



November 2024 Accountability Report

Geneva, 5 December 2024

1. Introduction: A word from the general secretary

Advent greetings and blessings to you in the name of our Triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

November was a month full of expressions of hope and peacebuilding. The WCC executive committee met in Cyprus, a gathering that represented a significant milestone on our collective Pilgrimage of Justice, Reconciliation and Unity. As we looked to the future, we also commemorated the past, with an international conference held at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey commemorating the 1700th anniversary of the Ecumenical Council at Nicaea. Young theologians were a significant presence there, as they were during the first in-person meeting of the WCC Commission on Young People in the Ecumenical Movement.

The WCC was also present as a partner for the assembly of the ACT Alliance, where together we mapped a future of serving God and those most in need across the world. We also stood up for human rights and equity during the “Biodiversity COP,” (COP16), and the “Finance COP,” (COP29) gatherings, represented by WCC delegates. The voice of our member churches has never been stronger, and we will keep amplifying the calls for climate justice, listening to Indigenous voices, phasing out fossil fuels, and adopting climate-friendly financing.

A most memorable meeting in November was with the Pope of the Coptic Church, His Holiness Tawadros II where we discussed global issues, the Christian witness in Egypt and the preparations for the Faith and Order World Conference in October 2025.

WCC kept a constant stream of prayer for many areas in the world, among them Armenia, where hostages are still being held and people and families are suffering from being separated from loved ones. May we continue to radiate hope in a challenging world as we journey through Advent and look forward to celebrating the birth of Jesus.

The month of November in brief:

2. What we have achieved? Key programmatic work this month

WCC executive committee radiates hope amid world’s darkness

The WCC executive committee concluded its meeting in Cyprus with inspiration and practical plans for a way forward with hope, even in a challenging world.

[WCC executive committee radiates hope amid world’s darkness | World Council of Churches](#)

WCC moderator: “What do we mean when we talk about speaking truth to power?”

WCC moderator Bishop Dr Heinrich Bedford-Strohm, in his report to the WCC executive committee, posed complex questions and reasons for hope.

[WCC moderator: “What do we mean when we talk about speaking truth to power?” | World Council of Churches](#)

WCC general secretary highlights how WCC proclaims God’s justice in the world

In a report to the WCC executive committee, WCC general secretary Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay reflected that, particularly during the past several months, his focus has been to lift the profile of the WCC. “I believe that this is being achieved in major proportions,” he said. “I am also grateful that many of the invitations that come my way are also graciously funded by the inviters and this certainly helps our budget constraints, especially when the requests for the general secretary’s presence are so numerous.”

[WCC general secretary highlights how WCC proclaims God’s justice in the world | World Council of Churches](#)

WCC youth commission gathers for first in-person meeting

The WCC Commission on Young People in the Ecumenical Movement convened in Manila, Philippines, marking the start of its first in-person meeting since its formation. The gathering, scheduled from 13-19 November, unites young ecumenical leaders from around the globe with a mission to amplify youth voices, address pressing global and local challenges, and establish intentional, actionable strategies for youth-led faith initiatives.

[WCC youth commission gathers for first in-person meeting | World Council of Churches](#)

Youth commission elects four new vice moderators

The Commission on Young People in the Ecumenical Movement, during its meeting in the Philippines, elected four new vice moderators: Ann Chris Jacob (United Methodist Church USA), Lorena Bonilla Garcia (Mennonite Church of Colombia), Rev. Bjorn Warde (Presbyterian Church of Trinidad and Tobago), and Danil Arakelian (Russian Orthodox Church).

[Youth commission elects four new vice moderators | World Council of Churches](#)

Seminar addresses decolonising the Bible

A seminar entitled “The word of God is living and active: Decolonising the Bible in the midst of colonial legacies and idolatrous powers” was cohosted on 18-24 November, by the WCC and University of the Western Cape.

[Seminar addresses decolonising the Bible | World Council of Churches](#)

Asia consultation calls for transformative action to address gender-based violence

A regional consultation on “Gender-Based Violence and Forced Migration of Women: Towards Strengthening Gender Justice Advocacy,” held 19-21 November in Bangkok, Thailand, organised by the Christian Conference of Asia, emphasised the need for collaborative, inclusive, and transformative action to address gender-based violence and the forced migration of women.

[Asia consultation calls for transformative action to address gender-based violence | World Council of Churches](#)

Interfaith collaboration drives WCC's climate justice efforts at COP29

The WCC collaborated with interfaith partners at COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, to amplify faith communities' moral and ethical advocacy for climate justice. This included participation in the Interfaith Talanoa Dialogue, support for the Interfaith Call to Action, moderating side events, and cohosting press conferences.

[Interfaith collaboration drives WCC's climate justice efforts at COP29 | World Council of Churches](#)

World Toilet Day 2024: Churches lead the call for dignified sanitation

The Ecumenical Water Network (EWN) Africa, in collaboration with the WCC Ecumenical Water Network and Norwegian Church Aid, hosted a hybrid workshop in Abuja, Nigeria, to mark World Toilet Day 2024. The event, themed "Toilets—A Place for Peace," highlighted sanitation's vital role in promoting health, dignity, and harmony across communities.

[World Toilet Day 2024: Churches lead the call for dignified sanitation | World Council of Churches](#)

WCC shares insights on mental health with pastors in Namibia

The WCC shared insights with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia on 21 November, with Dr Manoj Kurian, director of the WCC Commission of the Churches on Health and Healing, offering an online half-day session addressing mental health awareness and the impact of trauma on mental health.

[WCC shares insights on mental health with pastors in Namibia | World Council of Churches](#)

Prayer to be spiritual heartbeat of Faith and Order conference

Prayer will be at the center of the Sixth World Conference on Faith and Order when it gathers in October 2025 near Alexandria, Egypt, on the theme "Where now for visible unity?"

[Prayer to be spiritual heartbeat of Faith and Order conference | World Council of Churches](#)

WCC, Christian Conference of Asia host conference on "Reversing the HIV Epidemic in Asia: Faith-Based Engagements"

The WCC, in partnership with the Christian Conference of Asia, organised a conference in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, from 14-16 November, on "Reversing the HIV Epidemic in Asia: Faith-Based Engagements."

[WCC, Christian Conference of Asia host conference on "Reversing the HIV Epidemic in Asia: Faith-Based Engagements" | World Council of Churches](#)

WCC conducts training on HIV, mental health, and human rights in Namibia

The WCC, in collaboration with UNAIDS and national resource persons, conducted capacity-building programs on HIV, mental health, and human rights during the annual youth assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia from 31 October to 3 November in Ondangwa. Nearly 500 youth participated in the assembly.

[WCC conducts training on HIV, mental health, and human rights in Namibia | World Council of Churches](#)

African youth find hope in promoting holistic mental health

The All Africa Youth Network, in collaboration with the Africa Christian Health Associations platform, along with the WCC, organized an online consultation on 11-12 November to embark on a journey of promoting the holistic mental health and wellbeing of youth in Africa.

[African youth find hope in promoting holistic mental health | World Council of Churches](#)

Regional general secretaries meet online

The leaders of regional ecumenical organisations met online on 13 November to consult and collaborate with each other and with the WCC.

[Regional general secretaries meet online | World Council of Churches](#)

Colloquium at University of Fribourg will contemplate Nicaea Council as a guide to unity

The WCC Faith and Order Commission, in collaboration with the Study Centre for Eastern Churches at the Ecumenical Institute in Fribourg, offered a colloquium entitled “The Council of Nicaea as an Ecumenical Guide for Christian Unity,” on 18 November.

[Colloquium at University of Fribourg will contemplate Nicaea Council as a guide to unity | World Council of Churches](#)

Collaboration at ACT Alliance assembly deepened understanding of putting hope into action

As WCC staff participated in the ACT Alliance General Assembly in Indonesia, they collaborated to help send a message of both urgency and hope across the world. As with many other assemblies across the world, the ecumenical family came together to support the gathering, joining hands to support logistics, communications, and governance.

[Collaboration at ACT Alliance assembly deepened understanding of putting hope into action | World Council of Churches](#)

Training for church workers will show how to integrate advocacy into preaching, liturgy, and Bible studies

An “Advocacy Training for Church Workers” showed religious leaders, lay leaders, educators, seminary students, and interested individuals how to effectively integrate advocacy into preaching, liturgy, and Bible studies.

[Training for church workers will show how to integrate advocacy into preaching, liturgy, and Bible studies | World Council of Churches](#)

Istanbul conference remembers theological and ecumenical vision of Elder Metropolitan John Zizioulas

The theological legacy and ecumenical vision of the Orthodox theologian Elder Metropolitan John Zizioulas of Pergamon, who died in 2023 aged 92, was remembered at a conference in Istanbul organised under the patronage of the Ecumenical Patriarch, Bartholomew I.

[Istanbul conference remembers theological and ecumenical vision of Elder Metropolitan John Zizioulas | World Council of Churches](#)

As world prays for Armenia, WCC urges "justice and peace are closely interconnected"

Prayers for Armenia rang worldwide on 10 November—from London to Paris; Berlin to Washington, DC; Moscow to Australia—and in Geneva, the WCC called for the unconditional release of 23 Armenian war hostages, as well as defenders of human rights and journalists detained in Azeri jails.

[As world prays for Armenia, WCC urges "justice and peace are closely interconnected" | World Council of Churches](#)

Young leaders share insights and passion for intergenerational climate justice

A consultation with young people from WCC member churches enabled discussion and sharing of youth perspectives on the climate emergency, gathering feedback for a WCC handbook on legal action for intergenerational climate justice.

[Young leaders share insights and passion for intergenerational climate justice | World Council of Churches](#)

Role of faith communities in ending violence against children discussed in ministerial conference

A side event at the 1st Global Ministerial Conference on Ending Violence Against Children, held in Bogota, Colombia on 7 November emphasised that faith communities are uniquely positioned to lead efforts to end violence against children.

[Role of faith communities in ending violence against children discussed in ministerial conference | World Council of Churches](#)

International conference examines significance of the Council of Nicaea for the ecumenical movement today

An international conference organised by the WCC marked the beginning of a year of activities commemorating the 1700th anniversary of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea and other significant anniversaries in 2025.

[International conference examines significance of the Council of Nicaea for the ecumenical movement today | World Council of Churches](#)

Why did the emperor Constantine convoke the Council in Nicaea?

An international conference at the WCC Ecumenical Institute at Bossey focused on the impact of the Council of Nicaea. Rev. Dr Kathleen M. Griffin presented her research on Constantine's political motivations and its implications for historical and modern religious thought.

[Why did the emperor Constantine convoke the Council in Nicaea? | World Council of Churches](#)

Interfaith Dialogue on Climate urges action, compassion, and resilience ahead of COP29

Faith leaders and advocates worldwide came together on 6 November for a transformative Talanoa Dialogue, organised virtually by the Interfaith Liaison Committee to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, cochaired by the WCC. The dialogue provided a vital space for interfaith communities to explore shared goals in preparation for COP29, fostering unity around an urgent call for action on climate justice, compassion, and resilience.

[Interfaith Dialogue on Climate urges action, compassion, and resilience ahead of COP29 | World Council of Churches](#)

GEM School inspires Brazilian gathering focused on justice and ecological balance

Community leaders from El Salvador, Nicaragua, Uruguay, and Brazil gathered in São Paulo for an international exchange to advance an "Economy of Life" focused on sustainability, human dignity, and social justice. The event, an outcome of the Ecumenical School of Governance, Economics, and Management for an Economy of Life (GEM School 2023), provided a platform for grassroots leaders to share strategies for community empowerment and systemic change.

[GEM School inspires Brazilian gathering focused on justice and ecological balance | World Council of Churches](#)

WCC attending Conference of Secretaries of Christian World Communions

The WCC attended the Conference of Secretaries of Christian World Communions, hosted by the Organization of African Instituted Churches from 5-7 November in Nairobi, Kenya.

[WCC attending Conference of Secretaries of Christian World Communions | World Council of Churches](#)

WCC strengthens faith and labor coalitions for global worker rights at Brussels dialogue

The WCC reinforced its commitment to labor justice and climate equity at the "Care Dialogue" in Brussels on 30 October, co-hosted by UNI Care Europa. The event brought together key leaders from labor and faith communities to address critical issues in the global workforce, from workers' rights to the future of work in an age of automation and environmental challenges.

[WCC strengthens faith and labor coalitions for global worker rights at Brussels dialogue | World Council of Churches](#)

WCC shares insights at Bolivia conference on HIV response

Gracia Violeta Ross, WCC programme executive for HIV, Reproductive Health, and Pandemics, participated in an international conference on HIV, Chagas and other eliminable diseases held in Bolivia.

[WCC shares insights at Bolivia conference on HIV response | World Council of Churches](#)

Nicaea 2025 Bossey International Conference opens with reflections on unity

More than 130 people gathered in-person and online for the Nicaea 2025 Bossey International Conference, held 5-7 November

[Nicaea 2025 Bossey International Conference opens with reflections on unity | World Council of Churches](#)

Biodiversity COP16: ethical imperatives, Indigenous perspectives—and the work ahead

The WCC participated in the 16th Conference of the Parties (COP16) of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity held in Cali, Colombia, from 21 October to 1 November. The conference, under the theme "Peace with Nature," drew 23,000 participants from 196 countries.

[Biodiversity COP16: ethical imperatives, Indigenous perspectives—and the work ahead | World Council of Churches](#)

Africa-Europe roundtable on colonization focuses on remembrance, reimagining

An Africa-Europe Ecumenical Roundtable on the legacies of colonization and the future of ecumenical relations took place 24-25 October in Berlin.

[Africa-Europe roundtable on colonization focuses on remembrance, reimagining | World Council of Churches](#)

4th ACT Alliance General Assembly pledges to “manifest God’s unconditional love for all people”

The ACT Alliance General Assembly closed with message of both urgency and hope from the 300 delegates from across the globe who gathered in Indonesia under the theme “Hope in Action: Together for Justice!”

[4th ACT Alliance General Assembly pledges to “manifest God’s unconditional love for all people” | World Council of Churches](#)

3. Update on communication

Interviews

Youth commission moderator: “we act and journey together”

WCC Commission on Young People in the Ecumenical Movement moderator Karen Erina Puimera, is from the Protestant Church in Western Indonesia, and took time to reflect about what inspired her.

[Youth commission moderator: “we act and journey together” | World Council of Churches](#)

Women in Lebanon: “Stop the Madness of War, Lebanon deserves to live!”

In the midst of the devastating war sweeping Lebanon, killing and displacing its people, the Women's Pastoral Office of the Maronite Church in Bkerki, Lebanon has launched a cry and issued a statement entitled “Stop the Madness of War, Lebanon deserves to live!”

[Women in Lebanon: “Stop the Madness of War, Lebanon deserves to live!” | World Council of Churches](#)

Maria Lubat reflects on resilience, fatigue, and the complex landscape of Jerusalem

Living in the old city of Jerusalem amid the ongoing turmoil has profoundly shaped Maria Lubat’s day-to-day life.

[Maria Lubat reflects on resilience, fatigue, and the complex landscape of Jerusalem | World Council of Churches](#)

“We need to change strategies to get different results,” reflects Archbishop Rev. Julio Murray Thompson at COP29

At COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, the WCC interviewed Archbishop Rev. Julio Murray Thompson of the Anglican Communion in Central America, moderator of the WCC Commission on Climate Justice and Sustainable Development.

[“We need to change strategies to get different results,” reflects Archbishop Rev. Julio Murray Thompson at COP29 | World Council of Churches](#)

“Youth are leaders now, not just tomorrow,” says Patricia Mungcal at COP29

During COP29, the WCC interviewed Patricia Mungcal, a young climate advocate and humanitarian leader from the National Council of Churches in the Philippines.

[“Youth are leaders now, not just tomorrow,” says Patricia Mungcal at COP29 | World Council of Churches](#)

“We must move forward, walking with Jesus,” says Argentinian pastor on climate justice
During COP29, the WCC interviewed Pastor Eugenio Albrecht from Argentina, communications officer for the Evangelical Church of the River Plate and a Lutheran World Federation Latin America Communications Network member.

[“We must move forward, walking with Jesus,” says Argentinian pastor on climate justice | World Council of Churches](#)

Church and Peace call on parliamentarians to rethink security in Europe

Church and Peace—the European ecumenical peace church network of communities, training centers, peace organisations, and peace service agencies—is calling on parliamentarians to rethink security, and work for a paradigm shift toward peace.

[Church and Peace calls on parliamentarians to rethink security in Europe | World Council of Churches](#)

Dr Andrej Jeftić reflects on expectations for Ecumenical Year 2025

Dr Andrej Jeftić, director of the WCC Faith and Order Commission, answered questions about his expectations for the Ecumenical Year 2025, as well as how the 1700th anniversary of the First Council of Nicaea might inspire churches today.

[Dr Andrej Jeftić reflects on expectations for Ecumenical Year 2025 | World Council of Churches](#)

“We are called to protect Mother Earth,” says Aymara youth leader at COP29

During the busy environment of COP29, Wara Iris, a young Indigenous leader from Bolivia’s Aymara community, shared her reflections.

[“We are called to protect Mother Earth,” says Aymara youth leader at COP29 | World Council of Churches](#)

School principal expresses grave concern for children in Bedouin community

A school principal near Jerusalem expressed grave concerns for her students and staff as harassment by settlers increases, and fear keeps young people from learning.

[School principal expresses grave concern for children in Bedouin community | World Council of Churches](#)

How will you observe 16 Days Against Gender-based Violence?

As the global campaign “16 Days Against Gender-based Violence” approached, the WCC shared ideas and resources from Thursdays in Black ambassadors.

[How will you observe 16 Days Against Gender-based Violence? | World Council of Churches](#)

4. Update on statements, comments and messages

29 November. [WCC general secretary will visit Canadian Council of Churches to strengthen ties | World Council of Churches](#)

29 November: [Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem encourage fully commemorating Christmas season | World Council of Churches](#)

28 November: WCC general secretary meets with His Holiness Pope Tawadros II and church leaders in Egypt | World Council of Churches

28 November: WCC gives thanks for the life of Choan-Seng Song | World Council of Churches

27 November: WCC extends condolences on passing of Cardinal Miguel Ángel Ayuso Guixot | World Council of Churches

27 November: WCC welcomes news of ceasefire between Lebanon and Israel | World Council of Churches

27 November: WCC mourns passing of Rev. Dr John Moyer | World Council of Churches

26 November: WCC releases statement on “confronting threats to the living planet” | World Council of Churches

25 November: Prayer and Christian solidarity with people of Haiti focus of WCC statement | World Council of Churches

25 November: WCC seeks justice and peace in Gaza, Lebanon, and the wider Middle East | World Council of Churches

25 November: WCC demands end to violence in Sudan, urges support for churches | World Council of Churches

25 November: WCC reiterates vital importance of multilateral cooperation | World Council of Churches

25 November: WCC urges peaceful end to division of Cyprus | World Council of Churches

25 November: WCC: “We yearn for peace in Ukraine, in Russia and throughout the region” | World Council of Churches

20 November: WCC general secretary shares message with Global Network for Religions for Children Sixth Forum | World Council of Churches

19 November: WCC prayer mourns those lost to traffic accidents | World Council of Churches

18 November: WCC executive committee convenes in Cyprus with focus on peace-building | World Council of Churches

18 November: Non-economic climate losses spotlighted by WCC at COP29 | World Council of Churches

15 November: WCC North America-Turtle Island region meets online | World Council of Churches

14 November: WCC signs joint letter to G20 urging New International Financial and Economic Architecture | World Council of Churches

14 November: WCC congratulates Bishop Kirsten Fehrs, new chair of Council of Evangelical Church in Germany | World Council of Churches

13 November: At COP29, religious leaders call for “regeneration and renewal of our only planetary home” | World Council of Churches

13 November: WCC commends Archbishop of Canterbury’s decision to resign | World Council of Churches

13 November: WCC joins "Tax the super rich" campaign | World Council of Churches

12 November: Beyond numbers: COP29 side event advocates for justice-driven climate finance | World Council of Churches

11 November: WCC, World Evangelical Alliance, and global partners call for immediate release of Armenian prisoners | World Council of Churches

11 November: WCC congratulates new ACT Alliance moderator | World Council of Churches

11 November: “Creation itself is a teacher,” urge faith leaders at COP29 prayer service | World Council of Churches

11 November: WCC advocates for justice-driven climate action at COP29 | World Council of Churches

8 November: WCC accompaniment programme in Palestine and Israel convenes for annual meeting | World Council of Churches

8 November: Armenia prayer day will be “profound testament to Christian solidarity” | World Council of Churches

7 November: WCC general secretary shares greetings with 18th General Assembly of the Communion of Churches in Indonesia | World Council of Churches

6 November: WCC calls for debt justice and wealth taxation at the UN Social Forum | World Council of Churches

5 November: Protestinfo and Le Temps present WCC general secretary Jerry Pillay | World Council of Churches

4 November: WCC expresses solidarity with Roman Catholic Church mourning death of Padre Marcelo | World Council of Churches

1 November: WCC mourns passing of His Beatitude Catholicos Aboon Mor Baselios Thomas I | World Council of Churches

Green Village Project

As discussed at the past two executive committees, concern was shared about the developments in the Green Village Project indicating a possible overall financial shortfall affecting the WCC. The Steering Committee is in conversation with the developer, and we are ensuring that the WCC will emerge financially strong by the end of the project. We have clearly outlined the WCC expectations, and the developer is working on our demands.

I take this opportunity to wish you a blessed Christmas and a happy and joyful New Year. May the God of love, peace and justice fill your hearts with hope and joy during this season and beyond. Immanuel, God with us is a sure sign that we are not alone amidst our struggles, sufferings and challenges in the world: "For unto you a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6)

Yours in Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jerry Pillay". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jerry" being more prominent than the last name "Pillay".

Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay
General Secretary
World Council of Churches