



Church and Peace International Secretariat

Church and Peace – Ecumenical network of Peace Churches and
Peace Church communities, congregations, institutions and service agencies in Europe

*...you reap whatever you sow.
So let us not grow weary of doing what is right,
for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up.*

Galatians 6:7+9

Dear friends of Church and Peace,

The enclosed Advent letter tells the story of two people who continued to sow in adverse and lean times. In the Bible we read that we **cannot know when the seed will sprout**. And that is the position as we look back over this past year. We do not know when, and whether, the seed will come up – the seed we sowed in encounters, discussions and statements, e.g.

- **exposure trips and visits** by and to members and friends of Church and Peace in Croatia, Serbia, Kosovo, Switzerland, the UK and Germany
- our **Annual General Meeting** in Baarlo, Netherlands
- the Church and Peace **networking session in Birmingham, UK**
- the **statement** on the Palestinian prisoners in “administrative detention”, or the letter to Nikolaus Schneider, then still chair of the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD), and to its synod about the situation in Syria and northern Iraq
- participation in a **panel** on “Pursue peace...” at a big church gathering of the Lutheran church of Saxony
- the **centennial celebrations** of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation in Constance
- the **TV talk show** with the new EKD military bishop Sigurd Rink on Germany’s supplying weapons to Kurdish groups in northern Iraq
- the **event** marking the start of the First World War in Wetzlar, Germany

This year was studded with memories of the start of the First World War. How long it took to gain understanding for the other side! – through **realizing that guilt is not just to be found on one side**. It likewise took time to envisage **mourning** the many dead, injured and traumatized **together**, and finally to be able to mutually utter words of reconciliation.

The year has not only been marked by memories of the war 100 years ago. We are confronted with the burning issue of **what needs to be done when civilian populations are threatened with massive violence in armed conflicts**. The news and images from Syria and northern Iraq have left no one unmoved.

Let us not slacken in our efforts to bring about a change of direction, while trusting in the promise that whoever 'does what is right' (Gal. 6:9) will harvest the fruits: peace and justice, coexistence and a livelihood.

We want to work towards that and **sow the good seed**. In the coming year we intend to keep on contributing towards enabling encounters to learn about peace and reconciliation, and to raise our voice clearly for a peace stance based on peace theology.

The agenda for 2015 includes:

- the International Conference from 7 to 11 October 2015 in Pristina, Kosovo
- participating in the *Peace Centre* at the Kirchentag in Stuttgart, 3-7 June 2015
- continuing with theological study
- supplementing our website with a blog

We greatly appreciated your support that helped to make possible the wide range of activities this year. Thank you very much!

May we ask you to make a donation to support us in carrying out our plans in 2015? They aim to expand and strengthen our network, and to present a more visible profile to the public when raising our concerns.

With all good wishes for the time of waiting until Peace on Earth can be experienced by everyone



Antje Heider-Rottwilm
Chair of the Administrative Committee

PS: Next year, too, Church and Peace wants to raise a distinctive voice for a peace stance grounded in peace theology – with your support