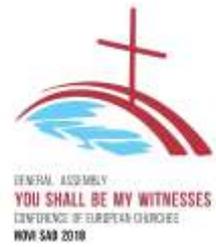


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## From the Assembly of the Conference of European Churches to the churches and peoples of Europe

### *You shall be my witnesses: Acts 1:8*

From east, west, north and south the member churches of the Conference of European Churches travelled to the crossroads of Europe. We came with vision and hope for the future of Europe.<sup>1</sup>

We came together in Serbia, thankful for and blessed with the hospitality of our host churches and acknowledging their challenges. We gathered at a time of uncertainty for Europe where many experience a loss of dignity, exploitation, destitution and the abuse of power.

By the banks of the Danube in Novi Sad, where bridges were destroyed in conflict and rebuilt in peace, we united in prayer. We brought our thirst for justice; our deep concern for people, our continent and our world. We came to share the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ the bringer of healing and peace.

We affirm that we have heard Christ's command to be His witnesses and we choose to live in hope. Following Christ Himself, we pledge to be bridge builders through the transformational power of faith. As a living testimony of faith, we respond to Christ's call and declare:

### **We shall witness to Christ**

- by proclaiming Christ's offer of saving love and grace to the world;
- By coming together to enjoy our ecumenical fellowship and to receive its richness as God's gift to us.
- By affirming that each person is created in the image and likeness of God and has inherent dignity as a result.
- By being an inclusive community, committed to the flourishing of women and men, welcoming people and protecting the human dignity of all.
- By being an intergenerational community, valuing the voices of young people who are our present and not only our future.
- By practising solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Christ in Europe and beyond.

### **We shall serve Christ by seeking and practising justice**

- By urging individuals, institutions and churches to work for the end of violence, persecution and discrimination, upholding freedom of religion or belief.
- By seeking reconciliation and the peaceful resolution of conflicts.
- By standing with, empowering and listening to those who find themselves silenced or in the margins of our churches, our communities and our world.

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<sup>1</sup> Choosing Hope at the Crossroads of Europe – Conference of European Churches 2018

- By caring for God's creation and working for ecological and climate justice and a sustainable future for our planet.

### **We shall serve Christ by offering and accepting hospitality**

- By offering a generous welcome to refugees and strangers of all faiths or beliefs.
- By engaging in dialogue, sharing our Christian faith and learning from each other.
- By raising our voices to overcome division, exclusion and marginalisation and advocating human rights and socio-economic justice for all.
- By recognising the hospitality given to us by God in the created world and by working towards the integrity of creation.

We call on our member churches and all people to join us in shaping a Europe where we build bridges for the good of all in our continent and world.

Let us proclaim together **'we shall be your witnesses'**