



Department for Theology and Public Witness

Annual Report 2014



THE
LUTHERAN
WORLD
FEDERATION

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Growing Strong in Joyful Witness

Among our ecumenical partners, how can we strengthen the wider ownership of preparations for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation? What does the Lutheran tradition contribute to the sustainable development of society? Who owns gender justice in the local Lutheran churches? Where should we draw the line between a local church's autonomy and its accountability to the wider communion?

These are but some of the complex and sometimes sensitive questions that staff in the Department for Theology and Public Witness (DTPW) have wrestled with during 2014. The wide range of topics explored reflects the staff's deep commitment to and passion and enthusiasm for theology, the Lutheran communion and the world at large.

One of our concerns is to safeguard spaces where in-depth theological reflection can take place. We are convinced that discussions with other LWF departments, ecumenical



Rev. Dr. Kaisamari Hintikka.
Photo: Violaine Martin

partners, such as the WCC's Faith and Order Commission staff, the LWF's member churches and our related agencies nurture theological thinking and reflection across the communion. Despite our busy schedules and packed portfolios we therefore regard providing space for global theological reflection within the LWF communion as one of the

DTPW's first and foremost tasks. The department's programmatic networks in the fields of hermeneutics, women theologians and ecumenical dialogues, as well as the close cooperation with the departments for World Service and for Mission and Development, ensure that these discussions are of relevance for the LWF member churches.

In 2014, as in previous years, the department's work was directed by the LWF Strategy. Within this strategic framework, the eight ongoing programs and one project were related to two strategic priorities: (1) a communion strengthened in worship and on-going theological discernment, ecumenical dialogue and interfaith collaboration; and (2) effective and empowering diakonia addressing human suffering, injustice and emergencies. Furthermore, the department continued to take the lead in three of the four LWF strategic cross-cutting priorities: (1) theological reflection and formation; (2) gender justice; and (3) advocacy.

In June 2014, the LWF Council decided to adopt the Reformation anniversary theme and its three sub-themes as the themes for the 2017 Twelfth Assembly. Over the course of the year, the main theme, "Liberated by God's Grace," as well as the three sub-themes— "Salvation—Not for Sale," "Human Beings—Not for Sale" and "Creation—Not for Sale"—have

informed the department's planning and reflections. Moreover, since the second half of the year, DTPW staff have played a leading role in the content preparations for the Assembly.

In 2014, the department contributed to preparing four significant agreements entered into by the LWF, namely: the decision to launch joint preparations for an ecumenical event commemorating the Reformation anniversary together with the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU); the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding together with Islamic Relief Worldwide; the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding together with UNHCR; and launching the Lutheran–Pentecostal dialogue in 2015 (which had to be postponed to 2016 due to the Swiss National Bank's decision to abandon its euro peg).

In this year's report we will concentrate on four specific areas of the department's activities. In 2014, we saw a remarkable growth in the following areas: (1) the interfaith pro-

gram safely secured its place within the Communion Office and benefited from substantial contributions by the other programmatic departments; (2) the LWF sharpened its profile with regard to the commemoration of the Reformation and the member churches as well as ecumenical partners have become more closely connected to the preparations for the anniversary; (3) theological gleanings from the two-year Lutheran self-understanding project as well as (4) the hermeneutics program permeated the wider programmatic work of the department. All these activities were successfully cross-fertilized with the department's other programs in the areas of ecumenical relations, gender justice, worship life and advocacy, and the LWF's other programmatic units.

Rev. Dr Kaisamari Hintikka
Assistant General Secretary for
Ecumenical Relations
Director, Department for Theology
and Public Witness

Affirming Shared Public Space and Interreligious Commitment to Peace

The program on public theology and interreligious relations is crucial in implementing the LWF's core commitment to building bridges with people of other faiths. One of the hallmarks of the LWF's approach to interreligious relations is its commitment to collaborating with interreligious partners in humanitarian work while engaging in theological dialogue between religious leaders and scholars.

The LWF signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Islamic Relief Worldwide which serves as a framework for jointly developing projects that focus on vulnerable and crisis-affected populations with the aim "to increase mutual understanding of how interfaith humanitarian action can work in practice, and contribute to peaceful and stable interreligious relations" (Art. 1 MoU). The LWF's thirty-year track record in interreligious dialogue was instrumental as



(left to right): Celene Ayat Ibrahim-Lizzio, Busi Suneel Bhanu, Marcie Lenk

the LWF ventured into such a new collaboration.

The Desk for the Dialogue with People of Other Faiths was established following a decision taken by the 1984 LWF Assembly. Since then, the LWF has engaged in sound theological reflection on religious plurality

from Lutheran perspectives, and has organized dialogue meetings with scholars from other religious communities, especially, Islam Judaism and Buddhism.

In several regions, violence committed in the name of religion and religio-political conflicts have led to

strained interreligious relations and an increasingly polarized discourse. In such a tense climate, interreligious encounter is crucial. Religious identity politics and the hegemony of one religious community haunt societies in many parts of the world. This is frequently exacerbated by socioeconomic disintegration and a shrinking public space. In light of the interaction between local and global dynamics, global and intentional interreligious dialogue on these issues is critical. The times when each

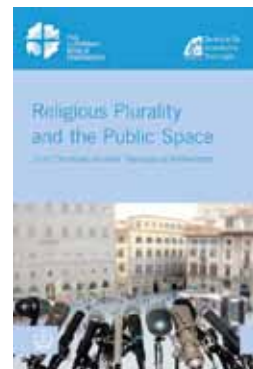
community could find answers for itself are past.

In 2014, the Office for Public Theology and Interreligious Relations organized three major dialogue consultations and facilitated an interreligious encounter at the meeting of the LWF Council in Medan, Indonesia.

In collaboration with the Center for Islamic Theology in Münster (Germany), a newly emerging center for Islamic research and teaching that aims at educating Muslim religious leaders in Europe, thirty-five

scholars from fifteen countries and Muslim and Christian backgrounds were convened in early 2014. The center's director, Professor Mouhanad Khorchide, receives significant attention in Germany and beyond, as his theological principles for understanding the message of the Qur'an unsettles traditionalist perspectives. Due to the fact that Muslim communities have become more visible and more articulate in Europe, there is a specific need to relate to the centers where new leaders are formed.

Keynote presentations by Archbishop Dr Antje Jackelén (Sweden) and Professor Mona Siddiqui (UK) were followed by in-depth debates on the meaning of secularity in the public space and participants contributed different contextual experiences and conceptual ideas to the conversation. "Citizenship" was referred to as a key concept in plural societies as it enables the establishment of public space there



Conference participants, Münster

where people of different religious, ethnic, gender and other identities can interact as different yet equal persons. The concept of citizenship helps to challenge discourses of majority vs. minority groups and enables the naming of injustice and oppression and jointly to develop visions of a just society. During one of the panel sessions, the participants discussed European foreign policy as well as human rights issues with two senior members of the German parliament, Ruprecht Polenz and Christoph Stässer.

Under the auspices of the LWF, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania and Mission EineWelt and in cooperation with the National Muslim Council of Tanzania (BAKWATA), the office of the Mufti of Zanzibar and the Tanzania Asian Development Association (TADA), a noteworthy regional interreligious consultation was held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in May 2014. In his opening speech, the Vice-President of Tanzania, Dr Mohamed Gharib Bilal, addressed the conference



(left to right) Dialogue participants Helen Haggai and Amina Ahmed.

topic “Interfaith Dialogue on Peace Building, Democracy and Development: A Call for Active Citizenship in Sub Saharan Africa.” This topic was further discussed by sixty-five religious leaders, mainly from Tanzania but also Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa. In a joint interreligious declaration, the signatories commit themselves to respect religious differences, adhere to democratic principles, guarantee the rights of everyone, support interreligious initiatives, refrain from the misuse of

religions to advance partisan political agendas and to do their utmost to combat sectarian and religious conflicts. Participants unanimously condemned the use of violence and pledged themselves to empower people to become active in building peace, to promote gender equity in their communities and to build inter-religious platforms to foster peace building, democracy and poverty alleviation.

At the August 2014 event in Seattle (USA), sponsored by the

LWF and the School of Theology and Ministry at Seattle University, thirty Jewish, Christian and Muslim scholars from various traditions discussed religious identity and renewal. Lively and thought-provoking discussions took place in response to papers on topics such as identity, memory, sacred texts and revelation, and religious life in the twenty-first century. In their final statement the participants affirmed:

Communities are seeking renewal in many different ways. These include: reinterpreting difficult texts, the healing of memories and overcoming past divisions. Understanding more fully the historicity of the texts and of the divisions helps us to think anew about the constructive meaning of the texts in today's world. Each of our religious communities draws on rich interpretative expertise (midrash, tafsir, linguistic analysis, hermeneutics), and in reflecting on the interpretative challenges together we mutually benefit from this expertise. [...] Jewish, Christian

and Muslim identities are inter-related and their theologies have a rich history of responsiveness to one another. Today we see people of different generations in all of our faith communities asking radical questions about God in the face of tremendous human suffering. We realize that we cannot consider the future of our own faith community in isolation from others; our communities are closely related and the future of life in dignity is a shared concern.

Since in 2014 the LWF Council met in Medan, Indonesia, the biggest majority Muslim country, a pre-Council study day at the State Islamic Institute in Medan provided an important opportunity to share information on and experiences pertaining to current issues in theological education in Christian and Muslim communities. At the Council, the keynote panel included two theological scholars from renowned religious institutes in Sumatra, as well as an Indonesian human rights activist, Ms Kamala Chandrakirana.

Having specialized in women's rights, she related her experience about the close ties between the rights for women and rights for ethnic and religious minorities in Indonesia.

Beyond the events that were initiated and organized by the Office for Public Theology and Interreligious Relations, theological expertise and Lutheran perspectives were contributed to other ecumenical events and processes, such as the WCC's study on multiple religious belonging and the CPCE's study on religious plurality.

Theological accountability in interreligious relations remain topics of paramount importance. In a shared world, torn apart by vocal fundamentalist identity politics, religious communities have to explain why and how they engage with others in the public space. The rationale they provide for their engagement needs to speak to those within their own community and be accountable to others in society. It is therefore vital that religious communities discover theology as a means of accountability and do theology in collaboration with others.



Conference participants,
Seattle

The GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

AN ACCOUNT OF THE
GENEALOGY OF JESUS
THE MESSIAH, THE
SON OF DAVID,
THE SON OF ABRAHAM.

ABRAHAM WAS THE FATHER OF
ISAAC, AND ISAAC THE FATHER
OF JACOB, AND JACOB THE
FATHER OF JUDAH, AND HIS
BROTHERS. AND JUDAH THE
FATHER OF PEREZ, AND ZERUHA
BY TAMAR, AND PHEZEAZ THE
FATHER OF HEZRON, AND
HEZRON THE FATHER OF ARAM,
AND ARAM THE FATHER OF
AMINADAB, AND AMINADAB
THE FATHER OF NAHSHON, AND
NAHSHON THE FATHER OF
SALMON, AND SALMON THE
FATHER OF BOAZ BY RUTH,
AND BOAZ THE FATHER OF OBED
BY RUTH, AND OBED THE
FATHER OF JESSE, & JESSE
THE FATHER OF KING DAVID.

AND DAVID WAS THE FATHER
OF SOLOMON BY THE WIFE OF
URIAH, AND SOLOMON THE
FATHER OF REHOBOAM, &
REHOBOAM THE FATHER OF
ABIAH, AND ABIAH THE FATHER
OF ASAPH, AND ASAPH THE
FATHER OF JEHOSHAPHAT, AND
JEHOSHAPHAT THE FATHER
OF JORAM, AND JORAM THE
FATHER OF UZZIAH, AND
UZZIAH THE FATHER OF
JOTHAM, AND JOTHAM THE
FATHER OF AHAZ, AND AHAZ
THE FATHER OF MANASSE,

FOURTEEN GENERATIONS
FROM ABRAHAM TO DAVID,
FOURTEEN GENERATIONS
FROM DAVID TO THE DEPARTURE
FROM BABYLON TO JERUSALEM,
FOURTEEN GENERATIONS
FROM JERUSALEM TO BETHLEHEM,
WHERE JESUS WAS BORN.



Reading and Interpreting the Gospel Together

As we prepare to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, the department's hermeneutics program seeks to reclaim some of the major Reformation insights, including the revitalization of the church through the reinterpretation and re-appropriation of the Holy Scriptures. Most historians and theologians agree that the rediscovery of the Bible and the development of new interpretive methodologies were key factors in as well as results of the Reformation. Therefore, in 2010, the Office for Lutheran Theology and Practice embarked on a hermeneutics program to explore models of biblical interpretation based on Lutheran perspectives and responding to different contextual challenges. Over the last four years, we have been looking at the Gospel of John, the Psalms and the Gospel of Matthew in light of particular con-

textual concerns and in conversation with some of the Lutheran tradition's main interpretive tenets. Prior to harvesting the main findings of this process we will focus on Paul's letters in 2015.

Particular to the exploration of the Gospel of Matthew in 2014 were three main features, namely: (a) the Christian–Jewish discussion; (b) the participation of young scholars; and (c) the emphasis on incorporating the findings of this hermeneutics process into seminary and university curricula and the formation of pastors.

A Christian—Jewish discussion

At the 2013 hermeneutics conference focusing on the Psalms it clearly transpired that some texts

that are sacred to Christians are also regarded as such by other religions such as Judaism and, to some extent, Islam. It was therefore decided that the 2014 event, hosted in cooperation with the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, would include Jewish scholars who would enrich our reading with a Jewish perspective.

Talking about the Pharisees in Christian and Jewish interpretations, Rabbi Laurence Edwards stressed the importance of encounters such as this since both religions carried interpretational traditions that tend to be hostile to each other. He pointed out that it would be helpful if Christian interpreters were to avoid negative associations with characters such as the “Pharisees” in the New Testament as well as identifying such negative portrayals with aspects of contemporary Judaism.



(left to right) Laurence Edwards, Faustin Leonard Mahali

Based on this experience, plans are being developed to bring together Christians, Jews and Muslims in 2016 in order to read sacred texts.

by more experienced scholars and found ways of relating the hermeneutics process to their own work. When asked about her participation in the

study program, Rospita Siahaan from Indonesia responded:

I am so grateful to the Lutheran World Federation for having invited me to attend the hermeneutics conference in Chicago. It was a great privilege for me to attend such a big international conference. As a doctoral student who is writing a dissertation on the New Testament, most of my studies focus on textual exegesis. As many papers were based on profoundly exegetical studies, this enriched my hermeneutical skills. Moreover, although I am a Lutheran pastor, in my studies I paid only little attention to Lutheran

The participation of young scholars

While previous conferences brought together well-established scholars, 2014 saw the involvement of a number of young scholars and students so as to bridge the generational gap and to ensure continuity. Interestingly, the younger scholars raised pertinent questions that tend not to be asked



(left to right) Renny Khoo, Eve-Marie Becker and Rospita Siahaan.

tradition and contextualization. At the conference, I discovered how inadequate I am in my own tradition. Therefore, the conference helped me greatly to be aware of Lutheran tradition and interpretation and how to apply it to my own context.

Emphasis on including the findings into higher education

One of our primary concerns has been to ensure that these global conferences influence teaching. We want to make certain that the resources we produce are used in seminaries and universities. When we asked one of the senior scholars, Prof. Hans-Peter Grosshans, University of Muenster, Germany, who has been involved in the hermeneutics program since the beginning, he replied:

The LWF hermeneutics consultations are a unique and great program, which has had a huge influence on my teaching and my



(left to right) Hans-Peter Grosshans, Craig Koester

research direction. Directed towards the Reformation anniversary in 2017, the program focuses on Holy Scripture and with this on the heart of the ongoing reformation of the church since the sixteenth century. As a professor of Christian doctrine and ecumenical theology I am very happy that with this series of consultations the LWF is not ignoring this center and heart of the Lutheran churches among all the other manifold anniversary activities. The hermeneutics program is unique in its consistently interdisciplinary approach, bringing into the discussion not only

biblical exegesis with doctrinal and pastoral considerations, but also doing hermeneutical theology in an experimental way by testing hermeneutical theories in joint readings and interpretations of biblical texts. Especially the reading and interpretation of biblical texts on the basis of the various contextual and often pressing experiences of the participants impresses me immensely. The intensive sharing of our understandings has given me new insights into the interpretation of biblical texts and generally into hermeneutics. Inspired by these experiences and learning I have in-

roduced hermeneutical reflections and information on hermeneutics in my normal teaching program, seminars and lectures on various subjects of doctrine and ecumenism. Furthermore, I have started to give extra seminars on hermeneutics with a great resonance among the students and started new research on hermeneutics.



- Planning for the fourth hermeneutics consultation in Aarhus, Denmark, has been concluded.

2015 and beyond

Achievements

- Third international LWF conference on hermeneutics focusing on the Gospel of Matthew with over forty-five participants from all regions of the LWF carried out in cooperation with the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago
- Regional hermeneutics workshops in collaboration with the Asian and African area secretaries carried out in Japan and Johannesburg
- Consultation statements posted on website
- Publication including select presentation from the 2013 international conference on hermeneutics focusing on the Psalms shared with theological seminaries, institutions and networks and reviewed in theological journals
- Harvesting process leading to the LWF statement on hermeneutics has been established
- The process to produce a hermeneutics statement informed by the work done over the last four years has begun. The draft statement should be ready for the 2016 meeting of the Council and the final document will be submitted to the 2017 Assembly.
- The “Journey in the Word” event is planned in the context of the 2016 Council in Witternberg.

Journeying Together Toward 2017

As the 500th anniversary of the Reformation draws near it increasingly informs the work of the entire Communion Office. Since the 2013 meeting of the Council, the report of the Special Committee, “500 Years of Reformation,” has directed the commemoration of this quincentennial anniversary. One of the principal ideas underlying our planning is the forward-looking dimension and this anniversary gives us the opportunity to reflect on the ongoing relevance of the questions that triggered the Reformation and to discern its impact on the church and society.

At its meeting in 2013, the Council designated the years 2015–2017 as the core time for anniversary commemoration activities. Much of the planning and preparatory work for the next three years was carried out in 2014. Many of the Communion Office’s programs specifically focus on Reformation 500, such as for instance the Office for Women in Church and Society’s

(WICAS) project “Women on the Move: From Wittenberg to Windhoek” (WMWW) that celebrates the leadership and participation of women in the ongoing Reformation 1517–2017. The toolkit for this project can be downloaded from www.lutheranworld.org/content/resource-women-move-wittenberg-windhoek-toolkit. Inspired by the anniversary’s main theme, “Liberated by God’s Grace,” the Global Young Reformers Network has adopted “Freed by God’s Love to Change the World” as its guiding theme. In 2014, the network began to collect stories written by young people who recount what their faith has freed them from and to. Stories by members of the steering group can be found online at youngreformers.lutheranworld.org.

At its meeting in June 2014, the LWF Council decided to adopt the Reformation anniversary theme “Liberated by God’s Grace” with its three subthemes, “Salvation—not for Sale,” “Human beings—not for

Sale” and “Creation—not for Sale” as the themes for the Twelfth Assembly which will take place in May 2017, at Windhoek, Namibia. In terms of content, this establishes a clear connection between the 500th anniversary of the Reformation program and the Twelfth Assembly and intentionally links the two processes. This close connection is visually reinforced by the fact that the LWF adopted the same logo for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation as for its Twelfth Assembly. The logo consists of elements recognizable from the LWF’s global logo and previous Assembly logos, and its colors are in accordance with the LWF color scheme but adapted to the Namibian context.

On its journey towards 2017, the LWF invites its member churches to become involved in discussions inspired by the anniversary theme and its subthemes. In 2014, we conceptualized and edited four global, popular booklets that explore different aspects



LIBERATED
BY GOD'S
GRACE

2017 - 500 YEARS OF REFORMATION

of the LWF's thematic approach to 2017. Brief essays were solicited from a wide range of international authors, including bishops, pastors, academics, LWF Council members and representatives of different LWF networks. As such they clearly reflect the global character of the Reformation. The booklets will be available in English, German and Spanish in 2015 both in print and online at www.lutheranworld.org/resources/14.

For the first time in the history of Reformation anniversaries, the 500th anniversary in 2017 openly seeks to be fully ecumenically accountable. Several decades of ecumenical dialogue have expunged many theological misunderstandings and have made notable headway in the reconciliation processes between different churches. Significant reception processes have taken place around the document *From Conflict to Communion*, compiled by the international Lutheran–Roman Catholic Commission on Unity. Published in 2013, this first attempt by Lutherans and Roman Catholics jointly to tell the story of the Reforma-



tion is currently available in English, Finnish, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Polish and Spanish with further translations, notably into other Nordic languages, currently underway. So far, one of the most far-reaching reception processes was organized in 2014 by the LWF's German National Committee. Their virtual reception process, 2017.gemeinsamunterwegs [2017.journeying together] www.2017gemeinsam.de/index.php?id=23, which took place from 23 April to 24 November 2014,

provided the opportunity to discuss the content of the document and the questions it raises. Furthermore, in cooperation with the local Roman Catholic Church, the Peruvian Lutheran Evangelical Church organized a reception process in 2014 and it is our hope that *From Conflict to Communion* will continue to be studied at regional, national and local levels.

In 2014, work continued on the joint Lutheran–Roman Catholic liturgy for the commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

The liturgy, which is developed in line with the main messages of this study document, is currently being edited and will be published in 2015.

During its meeting in Hong Kong, November 2014, the Anglican–Lutheran International Coordinating Committee (ALICC), developed joint plans for commemorating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. Some forty authors from both communions will be asked to prepare reflections on the theme “Liberated by God’s Grace.” The material will

also include a chapter that outlines the historical connections between the Lutheran Reformation and the sixteenth-century Reformation on the British Isles.

In view of this major anniversary, the Communion Office understands itself as both the “glue” and the “catalyst” with regard to the member churches’ 2017 related initiatives and plans. Information about their respective plans and events is collected via the 2017 network consisting of representatives from

the member churches who are in charge of preparations for Reformation 500. The number of members of this network grew substantially in 2014 and the recently launched LWF 2017 website will offer a virtual space for sharing information about regional and local plans collected via the 2017 network.

The Reformation 2017 flyer gives a coherent overview of the LWF’s approach to the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. It highlights several ongoing processes and events and marks key milestones of the Lutheran Reformation. The flyer, available in English, German, Spanish and French, can be downloaded at <http://2017.lutheranworld.org/content/reformation-2017-flyer-131>.



Learning to Live with Difference

Since the Seventh Assembly in 1984, at Budapest, Hungary, the Lutheran World Federation's member churches are in altar and pulpit fellowship. This communion is expressed in the sharing of spiritual and material resources in order to strengthen the joint participation in God's mission in the world. How to commit to the gospel and to serve in the world continues to be a matter of ongoing conversation within the communion. One issue that has created considerable tension between some member churches relates to family, marriage and sexuality which, in the LWF, has been called the "Emmaus conversation."

This discussion, first raised at the level of the LWF Council in 2007, was continued at its meeting in June 2012. After reflecting on the nature and expression of communion in "Claiming the Gift of Communion in the Fragmented World," a reflection by the General Secretary, the Council in 2013 commended the document



LWF working group on "The Self-Understanding of the Communion"

to the member churches and asked the General Secretary

to engage member churches in further theological reflections on how to respect the autonomy of LWF member churches' decisions and express and deal with the resulting differences, while at the same time upholding their commitment to live and work together

as a communion of churches.

(Message of the Council of the LWF, 2013.)

In order to begin this joint process of reflection, a working group of seven persons, representing different regions and theological expertise, was appointed by the Meeting of Officers at the end of 2013. The members of this group, which has an eighteen-

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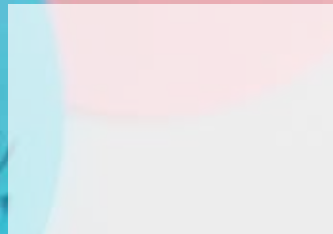
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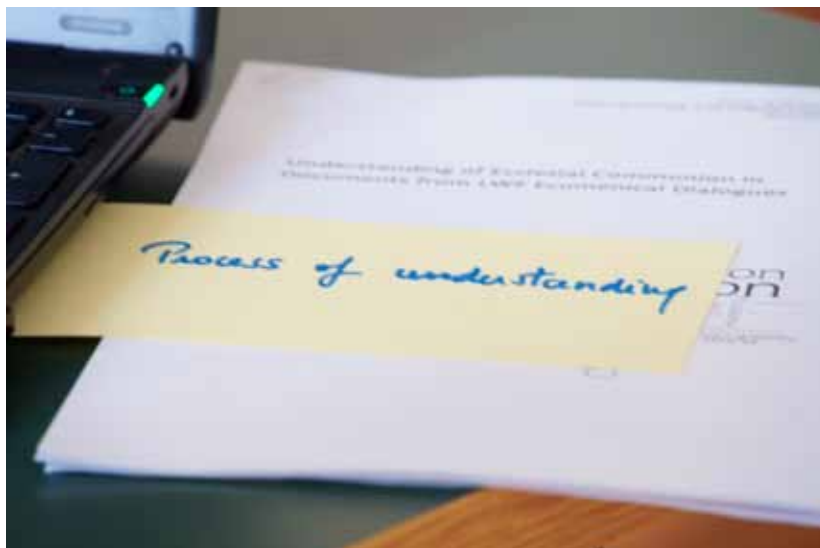


month mandate, are: Prof. Dr Guillermo Hansen (Argentina/USA), Dr Minna Hietamäki (Finland), Prof. Dr Allen Jorgenson (Canada), Bishop em. Dr Hance Mwakabana (Tanzania), Prof. Dr En Yu Thu (Malaysia), Prof. Dr Elisabeth Parmentier (France) and Rev. Annika Laats (Estonia). A DTPW and DMD staff team was assigned to accompany the process. The working group met at Bossey, Switzerland, in March 2014, and held an online meeting in November 2014.

The working group was tasked with preparing a study document on “The Self-Understanding of the Lutheran Communion” to be presented to the Council in 2015. The document is expected to offer substantial theological reflection for the member churches to further clarify the self-understanding of the LWF as a communion. Even though the LWF has produced several studies on the theology of communion over the last decades, further studies were needed to clarify the communion relationships. The group was asked to examine how bilateral relationships within the communion relate to multilateral ones.

At its first meeting in March 2014, the working group heard several presentations that approached the theme of communion from both theological and sociological perspectives and explored communion relationships from various LWF contexts. Addressing the meeting, the General Secretary, Rev. Martin Junge, emphasized the challenge of “socio-ethical” issues that are also deeply theological and regarded as potentially church dividing. Properly discerning and faithfully responding to this challenge are critical since there is a need to communicate “the ways in which the LWF intends in future to deal with difference, particularly if this difference is felt and understood to be of profound nature.” (Report of the First Meeting of the Working Group, *Understanding the Gift of Communion—The Quest for a Shared Self-Understanding of the Lutheran Communion*, Agenda, LWF Council 2014, at www.lutheranworld.org/sites/default/files/Exhibit%209.2%20Report%20WG%20on%20Self%20Understanding%20the%20Gift%20of%20Communion.pdf.)

Members of the working group had been asked to prepare presentations examining the topic of communion from various angles. Jorgenson presented “Perspectives from Lutheran Confessional Writings and other Writings”; Hietamäki explained the “Understanding of Ecclesial Communion in Documents from the LWF Ecumenical Dialogues”; Mtata was invited to share “Biblical Insights on Heterogeneity, Homogeneity and Communion”; Mwakabana posed the provocative question, “What does Autonomy and Accountability mean in the Relationships between Churches?”; Thu reflected on the “Self-Understanding of the Lutheran Communion in a Plural Society of Asia”; Elisabeth Parmentier focused on “Dealing with Difference in Communion Relationships”; and Hansen dealt with “The Church, Churches and Power. How do we Read Contemporary Dynamics from a Post-colonial Perspective?” Dr Luk van Langenhove, director of the United Nations University Institute on Comparative Regional Integrative Studies in Bruges, Belgium, was invited as



an external speaker and gave a presentation on “Secular Multilateral and Regional Systems: Organizational Structures across Contexts.” A reader that includes the theological presentations, which are important background material for the self-understanding study process, can be accessed at www.lutheranworld.org/content/resource-understanding-gift-communion.

Since the Bossey meeting, the working group has drafted a study document based on significant input from the LWF member churches who, at the LWF regional meeting, had been asked to reflect on the communion relationships and to identify their expressions of and expectations from the communion. Based on the working group’s interim report, the communion issues were discussed

by the LWF Council at its meeting in June 2014 and by the Meeting of Officers in November 2014.

The study document is structured around certain tensions that exist between two affirmations central to the study process. The communion is both a gift and a task. The richness of the gift leads us to the task of sharing our mutual commitment in a way that is responsible toward the world that God loves. Furthermore, the study document points to the tension between the churches’ accountability to the communion and their accountability to the local context where they are called to serve and bear witness. The difference between these two realities is addressed in the study document, both through theological reflection and practical recommendations as to how to find a balance between the two.

Finance and Administration

In 2014 the DTPW team continued to grow. In March, the department welcomed five new staff members to the following positions: Dr Ojot Ojulu, Advocacy Officer, working in the Office for International Affairs and Human Rights; Ms Marta Spangler working as an intern in the same unit; Rev. Rebecca Ruggaber, Secretary for Liturgy and Worship, focusing on the worship and congregational life; and Ms Berit Pedersen, Officer for Planning, Operations and Finance, serving the whole department.

In the second half of the year, an arrangement could be made with the Union des Églises Protestantes d'Alsace et de Lorraine to use one of their staff members, Martin Kopp, on a part-time consultancy basis for the department's work on climate change.

The LWF's two Assistant General Secretaries are located in the DTPW. Twenty-five percent of the Director's time is dedicated to her role as Assistant General Secretary for Ecumenical Relations and twenty-five percent of the Assistant Secretary for Human

Right's time is allocated to matters directly related to the Office of the General Secretary. The program on Gender Justice and Women's Empowerment, under the responsibility of the Secretary for Women in Church and Society, continues to be carried out in consultation and cooperation with the Department for Mission and Development (DMD). On the grounds of her crosscutting responsibilities, ten percent of the Secretary for Women in Church and Society's working time is allocated to DMD.

New Faces in the Department



Rebecca Ruggaber



Ojot Ojulu



Marta Spangler



Martin Kopp



Berit Pedersen

Our Donor Partners in 2014 (in Euro)

Member Churches and Related Agencies

Bread for the World (Brot für die Welt)	29,970	1.58%
Church of Sweden	358,069	18.86%
Church of Norway	21,737	1.14%
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria	60,000	3.16%
Canadian Lutheran World Relief	9,406	0.50%
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland	60,000	3.16%
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada	21,164	1.11%
Finn Church Aid	80,000	4.21%
Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission	40,000	2.11%
German National Committee Hauptausschuss	415,785	21.90%
Norwegian Church Aid	79,367	4.18%
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America	196,731	10.36%
Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church	390	0.02%
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>1,372,619</i>	<i>72.28%</i>

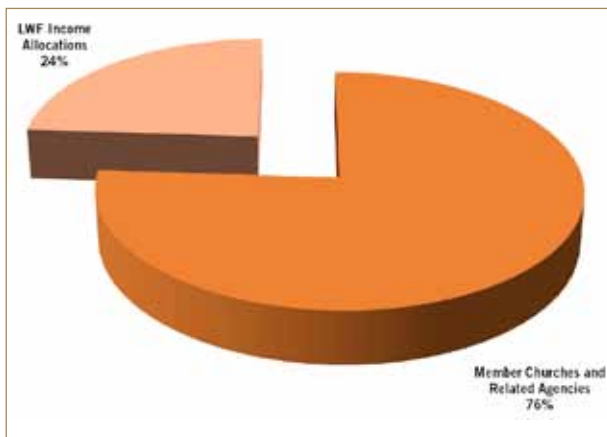
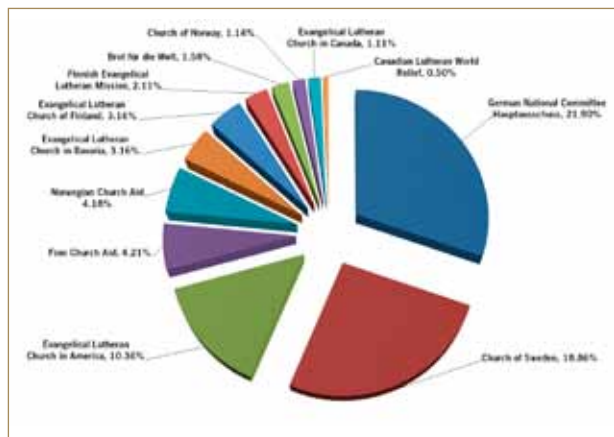
Balance from 2013	62,574	3.30%
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Other income

Other Income	3,409	0.18%
Web Donors	178	0.01%
LWF Employees	248	0.01%
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>3,835</i>	<i>0.20%</i>

LWF Income Allocations

Membership Fees	307,224	16.18%
Investments and Exchange Gains	22,762	1.20%
LWS Endowment Fund	129,977	6.84%
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>459,963</i>	<i>24.22%</i>



The DTPW has continued to work in close cooperation with the Institute for Ecumenical Research at Strasbourg, notably with regard to

ecumenical dialogues with the Mennonite, Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches, as well in preparing the dialogue with the Pentecostal movement.

The participation of Strasbourg staff in the various dialogue commissions has resulted in a mutually beneficial and enriching working relationship.

The department's total income in 2014 was Euros 1,898,991. The overall funding from the member churches and related agencies decreased by 3.55 percent over the previous year. The German National Committee, Church of Sweden International Mission and Diaconia and ELCA Global Mission continue to be the largest financial supporters of the department's work.

The position of Secretary for Ecumenical Relations has enjoyed the continued support of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and the

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Bavaria. The position of Advocacy Officer could be established, thanks to a three-year commitment by Church of Sweden International Mission and Canadian Lutheran World Relief.

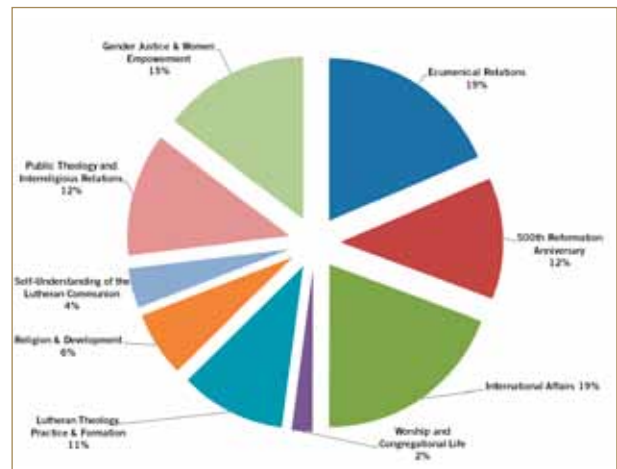
Throughout 2014, the department has continued to nurture and solidify its relationship with its traditional funding partners as well as to strengthen its capacity to identify new sources of funding. While discussions with the partners supporting the department's programs have taken place with individual staff members,

who are best placed to discuss matters pertaining to program content, DTPW has been more strategic and intentional in approaching partners at the departmental and organizational levels. All this has happened within the framework of the LWF's overall resource mobilization strategy. One of the models of funding which has proved to be highly rewarding is to partner with universities and theological institutions as well as other funding partners to cohost specific events.

In 2014, DTPW cooperated with several universities and other institu-

Our Programs 2014 (in Euro)

Ecumenical Relations	323,914	19%
500 th Reformation Anniversary	210,639	12%
International Affairs and Human Rights	337,766	19%
Worship and Congregational Life	36,119	2%
Lutheran Theology, Practice & Formation	183,228	11%
Religion & Development	112,949	6%
Self-Understanding of the Lutheran Communion	69,362	4%
Public Theology and Interreligious Relations	213,219	12%
Gender Justice & Women Empowerment	255,648	15%
Total Program Expenditure 2014	1,742,844	100%



tions that co-funded or contributed in kind to some of the department's conferences. The international interfaith conference on "Creating Public Space" in January 2014 was cohosted with the Center for Islamic Theology (ZIT) of the University of Muenster; the "Interfaith Dialogue on Peace-Building, Democracy and Development: A Call for Active Citizenship in Sub-Sahara Africa," was cohosted with Konrad Adenauer Stiftung; the international conference

on "Religious Identity and Renewal. Jewish, Christian and Muslim Exploration was cohosted with the University of Seattle; and the Third International Hermeneutics Conference was co-organized with the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (LSTC) and made possible through additional funding from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We would furthermore like to recognize the generosity of a number of individuals who supported our programs by covering

the expenses for participating in our events out of their own pockets.

This form of cooperation has not only enhanced the public profile of certain DTPW events but has enabled us significantly to reduce costs and to economize on staff time needed to prepare for international events. We hope, in the future, to explore other forms of cooperation in order to continue the promising development and further to strengthen our financial position.

DTPW Funding Partners

Without you, we would not be operational. We would like to thank the member churches and our funding partners for their continued support and encouragement and look forward to continuing our cooperation with you in the coming years.



**Brot
für die Welt**



SUOMEN EV. LUT. KIRKKO⁺
EV. LUTH. KYRKAN I FINLAND



A Communion Strengthened in Worship and Ongoing Theological Discernment, Ecumenical Dialogue and Interfaith Collaboration



THE
LUTHERAN
WORLD
FEDERATION

Department for Theology
and Public Witness