. In an effort to actively respond with foresight, the EMS has built up reserves from „free donations“, among other things. Free donations are financial contributions that are not earmarked for a specific project, but can be used flexibly where they are most urgently needed at a particular time. This relief fund allows us to provide first, immediate support in crisis situations. For example, we were able to supply funds for relief and reconstruction measures immediately after the flood of the century in southern India in 2019; the devastating fire disaster in Wupperthal in South Africa; the severe explosion in the port of Beirut in 2020; and the earthquakes in Sulawesi in 2018 and 2021 and in the Turkish-Syrian border region in 2023. After the disaster, we support the people affected to rebuild their livelihoods.



*Generous donations helped to rebuild the burnt-down mission station in Wuppertal (South Africa).*



*After the severe earthquake in Sulawesi in 2018, the EMS provided emergency relief through its local member church.*

## MAKING GOOD USE OF LOCAL STRUCTURES

Even after the earthquake disaster in February, the EMS first made funds available from its emergency relief fund before the actual fundraising campaign started. Families in northern Syria were supplied with tents, blankets, electricity generators, heaters, warm winter clothing and durable food through the local EMS member church, the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East. To ensure that relief supplies reach their destination, the church worked hand in hand with a local relief organisation, the Jordan Hashemite Charity Organization (JHCO). This organisation has a well-functioning supply chain and a convoy of vans.

The example of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East is a good example of one of the principles of EMS emergency relief fund. It is the responsibility of the local EMS member churches to manage all the donations entrusted to them. Only they can really assess where the need is greatest and what help is needed most urgently. It also allows the churches to make the best use of their own networks and

contacts with other organisations. Wherever possible, the churches themselves procure the necessary Relief supplies and transport them by the shortest and quickest route to the crisis and disaster areas. In addition, the Christian motivation of the EMS forms the basis for its commitment to helping people in need – regardless of their religion, race, gender, nationality or other differences. The only guiding factor is the need of the people.

**We depend on your support for us to continue providing rapid and non-bureaucratic aid in the event of crises and disasters. Every donation and contribution to the EMS relief fund is supplied to the victims and those affected without any deduction of costs.**

*EMS Fundraising Team*

### Donation account: EMS

Evangelische Bank eG

IBAN DE85 5206 0410 0000 0001 24

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**Donate online:** Supporting us is really easy: just choose between PayPal, credit card or direct debit.

<https://ems-online.org/en/support/germany-ems-emergency-aid>

## FINANCIAL YEAR 2022

### REVENUES

Donations, offerings	1,144,597.20
Contributions from members	5,013,599.34
Project refunds and subsidies	167,270.00
Interest, dividends	90,899.63
Revenues on assets -	
Rental revenues	92,926.00
Refunds and other revenues	117,777.60
Carried forward result previous year	1,483.19

**6,628,552.96 EUR**

### EXPENDITURES

Project allocations	2,474,389.23
Allocations to reserves	225,000.00
Staff costs administration	734,208.22
Staff costs programmes	1,854,372.48
Staff costs ecumenical	
co-workers	182,686.56
Write-offs	51,679.90
Material costs administration	441,998.95
Material costs programmes	663,919.20

**6,628,254.54 EUR**

Annual surplus

**298.42**

All figures in Euro.

## FACTS, FIGURES, PROJECTS

### THE EMS FINANCIAL REPORT 2022

The effects of the Ukraine war were also felt in many countries of the EMS member churches. In Lebanon the war exacerbated the already difficult economic situation; in Indonesia the food supply was disrupted; and Europe had to cope with an energy crisis. At the same time, inflation reached a new high in many countries. In Germany, too, inflation reached double digits at times. This situation also made the work of the EMS more difficult.

### A LOOK AT THE FIGURES

The programmes and projects of the EMS have always been supported by a strong base of donors. We are very grateful that the amounts reaching us through parish collections, confirmation donations or mailings have remained largely constant and that the Waldensian Church in Italy once again supported our work last year to the tune of €300,000.

The EMS Future Fund introduced on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the EMS also met with enthusiastic support. The aim of the EMS Future Fund is to improve the education prospects of children all over the world. More than €110,000 were received in donations. However, there was a sharp decline in the number of large single donations which represented a

major share of the volume of donations in previous years. Compared to previous years, fees from the 30 EMS members – five mission societies and 25 churches from Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East – remained almost the same at around €4.1 million. This accounted for over 60 percent of earnings. It is a strong sign of confidence in the partnership work of the EMS whenever members stand together in the face of several crises happening at the same time.

### BALANCED ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Nevertheless, the overall eight percent drop in revenues combined with inflation-related cost increases posed a challenge for the EMS. There were significant, unforeseeable increases especially in the areas of purchasing and travel. For example, the costs of international flights rose by up to 40 percent in some cases. For this reason, too, online communication channels were further expanded and increasingly used last year. This achieved savings in conference and travel costs.

Fortunately, the EMS succeeded in re-staffing various posts in the departments in 2022. At the same time, this led to an increase of around nine percent in staff costs. Overall, the EMS is able to report a balanced annual financial statement for 2022. The reserves were increased by around €225,000 by utilising all the means of savings at our disposal.



## SECURING THE FUTURE FOR CHILDREN

A total of almost €2.5 million were invested in projects and programmes last year. Among them are 51 major projects submitted by our members and funded to the tune of €1.4 million in what is we refer to as the EMS

ProPro Main Approval Procedure. The decision on which projects are funded is made by the ProPro Committee composed of six delegates from various regions of the EMS member churches. Based on this procedure, more than 50 percent of funds went to school and vocational training and almost 25 percent to health work. The money is used to support schools, boarding homes, children's homes, hospitals and health stations run by church organisations within the EMS network. In addition, the EMS supported a number of minor projects in 2022 to the tune of around €110,000. This money was used to fund projects for the empowerment of women, securing livelihoods, chaplaincy in prisons, work with HIV/AIDS sufferers or supporting disadvantaged groups.

## OUTLOOK

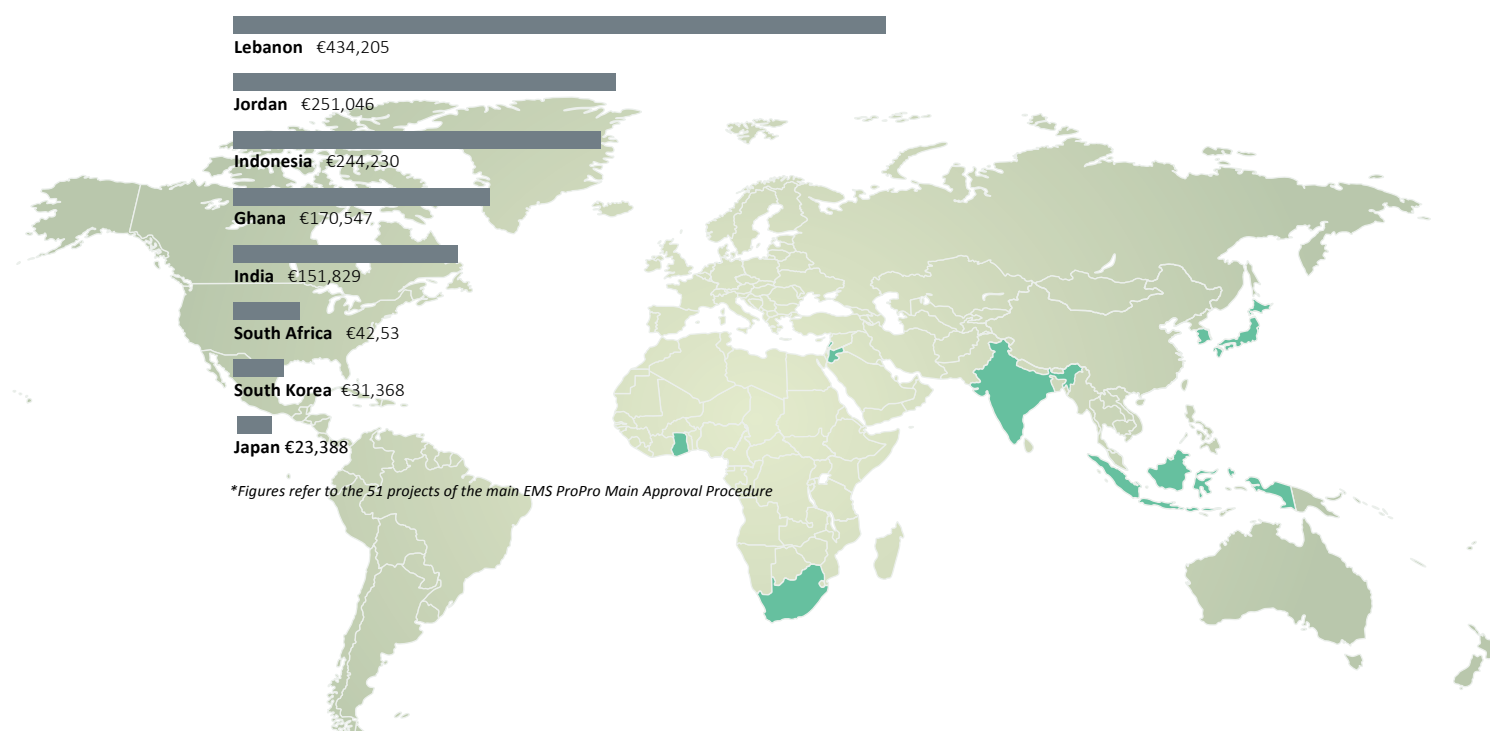
It is already becoming obvious that the years ahead will require great efforts on our part. Like many other mission societies in Germany, the EMS is also dependent on funding from its member churches. First and foremost are the German member churches which finance their contributions through church tax revenues. The high numbers of people leaving the church will ultimately require a financial readjustment in the not-too- distant future. The EMS will also feel the effects of this. This process has already begun. It will be the task of societies such as the EMS to maintain awareness of ecumenical requirements in the churches.

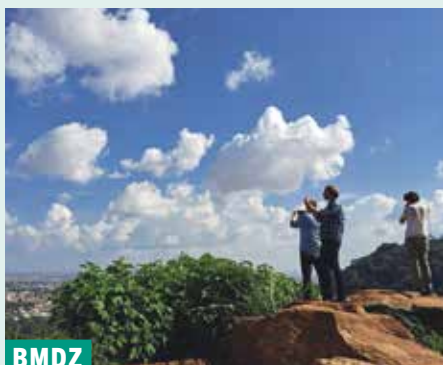
*Rudolf Bausch*

*Geschäftsführer*



## EMS PROJECT FUNDING BY COUNTRY\*





### CAMEROON IS WORTH A VISIT

A group from the Basel Mission – German Branch (BMDZ) travelled to Cameroon last autumn. They recorded their many impressions in a 70-page travel journal which can be downloaded free of charge from the BMDZ website.

Why did delegates from 20 partnership groups from Protestant congregations in Baden-Württemberg and Switzerland travel to Cameroon? How did they experience the French and English-speaking country which has been suffering from armed conflicts for many years? What concerns does the population have? What is the role played by the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon (PCC), a partner church of the BMDZ? And what can international congregation partnerships do – some of them have even lasted for decades? Answers to these questions and more information on the situation in the country can be found in the travel journal on the BMDZ website at [bmdz.ems-online.org](http://bmdz.ems-online.org) (German only). The travellers, led by Reverend Johannes Stahl, former partnership secretary of the BMDZ, killed two birds with one stone. They got to know each other and were able to share their personal experiences of partnership work and connect to each other's networks.

Most important were the meetings with the Cameroonian envoys in Douala, Bafoussam and Yaoundé. The group experienced the problems and successes in project work at first hand in intensive discussions. Unfortunately, due to the civil war, it was not possible for foreigners to travel to the project locations themselves.

They travelled in small buses and stayed overnight in a monastery and in guest houses. At the three locations, the guests were lovingly looked after by congregation members. Every welcome was an unforgettable celebration. Each church service deepened the fellowship and gave everyone encouragement to face the future together. The travellers were welcomed with open arms everywhere. The Cameroonians were enormously grateful as well as highly capable in presenting the success of their work so far and to outline their visions. This comes out very clearly in the interviews in the travel journal and in the reports about relief organisations that have made a name for themselves locally in dealing with the needy, such as internally displaced persons, the sick, traumatised and other disadvantaged groups. The travel journal, which contains numerous photos, is especially intended for people who want to get more acquainted with Cameroon and are considering how they can help in a meaningful way - for example, by working in a partnership with another congregation. The BMDZ is delighted to support such efforts.

*Sabine Eigel*

**Go here to the travel journal:**  
[bmdz.ems-online.org](http://bmdz.ems-online.org) (German only)



### FIRST FEMALE LUTHERAN PASTOR IN JERUSALEM

Sally Azar is the first Palestinian woman to be ordained by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL). More than 500 local and international guests came to attend the ordination ceremony in Jerusalem's Church of the Redeemer.

„I realise my task will not be an easy one. And I cannot do it alone. So I ask for your trusting support to build a strong, loving and believing community. I also ask for your prayers as I am reliant on God's guidance and wisdom,“ said the 26-year-old at her ordination. Sally Azar is only the sixth female pastor in the entire Middle East. She studied theology in Lebanon as well as in Göttingen and Hermannsburg (Germany). Besides her studies, she is a council member of the Lutheran World Federation, acting as a women's representative and also as a youth representative for the Asian region. She completed her Vicariate and Second Theological Examination in Berlin (Germany).

The EMS and the Evangelical Association for the Schneller Schools (EVS) are connected to Sally Azar in many ways –although her church is not formally a

member of the EMS. Indeed, her father Sani Ibrahim Azar, the present Bishop of the ELCJHL, was born at the Johann Ludwig Schneller School in Lebanon. In addition, Sally Azar studied at the Near East School of Theology (NEST) in Beirut, to which the EMS also regularly sends students through the „Study in the Middle East“ (SiMO). It was therefore a great pleasure for EVS Executive Secretary Dr Uwe Gräbe (on the left in the picture with Sally Azar and her father) to take part in the liturgy and offer a word of blessing to the young pastor.

Christians form only a small minority in the Palestinian territories including East Jerusalem. In Bethlehem and several other towns, the ELCJHL runs schools with a total of 2,000 students. As early as 2010, the church decided to admit women to the ministry. An announcement by the ELCJHL published on the occasion of Sally Azar's ordination says:

„We are very proud to make history in the name of gender justice and to make the women and girls in our church feel that their voice counts.“

*Dr Uwe Gräbe*



## 80 YEARS SINCE THE DEPORTATION OF THE SINTI AND ROMA

2023 marks the 80th anniversary of the beginning of the deportation of Sinti and Roma from what is now Baden-Württemberg to Auschwitz. Delegates from the German East Asia Mission (DOAM) also took part in the commemorative event on 15 March in Stuttgart organised by the state government of Baden-Württemberg together with the Association of German Sinti and Roma Baden-Württemberg.

At the ecumenical memorial service in the Catholic Church of St. Eberhard, the Protestant Bishop of Baden Prof. Dr Heike Springhart preached on the text of Cain and Abel. „We stand by the side of the wounded and afflicted because Christ is a wounded and afflicted person and stands by their side [...]. Thus, we as a Church can also be a guardian of our brothers and sisters,“ emphasised Bishop Springhart.

The 139 children and young people who were transported from Stuttgart on this day, most of whom did not survive Auschwitz, were then remembered by name at the „Sign of Remembrance“ memorial at Stuttgart North Station (photo).

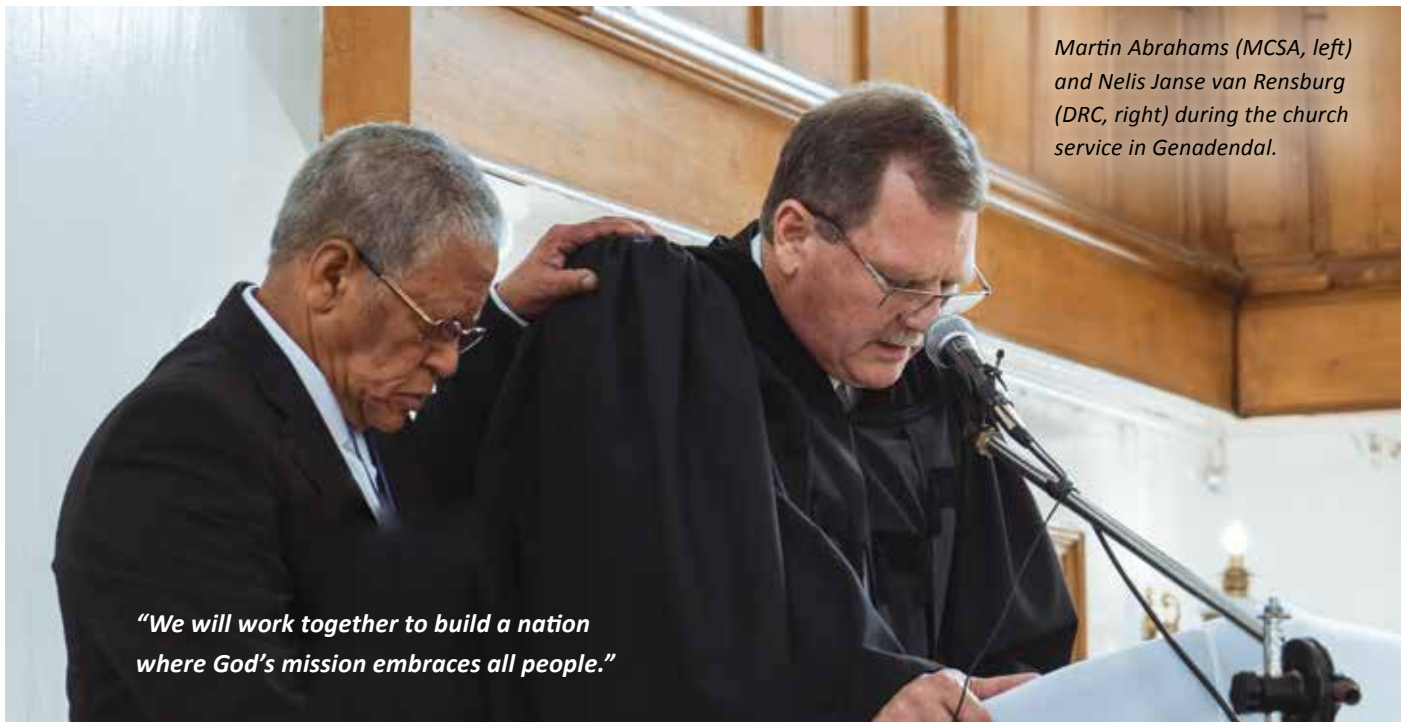
Schoolchildren lit a candle for them in the pouring rain and placed it on the tracks. Other commemorative events and services took place at many places in Baden Württemberg.

On 15 March 1943, the first of several shipments of Sinti and Roma from what is now Baden-Württemberg left for the concentration camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau. A total of about 500,000 Sinti and Roma were murdered. The crimes committed against them were not acknowledged for a long time after the war had ended and the compensation they deserved was delayed. The Sinti and Roma continue to suffer from exclusion and discrimination to this day.

One of the main areas of commitment of the German East Asia Mission is solidarity with discriminated minorities such as the Sinti and Roma in Germany. The founding of the Working Group Sinti/Roma and Churches in Baden-Württemberg in 1999 was an initiative of the United Church of Christ in Japan (KYODAN).

*Andreas Hoffmann-Richter*





*Martin Abrahams (MCSA, left) and Nelis Janse van Rensburg (DRC, right) during the church service in Genadendal.*

*"We will work together to build a nation where God's mission embraces all people."*

## SOUTH AFRICA: RECONCILIATION IS POSSIBLE

**Delegates from the Moravian Church in South Africa (MCSA) and the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) embarked on a joint „Pilgrimage of Grace“ from 23 to 25 September 2022 – thus opening a whole new chapter in their often difficult relations.**

For many centuries, the shared history of South Africa's two oldest Christian denominations was marked by racist and colonialist conflicts. These tensions date back to the 18th century. In the 20th century, the DRC supported the system of racial segregation and was closely associated with the white government of South Africa. The MCSA, on the other hand, was an important voice in the anti-apartheid movement and publicly condemned the oppression of the black population. Today, the MCSA is one of two African member churches of the EMS and has almost 45,000 members in 90 congregations. Since the end of apartheid politics in 1994, the MCSA and the DRC have been working intensively to improve their relations with the aim of reconciliation.

The pilgrimage started in Cape Town and its route led, among other places, to Genadendal (Afrikaans: "Valley of Grace"), the founding place of the MCSA. At a service in the church

there, the DRC publicly apologised to the MCSA for the pain and suffering they caused, but also for hindering their missionary work. "My church stood in the way of God's mission to the indigenous population," confessed Nelis Janse van Rensburg, moderator of the DRC. "We have sinned against God and against people –for that we ask forgiveness." At the end of the service, both churches pledged to work together across all ethnic and cultural boundaries to build the Kingdom of God in South Africa.

The last stop of the pilgrimage at Cape Agulhas, the southernmost point of Africa, also marked the beginning of the prayer campaign "50 Days of Prayer for Africa". With this campaign, the two churches invited people to pray for a different African country every day from 26 September to 20 November 2022.

*Augustine Joemath, Bishop of the Moravian Church in South Africa (MCSA)*

[www.moravianchurch.co.za](http://www.moravianchurch.co.za)

## EKIBA: “RETHINKING SECURITY” INITIATIVE

**„Military security policy is at a dead end. It is a contributory factor to the perpetuation of armed conflicts and violence“.** With these words, member of the Superior Church Council, **Christoph Schneider-Harpprecht of the Protestant Church in Baden (EKIBA)**, presented the scenario „Rethinking Security“ in April 2018. It intends to bring a new perspective to the discussion on peace and security.

The „Rethinking Security“ scenario advocates a change from a military to a civil security policy. It was compiled on behalf of the EKIBA by an interdisciplinary working group together with representatives of nationwide peace organisations. Since 2019, this scenario has been the basis for an international initiative which is now supported by 150 organisations.

### BUILDING MUTUAL TRUST

„Rethinking Security“ shows how the numerous existing approaches to a civil security policy can be systematically expanded in the future – and describes five pillars of civil security policy:

- A just economy and lifestyle.
- Sustainable development of the EU’s neighbouring states.
- Development of a global civil security architecture.
- Resilient democracy.
- Conversion of the German federal armed forces and the defence industry.

[www.sicherheitneudenken.de/sicherheit-neu-denken-unsere-vision/international/englisch](http://www.sicherheitneudenken.de/sicherheit-neu-denken-unsere-vision/international/englisch)

Thus, in the medium to long term, security and peace could be sustainably ensured by rebuilding mutual trust as a serious alternative to increasing global mistrust and mutual insecurities in real and cyber space.

The initiative responded to the war in Ukraine in March 2022 with concepts for a resolute and level-headed response towards Russia as well as numerous contributions from public discussions. In particular, “Rethinking Security” refers to the worldwide perception of the war in Ukraine as a geopolitical struggle between world powers. The solution, according to the resolutions of the UN General Assembly, requires an immediate conclusion of ceasefires and the start of rapid peace negotiations, i.e. the choice of non-violent means. For 2023, the initiative is planning to develop an updated scenario that takes even more account of the latest developments in world politics.

*Ralf Becker*



*Ralf Becker coordinates the “Rethinking Security” initiative on behalf of the Protestant Church in Baden (EKIBA).*

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## THE COVENTRY LITANY OF RECONCILIATION

## OUTLOOK

*All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.*

*The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class,  
Father, forgive.*

*The covetous desires of people and nations to possess what is not their own,  
Father, forgive.*

*The greed which exploits the work of human hands and lays waste the earth,  
Father, forgive.*

*Our envy of the welfare and happiness of others,  
Father, forgive.*

*Our indifference to the plight of the imprisoned, the homeless, the refugee,  
Father, forgive.*

*The lust which dishonours the bodies of men, women and children,  
Father, forgive.*

*The pride which leads us to trust in ourselves and not in God,  
Father, forgive.*

*Be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.*

*Amen.*

*The Coventry Litany of Reconciliation has been prayed every Friday since 1959 in the ruins of the medieval St Michael's Cathedral. The prayer commemorates the German air raid on 14 November 1940 that killed 550 people and destroyed large parts of the English industrial city, including the Cathedral.*