



Global Christian Forum



GCF Newsletter **December 2024**

As we enter the Christmas season, we are reminded of the joyous anticipation that leads us to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ—the Light of the World. In this time of reflection and gratitude, we are called to remember that this Light shines not only for us but through us as we engage with one another across traditions, fostering unity and mutual encouragement in our shared faith.

This year has been one of profound connection within the Global Christian Forum. From regional consultations to global gatherings, we have seen firsthand how the story of Christ's love transcends boundaries, uniting believers in prayer, dialogue, and fellowship. As we look to the upcoming year, we continue to be inspired by the stories of faith and perseverance shared by our brothers and sisters around the world.

May this Christmas season be a reminder of the eternal hope we have in Christ and an invitation to carry His light into the world. Together, let us remain steadfast in our commitment to the unity and mission of the Church.

Global Christian Forum Celebrates 25 Years of Ministry

The Global Christian Forum (GCF) celebrated its 25th anniversary during the Fourth Global Gathering in Accra, Ghana. The evening was spent celebrating at Action Chapel International where the participants were welcomed by Archbishop Nicholas Duncan-Williams. The event drew Christians from throughout the world and exemplified the GCF's commitment to fostering unity, dialogue, and mutual understanding among Christians of all denominations.

The Global Christian Forum was established in 1998 as a platform for engagement among various Christian communities, particularly those that might not interact in traditional ecumenical settings. Over the past quarter-century, the GCF has played a vital role in bridging divides and building relationships among Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical, Pentecostal, and Independent churches.

The 25th anniversary celebration was marked by reflections on the GCF's founding vision, which sought to create a safe space for dialogue among Christian traditions often divided by theological, cultural, or historical differences. Acknowledging the progress made, participants celebrated the ways the Forum has fostered deeper relationships and mutual respect among diverse Christian communities.

Youth voices were notably prominent, with sessions dedicated to amplifying their perspectives on leadership and social transformation. The inclusion of younger generations in the discussions underscored the GCF's commitment to fostering intergenerational dialogue and ensuring the Forum's relevance for years to come. The youngest participant in the Global Gathering, Kate Andison from the Church of England helped cut the 25th anniversary cake.

As the Global Christian Forum moves into its next chapter, the celebration emphasized the ongoing need for spaces of dialogue and collaboration in an increasingly polarized world. The anniversary was not only a celebration of past achievements but also a launching pad for new initiatives aimed at deepening relationships and expanding the Forum's reach.

Reflections from Accra

I think what had the most impact on me was the sense of hope that was present at the gathering. The GCF really taught me that there is a lot of work to be done in the Church, but there is also such reason to hope - and that we don't need to forget or let go of the past, to move forward into the future and to move forward towards reconciliation and hope. I think this hope came in part from the focus on Jesus - who is our hope. It felt like the whole forum was so centered around the person of Jesus and the message of the gospel, which prevented people from getting caught up in petty conflicts or irrelevant details and really helped people look beyond the obvious differences that can so easily divide us and have divided us throughout history.

-Kate Andison, Church of England



Reflections from Accra

The experience in Ghana remains deeply meaningful to me, especially the powerful statement made by the gathering itself: Christians from so many traditions coming together in fraternity in a deeply divided world, and a deeply divided Church. It was profoundly moving to sit at the table with people from traditions I had never before encountered and to listen to their faith stories. Those moments of shared vulnerability and mutual learning have stayed with me and continue to inspire and bless me.

-César Lopes, CETI Continental



Regional Gathering in German-speaking Switzerland

From October 27 to 30, 2024, the first Christian Forum in German-speaking Switzerland took place on the Chrischona Campus in Bettingen (BS). Over 100 representatives from a total of around 25 national and free churches, traditional and younger churches and Christian communities of different origins and backgrounds took part in the meeting. The focus was on sharing personal stories of faith as a first step on the path to opening up to one another and for a new way of living together.

In the closing message of the first Christian Forum for German-speaking Switzerland, the participants emphasize that diversity does not hinder the Christian community, but enriches it. With God's help, they want to work for peace and reconciliation between the churches and Christian communities. What is possible in the churches can also have an impact in a humanity torn apart by division, crises and conflicts.

