



*A call to live faithfully in the midst of economic injustice  
and ecological destruction*

In August 2004, after seven years of hearings and debate, thousands of Christians from all over the world, meeting in Accra, Ghana adopted what has come to be known as the Accra Confession, a faith stance entitled *Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth*.

As identified in the Accra Confession *covenanting for justice* involves:

- Confessing our faith together
- Coming together in relationships of mutual solidarity and accountability
- Working together for justice in the economy and the earth in our own local contexts and globally ('to the ends of the earth' Acts 1:8).

This was developed further in the Kuala Lumpur<sup>1</sup> statement under the themes of:

- **Reclaiming spirituality** – rejecting anthropocentrism and reconnecting with nature, the incarnate reality of God's life-giving and life-renewing bounty
- **Reclaiming a theology of God's economy** – promoting solidarity and justice because God's economic measures emphasise compassion, grace, love and justice
- **Reclaiming mission** – recognising that proclaiming God's good news of liberation and redemption in the context of the neo-liberal economy, ecological destruction and empire calls us to engage in transformative mission reclaiming life in its fullness for all.

In other follow-up work focussing on the issue of empire, the Manila Declaration<sup>2</sup> called on churches to 'resist empire and to renew communities of life'.

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<sup>1</sup> Kuala Lumpur statement, *Living Out the Accra Confession*, May 2006

<sup>2</sup> Manila Declaration, *An Ecumenical Faith Stance Against Global Empire For A Liberated Earth Community*, July 2006

Alongside this the ecumenical Alternative Globalization Addressing People and Earth (AGAPE) process, begun in 1998, also seeks to respond to the question “How do we live our faith in the context of globalization?” Now being pursued through the AGAPE study on Poverty, Wealth and Ecology, it is exploring alternatives to neo-liberal economic globalization, which link economy and ecology in ways that promote economic justice for all. This calls for a process of transformation that makes us all accountable to the victims of neo-liberal globalization.

The Kuala Lumpur statement, recognising the need to take these concerns and initiatives forward concluded with an invitation to ‘all God’s people to join with us in a covenanting for justice movement to transform ourselves and the world according to God’s purposes and promises, inspired by the vision of a new heaven and a new earth’.

*Oikotree* is the fruit of this vision, an ecumenical space in which a movement of those seeking to live faithfully in the midst of economic injustice and ecological destruction can take shape. Sponsored by the Council for World Mission (CWM), the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) and the World Council of Churches (WCC) it is open to individuals, local churches, people’s movements and all who share our concern for justice and the healing of the nations.

*Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.*

Taking its name after Revelations 22:1-2 it seeks to network, challenge, encourage and offer support to all who wish to covenant together for justice in the economy and the earth. As such its principal precepts are:

## **Core Values**

1. Living faithfully through engaging in the struggle for justice in the economy and the earth.
2. A Spirituality of resistance and transformation.
3. The formation of life-sustaining, justice-affirming communities, which embrace creation and humanity.
4. Advocacy of economic and ecological justice, and support for alternatives to an ecologically destructive economy.
5. Resistance to neo-liberal corporate globalisation, patriarchy and empire.

6. Accompaniment with people and communities struggling to overcome economic and ecological injustice.
7. Solidarity in the struggle to change the systems that are destroying humanity and the earth.
8. Inclusivity, diversity, openness and transparency.

## **Moving Towards Our Goals**

### *A. Process*

9. To invite participation in a covenanting for justice movement (Oikotree) by churches, ecumenical organisations, local congregations and individuals engaged in the struggle for justice in the economy and the earth.
10. To share resources for nurturing, developing and sustaining the commitment to justice and its lived expressions.
11. To support individual and communal actions which live out alternatives promoting justice in the economy and the earth.
12. To explore and promote alternative economic and ecological models to neo-liberal economic globalisation, the consumerist materialism it spawns and the patriarchy it supports.
13. To strengthen mutual support through networking.
14. To further develop the theological and missiological implications of the Accra Confession and the AGAPE call in a pluralistic and multi-faith world.

### *B. Approaches*

15. Compassionate engagement with the lived experience of others and the issues raised by that experience.
16. A spirit of learning and commitment to personal and communal formation and transformation.
17. A life-engaging *kairotic*<sup>3</sup> reading of the Bible rooted in the everyday lives of people, open to the insights of other faith communities.

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<sup>3</sup> Reading the signs of the times

18. Cultivation of life-affirming spiritualities, sharing rituals, prayers, images, symbols, actions, songs, music etc.
19. Inviting people to see diverse perspectives and other ways of living, offering examples and alternative models.
20. Joining in actions of resistance against systemic injustice, patriarchy and empire.