

Rev. Gani Wiyono, Assemblies of God

Greeting to the Council of the Lutheran World Federation

Medan, Indonesia, 2014

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ.

Once more we would like to thank you that you invited a Pentecostal guest to your council meeting. This is not only a symbol of open ecumenical relations. It is also a much needed sign that Christians take their calling serious to be a common witness of God's grace to a world with many challenges.

For your deliberations in Medan, you have chosen a theme that relates our lives to that of a tree planted by stream of water. That reminds us that a tree has to be in dialogue with its roots. Those among us who do some gardening know that it takes time for roots to grow. Only when they have established themselves is the tree able to grow and bear fruit. In view of this, it is understandable that more than 10 years have already passed since the preparatory meetings began between Lutherans and Pentecostals at the Institute for Ecumenical Research in Strasbourg. The time was not wasted, besides growing in mutual understanding, relationship deepened and trust was built. Roots grew that are solid enough to be tested by the issues and challenges we are facing together. The ecumenical tree between the Lutheran World Federation and classical Pentecostals is ready to bear fruit.

Furthermore, the fact that the psalmist refers to the streams of water, indicates that we, as God's children, need to be at the source of life. As Christians we know that our life comes from God's love. It finds its meaning in Jesus Christ and it is empowered by the presence of the Holy Spirit. If we keep these truths in mind we can be a witness and blessing to the world.

Finally, we remember that the first Psalm begins with a beatitude: "Happy is the one!" That reminds us of the Sermon on the Mount. If we know that we have your being in Christ, then we can consider ourselves to be happy in spite of the big questions that we are facing. For your discussions and decision making process during this council meeting, we wish you God's blessings so that you can also respond with confidence to Jesus conclusion, "Rejoice and be glad." May God's Spirit grant it that Pentecostals can join you in playing their part towards the fruition of the Kingdom of God.

Thank you again for your invitation, for your determination to reach out to Sisters and Brothers of other Christian churches so that God may be praised and people may be blessed.

Gany Wiyono and Jean-Daniel Plüss

Medan, June 14, 2014