

menqte

Middle East and North Africa
Association for Theological Education

رابطة الشرق الأوسط وشمال أفريقيا للتعليم اللاهوتي

**Constitution of the
Middle East & North Africa
Association for Theological Education
(MENATE)**

www.menate.org

September 2018

Middle East & North Africa Association for Theological Education

Constitution

ARTICLE 1 : NAME, LEGAL ADDRESS, AND STATUS

1.1) The name of this organization is “The Middle East & North Africa Association for Theological Education” (MENATE), previously known as “The Middle East Association for Theological Education” (MEATE). In this document, it will hereafter be referred to as “MENATE”.

1.2) MENATE has its legal address normally in the country where the association is registered.

1.3) MENATE pursues exclusively and directly religious and non-profit objectives in line with the laws and statutes of the country where MENATE is officially registered and of the countries in which its member institutions are located. MENATE does not seek profits for itself nor for others.

ARTICLE 2: PURPOSE

MENATE is a fellowship of theological institutions in the Middle East and North Africa. The purpose of MENATE is to strengthen the Church in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region by assisting MENATE members to achieve their own mission and objectives more effectively. MENATE shall use the following and other means to accomplish this purpose:

- To provide a forum for relationships and fellowship among evangelical theological educational programs in the Middle East and North Africa.
- To propose/provide to its members accreditation, effective assessment, and quality assurance/development of their awards based on international standards for mutual recognition and international comparability.
- To encourage the sharing and development of human and material resources and to stimulate co-operation and partnerships among its members.
- To represent MENATE members before international organizations concerned with theological education.

ARTICLE 3: DOCTRINAL POSITION

MENATE adheres to the doctrinal statement developed at the time of its creation in 1992, as follows:

- We believe that the Holy Bible, consisting of the sixty-six books, is God's inspired Word. It is without error in all that it affirms. It is the only infallible rule for faith and life.
- We believe in one God, being three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, for eternity.
- We believe in the full deity and full humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, His sinless life, His vicarious death, the atonement, the resurrection of His glorified body, His ascension, His sitting on the right hand of the Father, and His personal and visible return.
- We believe that man is created in the image of God, but that he fell into sin and he became separated from God, and that man is incapable of saving himself through his own efforts, but God still loves him, cares for him, and seeks his salvation.
- We believe that man receives salvation and acceptance before God by his repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Salvation begins with man's spiritual birth and affects him in every aspect of his personal and social life.
- We believe that the Church consists of one body whose head is Christ, is composed of all the believers in Christ who have been born by the work of the Holy Spirit, and it forms the community of God's people. Its duty is worship, fellowship, teaching, witnessing, preaching and serving society.
- We believe that the Holy Spirit dwells in all believers, empowers them, unites them together in Christ in one fellowship, and seeks to accomplish all of God's purposes in the lives of the believer and the church.
- We believe in the resurrection of the body: the saved to the resurrection of life, and those who are not believers to the resurrection of judgment.

In addition, MENATE affirms the Statement of Faith of the World Evangelical Alliance (see Appendix I) and Lusanne Covenant (see Appendix II). Both statements are the basis for MENATE's unity and corporate action. Changes to these doctrinal statements require a three-fourths (3/4) majority of full members of the MENATE General Assembly (GA).

ARTICLE 4: MEMBERSHIP

4.1) FULL MEMBERSHIP

Full membership is open to theological institutes of higher learning: seminaries, Bible colleges, institutes of theological studies, programmes for theological education by extension and distance-learning institutions who operate in the Middle East and North Africa, and whose training benefits primarily the Church in that region, provided that they agree to:

- Abide by the MENATE Constitution and MENATE stated purposes.
- Accept the MENATE Doctrinal Statement, the Statement of Faith of the World Evangelical Alliance, and the Lusanne Covenant (Article 3).
- Be in good terms with the evangelical community of their context. They should also have positive and collaborative relationships with neighbouring theological schools.
- Have clear goals and purposes related to evangelical theological education.
- Possess legal ownership: have constitution and exercises proper governance.
- Have a clear prospectus/course catalogue.
- Not to belong to or be linked with any political party.

- Pay the annual membership dues and other service fees.
- Send a representative(s) to each MENATE GA at their own expense.
- Have students who graduated from its program(s).
- Have served as associate member for at least 2 years.

Qualifying institutions desiring full membership should follow the application procedures as set by the Executive Committee (ExCom). Complete applications are evaluated by the ExCom, which provides a recommendation to the GA for their vote. Candidates are admitted by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the GA members present.

Full members of MENATE have a voice and the right to one vote only at the GA. A full members can nominate individuals from its institution to serve on the ExCom, or on any other committee of MENATE.

4.2) ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

Associate membership is open to theological schools and other organizations concerned with evangelical theological education in the Middle East and North Africa region, but who do not meet all of the conditions for full membership. Associate members agree to:

- Abide by the MENATE Constitution and MENATE's stated purposes.
- Accept the MENATE Doctrinal Statement, the Statement of Faith of the World Evangelical Alliance, and the Lusanne Covenant (Article 3).
- Be in good terms with the evangelical community of their context.
- Have clear goals and purposes related to evangelical theological education.
- Possess legal ownership: have constitution and exercises proper governance.
- Not to belong to or be linked with any political party.
- Pay the annual membership dues and other service fees.
- Send a representative(s) to each MENATE GA at their own expense.

Qualifying institutions desiring associate membership should follow the application procedures as set by the ExCom. Complete applications are evaluated by the ExCom, which provides a recommendation to the GA for their vote. Candidates are admitted by a simple majority vote of the GA members present. After two years from admission, associate members can apply to become full-members.

Associate members of MENATE have a voice but no right to vote at the GA. An associate members can nominate individuals from its institution to serve on any MENATE committee, except on the ExCom.

4.3) LOSS OF MEMBERSHIP

Full and associate members may withdraw from membership by officially declaring their withdrawal by letter to the MENATE Executive Director or Chairperson. After examination of the letter by the ExCom, and appropriate contact with the member, such withdrawal may become effective. Once the member's withdrawal is confirmed, they may not make reference to MENATE membership in their publications. Fees and contributions will not be refunded.

Full and associate members are subject to lose their membership if they fail to meet respective membership criteria, or do not respond positively to notices from MENATE ExCom. The ExCom should make a recommendation to the GA in its earliest meeting for ratification.

ARTICLE 5: REVENUE

Income is generated by membership fees and contributions, as well as accreditation and other service fees paid by MENATE members. Other revenue are: gifts in kind, assets of the association or any other financial sources permitted by laws of the country in which MENATE is registered.

At least every two years, an audit of all the funds, the cash balance, and bookkeeping records is to be carried out by an auditor who is neutral to MENATE.

Funds of MENATE should be used for the purposes stated by the constitution and by-laws of MENATE, or other purposes in harmony with MENATE's vision and by-laws. Committee members receive no donations from funds of MENATE.

No MENATE-related individual or institution may receive donations from MENATE contrary to its purposes, or receive disproportionately high compensation for services rendered to MENATE. The remuneration of MENATE staff is set in the MENATE budget by the ExCom and ratified by the GA.

ARTICLE 6: ORGANIZATIONAL BODIES

Organizational bodies of the association are:

- General Assembly (GA)
- Executive Committee (ExCom)
- MENATE Staff
- Accrediting Commission (AC)
- Ad hoc Committees

6.1) GENERAL ASSEMBLY (GA)

6.1.1) General Responsibilities

The affairs of MENATE shall be administered by the General Assembly (GA) composed of representatives of the full and associate membership as defined in article 4.1 and 4.2. The GA deliberates and makes decisions relative to the future work of MENATE. It has the right to entertain motions from the floor.

6.1.2) Composition

The GA shall be composed of one appointed representative of each full and associate member based on the definition of Article 4.1 and 4.2. Each representative should attend the meetings of the GA.

6.1.3) *Duties*

The GA shall be responsible for the following duties:

- To elect by secret ballot the chairman and four additional members to form the ExCom.
- To elect by secret ballot members of the Accrediting Commission (AC) and any ad hoc or standing committees deemed necessary for the ongoing work of MENATE.
- To set the policies of MENATE.
- To request, receive and approve reports from the Executive Director and the ExCom.
- To approve the budget, appoint an auditor for the accounts of MENATE, receive and approve financial reports from the Treasurer.
- To accept the membership of new institutions based on the recommendation of the ExCom.
- To approve change of status, including loss of membership, of member schools based on the recommendation of the ExCom.
- To appoint the Executive Director, based on recommendation of the ExCom.
- To approve global partnerships based on recommendation of the ExCom.
- To carry on any other work needed by MENATE.

Unless otherwise specified, GA decisions are made by simple majority of members present and represented by their duly-designated delegate.

6.1.4) *Meetings*

Ordinary meetings of the GA shall take place once every 2 years. The ExCom shall assign a meeting time and place one year prior to the proposed assembly. The GA meeting is convened by the Chair or the Vice-Chair (in case of the Chair's absence). The GA agenda is to be sent out by the Executive Director, in consultation with the Chair and Secretary, at least one month before the GA meeting.

Extraordinary meetings of the GA shall be held based either on a request from the ExCom, or when at least a third of the full members request it in writing indicating the purpose and reasons for it. The meeting must be announced two months before its scheduled date and only the request matter is discussed in the meeting.

The quorum for the GA (whether ordinary or extraordinary) is simple majority of the GA's full membership. Each full member institution is entitled to one vote.

Each member school (full and associate) may send up to two representatives, but only one of them serves as the formal delegate.

6.2) **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Between sessions of the GA, the affairs of MENATE will be managed by the Executive Committee (ExCom).

6.2.1) *Terms of service*

The term of service of the ExCom members shall be four years

6.2.2) *Composition*

The ExCom shall be composed of five members, elected by the GA in its ordinary meeting. The Executive Director and chairperson of the AC shall be ex-officio members with voice but no vote.

6.2.3) *Conditions for ExCom Membership*

Every member of the ExCom must:

- Represent a full member school of MENATE.
- Be a member of an evangelical church.
- Be above 30 years of age.
- Preferably be a Middle Eastern or North African national.
- Hold a reputation as being faithful and bearing good witness.
- Be a person of integrity in character, finances, and professional life.
- Hold at least a BA degree.
- Have successful professional experience.
- Not be an immediate relative to the executive director.
- Present in GA at time of election.

6.2.4) *Election*

As the ExCom should be as representative as possible of the general MENATE constituency, no single institution shall have more than one of its member on the ExCom. The GA elects the chairperson and another four members by secret ballot at the meeting of the GA. The ExCom elects its own officers from among its members; Vice-chair, secretary, and treasurer in its first meeting after the election. In case of vacancy in the ExCom between the GA meetings, the ExCom is responsible to designate a replacement to serve until the following GA.

6.2.5) *Duties*

The duties of the ExCom are as follows:

- Provide the GA with minutes of previous GA meeting.
- Provide the GA with a report of its decisions since last GA for ratification.
- To have power of attorney and full authority to carry on all work of MENATE, subject to the limitations of the MENATE Constitution, and except those functions explicitly reserved for the GA.
- To examine applications for new membership and change of status in MENATE and present those they recommend to the GA to be decided upon.
- To prepare for the GA of MENATE and any necessary elections.
- To report to the GA for ratification a list of all ExCom decisions taken since the previous GA.
- To administer the financial affairs of MENATE and present the general accounts and proposed budget for approval to the GA.
- To manage the legal and managerial affairs of MENATE.
- To open and manage bank accounts on behalf of MENATE.
- To determine the salaries, pay raises and stipends for the employees of MENATE.
- To nominate the Executive Director who conducts the business for MENATE.
- To appoint individuals to fill vacant positions on all committees.
- To provide direction to the Executive Director.
- To oversee the work of all MENATE committees.

- To approve AC reports and decisions, and to recommend for ratification to the GA the accreditation status of institutions.
- To appoint ad-hoc committee where necessary

6.2.6) *Meetings*

The MENATE Chair convenes ExCom meetings, pronounced at least four weeks in advance. Meeting agenda is sent by the Secretary one month ahead of the meeting.

A list of members present and minutes of the meeting are to be kept and signed by the Chair and the appointed secretary and sent to all ExCom members for ratification at the following ExCom meeting. The ExCom shall meet at least once a year. A time and place will be decided at each meeting for the following meeting. During the year that the GA meets, it is preferable that the ExCom meet beforehand.

The quorum of the ExCom (in person or virtually) is a simple majority of its voting members. ExCom decisions are also made by simple majority of its voting members in attendance.

6.2.7) *Procedures*

The ExCom develops its own procedures and policies relative to its internal business, transactions and voting procedures. These procedures and policies shall be consigned in writing in the MENATE Constitution or Policy Manual and duly approved by the GA.

6.2.8) *Officers*

6.2.8.1) Chairperson

The Chairperson possesses the following qualities and qualifications:

- Significant ministry experience.
- Significant experience in a theological institution as an academic or administrative leader.
- Should be an Arab national, and mature in age.
- Should have sufficient time to accomplish the functions of the Chairperson
- Should hold at least a Bachelor's degree in theology.
- His/her character should correspond to the qualities mentioned for overseers in the New Testament

The Chairperson has the following duties:

- Preside over all meetings of the ExCom and the GA.
- With the secretary, notifies ExCom members of the agenda and meeting times, normally one month in advance.
- Watches over the unity of the association, its doctrines, and its Biblical values.
- Sign, or where appropriate delegate, on behalf of the association on all official and governmental dealings.
- Sign all the accreditation certificates granted by the association with the chairperson of the AC.
- Represents, if possible, the association in case of legal problems, whether MENATE is plaintiff or defendant and appoints lawyers, in collaboration with the Executive Director.

- In case of a tie vote during ExCom or GA deliberations, the chairperson's vote is preponderant.

6.2.8.2) Vice-Chairperson

The Vice-Chairperson has the following duties:

- Carry out the responsibilities of the Chairperson in his/her absence. This person becomes interim Chairperson in case of resignation or death of the Chairperson.

6.2.8.3) Secretary

The Secretary has the following duties:

- Record all minutes of the ExCom and GA, and may appoint a recording secretary.
- Conserve and distribute copies of the agenda and minutes to all members within one month of the previous meeting.
- With the Chairperson, notify ExCom members of the agenda and meeting times, normally one month in advance.

6.2.8.4) Treasurer

The Treasurer has the following duties:

- Oversee the general financial situation of MENATE in close consultation with the Executive Director .
- Oversee proper management of the funds of MENATE and ensure the keeping of accurate records for income and expenditures.
- In collaboration with the Executive Director, present the financial records each year for review, and every two years for an audit by an accountant appointed by the GA.
- Ensure the keeping of a list of all properties and assets owned by MENATE and official documents related to them.

6.3. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The MENATE Executive Director is the Chief Executive Officer of the MENATE and reports to the MENATE ExCom and MENATE Chair. The Executive Director is elected by the MENATE GA, upon the proposal of the ExCom, by simple majority and for a four-year renewable term.

6.3.1) Qualities and Qualifications

The Executive Director possesses the following qualities and qualifications:

- Should be an Arab national, not less than 30 years of age.
- Should hold at least a Bachelor's degree in a related field.
- Should have at least 5 years of managerial experience.
- Should be an active and faithful member in an evangelical church for at least 5 years.
- Be a person of integrity, role model to his team, teachable, submissive to authority, and cooperative with others.
- His/her character should correspond to the qualities mentioned for overseers in the New Testament.

6.3.2) Duties of the Executive Director:

- Present an annual plan.
- Develop an annual budget.
- Execute the work of MENATE according to the plans and decisions approved by the MENATE ExCom and GA.
- Present to the ExCom and GA for approval a report on the activities and finances of MENATE, including the budget, the financial reports, and the audited accounts.
- Represent MENATE to donors and partner organizations.
- Present periodic reporting concerning the situation of the association based upon its performance, and measured according to the vision, the objectives and capacities of MENATE.
- Execute the decisions of the GA and the ExCom.
- Recruit MENATE personnel and terminates their employment. The salaries of MENATE personnel are proposed by the Executive Director and ratified by the ExCom.
- Form teams of volunteers according to need on behalf of MENATE members.
- Supervise financial transactions and take all necessary administrative decisions, and ensure balance between income and expenses according to the approved MENATE budget.
- Sign cheques along with the treasurer or other duly designated signatories.
- Not abuse his/her powers and position for his/her own personal gain, and should avoid any conflicts of interest.
- Request clearance from the ExCom regarding any non-MENATE position and/or assignments that conflict with his time and responsibilities.

6.4. ACCREDITING COMMISSION

The Accrediting Commission (AC) consists of five members ratified by the GA for a four-year term, upon recommendation of the ExCom. Due consideration shall be given to balanced representation of the various areas of the Middle East and North Africa. Two of the AC members may be associated with non-member institutions or organizations. Between general assemblies and if necessary, the AC may request from the ExCom approval of additional members. The MENATE chair and Executive Director are *ex officio* members of the AC.

The AC is chaired by one of its members, who is nominated for a renewable four-year term by the ExCom and elected by the GA. The AC Chair is also an *ex-officio* member of the ExCom.

The AC decides on its accreditation policies and procedures based on MENATE Accreditation Manual. This Manual and AC decisions must be ratified by the ExCom.

The functions of the AC are to:

- Recommend to the ExCom the candidate status of institutions desiring to begin the accreditation process.
- Constitute proper Visiting Evaluation Teams (VET) for accreditation and consultancy.
- Recommend to the ExCom the accreditation of candidate institutions.

- Develop and update an accreditation policy manual with appropriate quality assurance standards, to be approved by the ExCom and the GA.
- Review and make recommendations to the ExCom concerning institutions requesting membership in MENATE.
- Liaise with sister accrediting bodies in matters related to quality assurance.
- Provide educational consultancy and training services.

6.4.1 Quorum and Decision Making

The quorum for the AC is simple majority of the Commission's voting members. Decisions are made through the vote of a simple majority of those present. When necessary, the AC Chair may request vote by electronic ballot for recommendation of candidacy to the accreditation process, or for recommendation for final approval of accreditation. Such approvals require a three-fourths majority of all voting members of the AC.

6.4.2 AC Staff

According to need, an accreditation officer or other staff may be appointed by the Executive Director in consultation with the MENATE Chair and the AC chair. The role of such AC staff members is to assist the AC to develop and implement decisions related to AC services.

6.4.3 Visiting Evaluation Teams (VETs)

VET members and the VET leader are appointed by the AC according to the need for each case. For joint visits with another accrediting agency, a MENATE VET leader will still be appointed, but the overall joint-VET leader is appointed through negotiation with the other agency. The VETs are responsible for visiting a school upon invitation from the AC, and for writing a report according to MENATE norms. VET Guidelines are enumerated in the MENATE Accreditation Manual. VET members may also be asked by the AC to be available for advice to schools that request it.

6.5. AD HOC COMMITTEES

The ExCom may appoint ad hoc or standing committees to deal with special issues or invite advisors as needed.

6.6. DISMISSAL OF MENATE ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICERS

MENATE elected or appointed officers may be dismissed in the case of serious moral failure, doctrinal deviation, or opposition to MENATE principles and policies. Such dismissal must be based on biblical principles, on careful investigation of the issues involved, and follow due process as defined by the ExCom.

ARTICLE 6 : ASSETS OF THE ASSOCIATION

No immoveable properties of the Association may be bought, sold, transferred or assigned to other owners without the previous approval of the GA by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of its full members.

ARTICLE 7: AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the MENATE Constitution and Bylaws may be proposed by the ExCom or by agreement of one-fourth (1/4) of the full membership of MENATE to the Executive Director who will distribute any suggested amendment(s) at least three months prior to the GA meeting. Such amendments must be adopted by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of it full members.

ARTICLE 8: DISSOLUTION

MENATE exists for an unlimited time period. If three-fourths (3/4) of the full membership of MENATE decides to dissolve the Association, it will be dissolved at an agreed upon date. The decision for dissolution should be carried out by those present or duly appointed proxies at the GA. If, upon the dissolution of MENATE, there be any remaining assets, moveable or immovable, and after all legal obligations of MENATE are met, the remainder of the assets shall be distributed equally among MENATE full member-schools.

Middle East & North Africa Association for Theological Education

By-Laws

ARTICLE 1: BY-LAWS FOR ELECTION IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- Each member can send up to two individuals to the General Assembly, but must indicate who will be voting on behalf of their institution. Full members get one vote only. Associate members cannot vote.
- The MENATE Chair and Executive Director request from MENATE full members nominees to be proposed for election to the ExCom, at least three months prior to the following General Assembly.
- Such nominations, as well as those proposed by the ExCom, are to be communicated to members one month prior to the General Assembly and should be shared during GA convocation.
- During the General Assembly, nominations from the floor are excluded.
- The General Assembly elections are chaired by a person selected by the General Assembly. This person designates those who count the votes.
- Before the elections, the nominees are introduced to the Assembly.
- The voting members indicate their choices for election by secret ballot.
- MENATE Chairperson and AC Chairperson are elected first and in separate ballots by simple majority.
- Other committee members are elected according to votes ranking.

Appendix I

World Evangelical Alliance Statement of Faith

We believe

...in the **Holy Scriptures** as originally given by God, divinely inspired, infallible, entirely trustworthy; and the supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct...

One **God** , eternally existent in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit...

Our **Lord Jesus Christ** , God manifest in the flesh, His virgin birth, His sinless human life, His divine miracles, His vicarious and atoning death, His bodily resurrection, His ascension, His mediatorial work, and His Personal return in power and glory...

The **Salvation** of lost and sinful man through the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ by faith apart from works, and regeneration by the Holy Spirit...

The **Holy Spirit** , by whose indwelling the believer is enabled to live a holy life, to witness and work for the Lord Jesus Christ...

The **Unity** of the Spirit of all true believers, the Church, the Body of Christ...

The **Resurrection** of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life, they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.

Last modified:
Friday, June 27, 2001

Appendix II

The Lausanne Covenant

INTRODUCTION

We, members of the Church of Jesus Christ, from more than 150 nations, participants in the International Congress on World Evangelization at Lausanne, praise God for his great salvation and rejoice in the fellowship he has given us with himself and with each other. We are deeply stirred by what God is doing in our day, moved to penitence by our failures and challenged by the unfinished task of evangelization. We believe the gospel is God's good news for the whole world, and we are determined by his grace to obey Christ's commission to proclaim it to all mankind and to make disciples of every nation. We desire, therefore, to affirm our faith and our resolve, and to make public our covenant.

1. THE PURPOSE OF GOD

We affirm our belief in the one eternal God, Creator and Lord of the world, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who governs all things according to the purpose of his will. He has been calling out from the world a people for himself, and sending his people back into the world to be his servants and his witnesses, for the extension of his kingdom, the building up of Christ's body, and the glory of his name. We confess with shame that we have often denied our calling and failed in our mission, by becoming conformed to the world or by withdrawing from it. Yet we rejoice that, even when borne by earthen vessels, the gospel is still a precious treasure. To the task of making that treasure known in the power of the Holy Spirit we desire to dedicate ourselves anew.

(Isaiah 40:28; Matthew 28:19; Ephesians 1:11; Acts 15:14; John 17:6,18; Ephesians 4:12; 1 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 4:7)

2. THE AUTHORITY AND POWER OF THE BIBLE

We affirm the divine inspiration, truthfulness and authority of both Old and New Testament Scriptures in their entirety as the only written word of God, without error in all that it affirms, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice. We also affirm the

power of God's word to accomplish his purpose of salvation. The message of the Bible is addressed to all men and women. For God's revelation in Christ and in Scripture is unchangeable. Through it the Holy Spirit still speaks today. He illumines the minds of God's people in every culture to perceive its truth freshly through their own eyes and thus discloses to the whole Church ever more of the many-colored wisdom of God.

(2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21; John 10:35; Isaiah 55:11; 1 Corinthians 1:21; Romans 1:16, Matthew 5:17,18; Jude 3; Ephesians 1:17,18; 3:10,18)

3. THE UNIQUENESS AND UNIVERSALITY OF CHRIST

We affirm that there is only one Saviour and only one gospel, although there is a wide diversity of evangelistic approaches. We recognize that everyone has some knowledge of God through his general revelation in nature. But we deny that this can save, for people suppress the truth by their unrighteousness. We also reject as derogatory to Christ and the gospel every kind of syncretism and dialogue which implies that Christ speaks equally through all religions and ideologies. Jesus Christ, being himself the only God-Man, who gave himself as the only ransom for sinners, is the only mediator between God and people. There is no other name by which we must be saved. All men and women are perishing because of sin, but God loves everyone, not wishing that any should perish but that all should repent. Yet those who reject Christ repudiate the joy of salvation and condemn themselves to eternal separation from God. To proclaim Jesus as 'the Saviour of the world' is not to affirm that all people are either automatically or ultimately saved, still less to affirm that all religions offer salvation in Christ. Rather it is to proclaim God's love for a world of sinners and to invite everyone to respond to him as Saviour and Lord in the wholehearted personal commitment of repentance and faith. Jesus Christ has been exalted above every other name; we long for the day when every knee shall bow to him and every tongue shall confess him Lord.

(Galatians 1:6-9; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Timothy 2:5,6; Acts 4:12; John 3:16-19; 2 Peter 3:9; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; John 4:42; Matthew 11:28; Ephesians 1:20,21; Philippians 2:9-11)

4. THE NATURE OF EVANGELISM

To evangelize is to spread the good news that Jesus Christ died for our sins and was raised from the dead according to the Scriptures, and that, as the reigning Lord, he now offers the forgiveness of sins and the liberating gifts of the Spirit to all who repent and believe. Our Christian presence in the world is indispensable to evangelism, and so is that kind of dialogue whose purpose is to listen sensitively in order to understand. But evangelism itself is the proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Saviour and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to him personally and so be reconciled to God. In issuing the gospel invitation we have no liberty to conceal the cost of discipleship. Jesus still calls all who would follow him to deny themselves, take up their cross, and identify themselves with his new community. The results of evangelism include obedience to Christ, incorporation into his Church and responsible service in the world.

(1 Corinthians 15:3,4; Acts 2:32-39; John 20:21; 1 Corinthians 1:23; 2 Corinthians 4:5; 5:11,20; Luke 14:25-33; Mark 8:34; Acts 2:40,47; Mark 10:43-45)

5. CHRISTIAN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

We affirm that God is both the Creator and the Judge of all men. We therefore should share his concern for justice and reconciliation throughout human society and for the liberation of men and women from every kind of oppression. Because men and women are made in the image of God, every person, regardless of race, religion, colour, culture, class, sex or age, has an intrinsic dignity because of which he or she should be respected and served, not exploited. Here too we express penitence both for our neglect and for having sometimes regarded evangelism and social concern as mutually exclusive. Although reconciliation with other people is not reconciliation with God, nor is social action evangelism, nor is political liberation salvation, nevertheless we affirm that evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty. For both are necessary expressions of our doctrines of God and Man, our love for our neighbour and our obedience to Jesus Christ. The message of salvation implies also a message of judgment upon every form of alienation, oppression and discrimination, and we should not be afraid to denounce evil and injustice wherever they exist. When people receive Christ they are born again into his kingdom and must seek not only to exhibit but also to spread its

righteousness in the midst of an unrighteous world. The salvation we claim should be transforming us in the totality of our personal and social responsibilities. Faith without works is dead.

(Acts 17:26,31; Genesis 18:25; Isaiah 1:17; Psalm 45:7; Genesis 1:26,27; James 3:9; Leviticus 19:18; Luke 6:27,35; James 2:14-26; John 3:3,5; Matthew 5:20; 6:33; 2 Corinthians 3:18; James 2:20)

6. THE CHURCH AND EVANGELISM

We affirm that Christ sends his redeemed people into the world as the Father sent him, and that this calls for a similar deep and costly penetration of the world. We need to break out of our ecclesiastical ghettos and permeate non-Christian society. In the Church's mission of sacrificial service, evangelism is primary. World evangelization requires the whole Church to take the whole gospel to the whole world. The Church is at the very centre of God's cosmic purpose and is his appointed means of spreading the gospel. But a church which preaches the cross must itself be marked by the cross. It becomes a stumbling block to evangelism when it betrays the gospel or lacks a living faith in God, a genuine love for people, or scrupulous honesty in all things including promotion and finance. The church is the community of God's people rather than an institution, and must not be identified with any particular culture, social or political system, or human ideology.

(John 17:18; 20:21; Matthew 28:19,20; Acts 1:8; 20:27; Ephesians 1:9,10; 3:9-11; Galatians 6:14,17; 2 Corinthians 6:3,4; 2 Timothy 2:19-21; Philippians 1:27)

7. COOPERATION IN EVANGELISM

We affirm that the Church's visible unity in truth is God's purpose. Evangelism also summons us to unity, because our oneness strengthens our witness, just as our disunity undermines our gospel of reconciliation. We recognize, however, that organizational unity may take many forms and does not necessarily advance evangelism. Yet we who share the same biblical faith should be closely united in fellowship, work and witness. We confess that our testimony has sometimes been marred by a sinful individualism and needless duplication. We pledge ourselves to seek a deeper unity in truth, worship, holiness and mission. We urge the

development of regional and functional cooperation for the furtherance of the Church's mission, for strategic planning, for mutual encouragement, and for the sharing of resources and experience.

(John 17:21,23; Ephesians 4:3,4; John 13:35; Philippians 1:27; John 17:11-23)

8. CHURCHES IN EVANGELISTIC PARTNERSHIP

We rejoice that a new missionary era has dawned. The dominant role of western missions is fast disappearing. God is raising up from the younger churches a great new resource for world evangelization, and is thus demonstrating that the responsibility to evangelize belongs to the whole body of Christ. All churches should therefore be asking God and themselves what they should be doing both to reach their own area and to send missionaries to other parts of the world. A re-evaluation of our missionary responsibility and role should be continuous. Thus a growing partnership of churches will develop and the universal character of Christ's Church will be more clearly exhibited. We also thank God for agencies which labor in Bible translation, theological education, the mass media, Christian literature, evangelism, missions, church renewal and other specialist fields. They too should engage in constant self-examination to evaluate their effectiveness as part of the Church's mission.

(Romans 1:8; Philippians 1:5; 4:15; Acts 13:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 1:6-8)

9. THE URGENCY OF THE EVANGELISTIC TASK

More than 2,700 million people, which is more than two-thirds of all humanity, have yet to be evangelized. We are ashamed that so many have been neglected; it is a standing rebuke to us and to the whole Church. There is now, however, in many parts of the world, an unprecedented receptivity to the Lord Jesus Christ. We are convinced that this is the time for churches and para-church agencies to pray earnestly for the salvation of the unreached and to launch new efforts to achieve world evangelization. A reduction of foreign missionaries and money in an evangelized country may sometimes be necessary to facilitate the national church's growth in self-reliance and to release resources for unevangelized areas.

Missionaries should flow ever more freely from and to all six continents in a spirit of

humble service. The goal should be, by all available means and at the earliest possible time, that every person will have the opportunity to hear, to understand, and to receive the good news. We cannot hope to attain this goal without sacrifice. All of us are shocked by the poverty of millions and disturbed by the injustices which cause it. Those of us who live in affluent circumstances accept our duty to develop a simple life-style in order to contribute more generously to both relief and evangelism.

(John 9:4; Matthew 9:35-38; Romans 9:1-3; 1 Corinthians 9:19-23; Mark 16:15; Isaiah 58:6,7; James 1:27; 2:1-9; Matthew 25:31-46; Acts 2:44,45; 4:34,35)

10. EVANGELISM AND CULTURE

The development of strategies for world evangelization calls for imaginative pioneering methods. Under God, the result will be the rise of churches deeply rooted in Christ and closely related to their culture. Culture must always be tested and judged by Scripture. Because men and women are God's creatures, some of their culture is rich in beauty and goodness. Because they are fallen, all of it is tainted with sin and some of it is demonic. The gospel does not presuppose the superiority of any culture to another, but evaluates all cultures according to its own criteria of truth and righteousness, and insists on moral absolutes in every culture. Missions have, all too frequently, exported with the gospel an alien culture, and churches have sometimes been in bondage to culture rather than to Scripture. Christ's evangelists must humbly seek to empty themselves of all but their personal authenticity in order to become the servants of others, and churches must seek to transform and enrich culture, all for the glory of God.

(Mark 7:8,9,13; Genesis 4:21,22; 1 Corinthians 9:19-23; Philippians 2:5-7; 2 Corinthians 4:5)

11. EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP

We confess that we have sometimes pursued church growth at the expense of church depth, and divorced evangelism from Christian nurture. We also

acknowledge that some of our missions have been too slow to equip and encourage national leaders to assume their rightful responsibilities. Yet we are committed to indigenous principles, and long that every church will have national leaders who manifest a Christian style of leadership in terms not of domination but of service. We recognize that there is a great need to improve theological education, especially for church leaders. In every nation and culture there should be an effective training programme for pastors and laity in doctrine, discipleship, evangelism, nurture and service. Such training programmes should not rely on any stereotyped methodology but should be developed by creative local initiatives according to biblical standards.

(Colossians 1:27,28; Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5,9; Mark 10:42-45; Ephesians 4:11,12)

12. SPIRITUAL CONFLICT

We believe that we are engaged in constant spiritual warfare with the principalities and powers of evil, who are seeking to overthrow the Church and frustrate its task of world evangelization. We know our need to equip ourselves with God's armour and to fight this battle with the spiritual weapons of truth and prayer. For we detect the activity of our enemy, not only in false ideologies outside the Church, but also inside it in false gospels which twist Scripture and put people in the place of God. We need both watchfulness and discernment to safeguard the biblical gospel. We acknowledge that we ourselves are not immune to worldliness of thought and action, that is, to a surrender to secularism. For example, although careful studies of church growth, both numerical and spiritual, are right and valuable, we have sometimes neglected them. At other times, desirous to ensure a response to the gospel, we have compromised our message, manipulated our hearers through pressure techniques, and become unduly preoccupied with statistics or even dishonest in our use of them. All this is worldly. The Church must be in the world; the world must not be in the Church.

(Ephesians 6:12; 2 Corinthians 4:3,4; Ephesians 6:11,13-18; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5; 1 John 2:18-26; 4:1-3; Galatians 1:6-9; 2 Corinthians 2:17; 4:2; John 17:15)

13. FREEDOM AND PERSECUTION

It is the God-appointed duty of every government to secure conditions of peace, justice and liberty in which the Church may obey God, serve the Lord Jesus Christ, and preach the gospel without interference. We therefore pray for the leaders of nations and call upon them to guarantee freedom of thought and conscience, and freedom to practise and propagate religion in accordance with the will of God and as set out in The Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We also express our deep concern for all who have been unjustly imprisoned, and especially for those who are suffering for their testimony to the Lord Jesus. We promise to pray and work for their freedom. At the same time we refuse to be intimidated by their fate. God helping us, we too will seek to stand against injustice and to remain faithful to the gospel, whatever the cost. We do not forget the warnings of Jesus that persecution is inevitable.

(1 Timothy 1:1-4; Acts 4:19; 5:29; Colossians 3:24; Hebrews 13:1-3; Luke 4:18; Galatians 5:11; 6:12; Matthew 5:10-12; John 15:18-21)

14. THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe in the power of the Holy Spirit. The Father sent his Spirit to bear witness to his Son; without his witness ours is futile. Conviction of sin, faith in Christ, new birth and Christian growth are all his work. Further, the Holy Spirit is a missionary spirit; thus evangelism should arise spontaneously from a Spirit-filled church. A church that is not a missionary church is contradicting itself and quenching the Spirit. Worldwide evangelization will become a realistic possibility only when the Spirit renews the Church in truth and wisdom, faith, holiness, love and power. We therefore call upon all Christians to pray for such a visitation of the sovereign Spirit of God that all his fruit may appear in all his people and that all his gifts may enrich the body of Christ. Only then will the whole Church become a fit instrument in his hands, that the whole earth may hear his voice.

(1 Corinthians 2:4; John 15:26,27; 16:8-11; 1 Corinthians 12:3; John 3:6-8; 2 Corinthians 3:18; John 7:37-39; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; Acts 1:8; Psalm 85:4-7; 67:1-3; Galatians 5:22,23; 1 Corinthians 12:4-31; Romans 12:3-8)

15. THE RETURN OF CHRIST

We believe that Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly, in power and glory, to consummate his salvation and his judgment. This promise of his coming is a further spur to our evangelism, for we remember his words that the gospel must first be preached to all nations. We believe that the interim period between Christ's ascension and return is to be filled with the mission of the people of God, who have no liberty to stop before the end. We also remember his warning that false Christs and false prophets will arise as precursors of the final Antichrist. We therefore reject as a proud, self-confident dream the notion that people can ever build a utopia on earth. Our Christian confidence is that God will perfect his kingdom, and we look forward with eager anticipation to that day, and to the new heaven and earth in which righteousness will dwell and God will reign forever. Meanwhile, we re-dedicate ourselves to the service of Christ and of people in joyful submission to his authority over the whole of our lives.

(Mark 14:62; Hebrews 9:28; Mark 13:10; Acts 1:8-11; Matthew 28:20; Mark 13:21-23; 1 John 2:18; 4:1-3; Luke 12:32; Revelation 21:1-5; 2 Peter 3:13; Matthew 28:18)

CONCLUSION

Therefore, in the light of this our faith and our resolve, we enter into a solemn covenant with God and with each other, to pray, to plan and to work together for the evangelization of the whole world. We call upon others to join us. May God help us by his grace, and for his glory, to be faithful to this our covenant! Amen, Alleluia!

