



Global Christian Forum

In This Issue

International
Committee Confirms
Global Gathering for
April 2024

Welcome
Commissioner Jane
Paone and Rev. Dr.
Master Oboletswe
Matlhaope

Gathering in French-
speaking Switzerland

Finding Hope in the
Present Moment

GCF Newsletter: November 2021

We are delighted to announce the dates for the 2024 Global Gathering and to share exciting ways that God is at work through the relationships built by GCF.

We thank God for your faithful commitment to the work of hope and Christian unity fostered by GCF, and we hold you in prayer always.

May God bless you during this season of light and love, as we celebrate God who comes to be with us in Jesus Christ.





International Committee Confirms the Fourth Global Gathering for April 15-19, 2024

The Global Christian Forum's International Committee met virtually on October 26. It was a joyful virtual gathering where participants joined one another from around the world to reflect on places they find hope and to plan for the next Global Gathering which will take place in 2024.

Despite the challenges that the Covid-19 pandemic has posed throughout the world, the work of GCF continues to build bridges and to unite people through hope in Christ. The GCF model of sharing faith stories is a powerful way to open hearts and create connection.

The Committee unanimously confirmed that we will have the fourth Global Gathering the week of April 15-19, 2024. More details will be coming soon!

Welcome Commissioner Jane Paone!

Commissioner Jane Paone is the Secretary for International Ecumenical Relations for The Salvation Army (SA). A Salvation Army officer since 1982, she has served in Corps (parishes) in the UK, in Italy, and France. Along with her husband, Jane has given territorial leadership in Italy (also giving oversight to the opening of work in Greece), France and Belgium Territory and Switzerland, Austria and Hungary Territory.

Jane was the first woman to be chair of Churches Together in Rome and was active in various ecumenical events with the Vatican. As Senior Representative-Europe of the International Social Justice Commission (SA), Jane had opportunities to interact with the UN in Vienna and Geneva, particularly on the issue of combatting Human Trafficking. She attended the UN Commission on the Status of Women in New York and was involved with Faith Action for Children on the Move group, engaging also in the first Global Refugee Forum in Geneva (UNHCR).



“I believe that our Lord delights in uniting diverse people from diverse cultures and languages to make a positive impact in the world He loves. It’s my privilege to be part of the Global Christian Forum.”

Welcome Rev. Dr. Master Oboletswe Matlhaope!

Rev. Dr Master Matlhaope is the General Secretary of the Association of Evangelicals in Africa (AEA).



He hails from Botswana, where he previously served as the President of the Evangelical Fellowship of Botswana (EFB) for a maximum of three successive terms. He is also a senior minister in the Pentecostal Protestant Church (PPC) in Botswana and has been a pastor for over 22 years.

Rev. Dr Master Matlhaope holds a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Practical Theology from North-West University (NWU)-Potchefstroom in South Africa.

He is married to Boipuso Eneldah Matlhaope, and they are blessed with three children.

“As president of the Evangelical Fellowship of Botswana (EFB) from 2011 -2017, I co-founded the Botswana Network of Christian Churches Organization (BONECO), where I served as its 1st Chair for a period of 3 years. This Ecumenical movement was necessary for common voice and action in the nation.”

As different Christian Church organizations, our collaboration and unity is necessary because the outside world looks at us as one. Despite our doctrinal differences, our core values of love and respect demands a semblance of unity among ourselves.”



Gathering of the Christian Forum of French-speaking Switzerland

The Christian Forum of French-speaking Switzerland gathered October 10-13, 2021. Participants came from various confessions or Christian traditions of the different cantons of French-speaking Switzerland – catholics, orthodox, reformed, evangelicals, pentecostals, old catholics, anglicans, adventists, baptists, and members of communities and movements – all together (Acts 2:1) in the joy of the Holy Spirit at Leysin. They gathered to listen for the Word of God and share faith stories with one another.

The theme of this Forum was taken from the Gospel of John: "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you, so that you might go and bear fruit – fruit that will last – and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you" (15:16).

This text accompanied the group during the gathering. Through these words, so elevated, full of life and powerful, Christ has called. He always takes the first step, so that his people respond to him in faith and turn ourselves to those around us.

About the gathering, forum participants agreed "This Forum has reminded us that what unites us is much stronger than what separates us: Jesus Christ, true God and true human, sent by the Father and giver of the Holy Spirit to unite us in him. In often surprising ways his grace visits our hearts so as to send us into this suffering world, particularly in this time of the Coronavirus pandemic."

A special recognition was made of the connection and unity that emerges as people share their faith stories with one another.

Finding Hope

There have been moments during the global Covid-19 pandemic when hope has been in short supply. Around the world people have struggled with isolation, unemployment, food insecurity, uncertainty about the future, sickness and even death. Participants during the International Committee meeting were invited to share places where they have witnessed hope during this season of uncertainty. There were many beautiful expressions of hope that were shared:

"I find hope in the resurrection which is the foundation of hope because we are assured that evil does not have the final word; the final word belongs to God. This belief enables us to continue to be part of God's mission despite the current circumstances."

"There is hope in ecumenical relationships and movements which offer a bright future for Christianity and Christian unity."

"There is hope in churches who are taking steps to protect the planet and care for the earth; there is hope in the energy of young people who are eager to lead the church in the movement for climate justice."

"I have witnessed hope in the dialogue which is beginning between the Catholic church and the Pentecostal church in the US context."

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.



-Romans 15:13