



“Seek peace and pursue it”

LWF 2019 New Year Message

“Seek peace and pursue it” (Psalm 34:14)

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I want to take this opportunity to wish everyone in the worldwide family of The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) a Happy New Year!

It is my profound hope that 2019 will be a year filled with peace – in your hearts, in your families, and your communities.

The Psalmist’s call to “Seek peace and pursue it” (Psalm 34: 14) resonates with the Christmas message of LWF President Archbishop Dr Panti Filibus Musa with its strong call to overcome fear so that you can “go forth and be prophetic” in a world crying out for justice.

Indeed, a fearful heart won’t see peace. On the contrary, it will see danger and conflict everywhere.

At times, this observation may, in fact, reflect the reality experienced in many of our contexts and at the global level. Peace seems elusive today. Conflicts are ravaging in many countries and communities.

Many of our LWF member churches are witnessing to Christ in contexts marked by conflict. Some of these situations are well known because they feature in the media; others are known only to us because of our mutual ac-



THE
LUTHERAN
WORLD
FEDERATION

A Communion
of Churches

companiment. As churches in communion, we share our joys and pains as we journey together.

I hope and pray that churches suffering through hardship will always find comfort in the knowledge that they are not alone! They are surrounded and empowered by their communion relationships expressed in prayer and solidarity.

The watchword for the year 2019 – “Seek peace and pursue it” - reminds us that we should not abandon the pursuit of peace. For people of faith, it underlines, the absence of peace is not a reason to forget about peace but a call to pursue it with determination.

I want to invite LWF member churches to become active and engaged to be peacebuilders in their contexts. Sometimes, this will mean working towards preserving existing peace. At other times, this will mean restoring peace, bringing it back – for ourselves, our communities, and globally.

As LWF member churches standing together as a communion of churches, let our ministry be one that brings peace, never one adding to existing divisiveness and fear. Because God so much wants peace, because God brought it to us through Jesus Christ, and because the world so much needs it.

When we remember God’s gift of peace, and when we root ourselves in Christ, we are well equipped to engage in this ministry of peacebuilding. So, let’s pursue that peace, which shouldn’t be taken for granted, but needs our prayer, our commitment, and our action.

Sincerely,



Rev. Dr Martin Junge, General Secretary
The Lutheran World Federation

The Lutheran World Federation
Route de Ferney 150
PO Box 2100
1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland

www.lutheranworld.org
info@lutheranworld.org



THE
LUTHERAN
WORLD
FEDERATION

A Communion
of Churches

*A peace dove and flowers
at a monument in Amsterdam.
Photo courtesy of Albin Hillert.*