



Evangelical Mission
in Solidarity



GIVING SPACE

Annual Report 2016

IMPRINT

EVANGELICAL MISSION IN SOLIDARITY (EMS)

Vogelsangstr. 62 | 70197 Stuttgart
Tel.: + 49 711 636 78 -0
Fax: + 49 711 636 78 -45
E-mail: info@ems-online.org

DONATION ACCOUNT

Evangelische Bank eG
IBAN: DE85 5206 0410 0000 0001 24
BIC: GENODEF1EK1

IMPRINT

Evangelical Mission in Solidarity –
Churches and Missions in International
Partnership (EMS) e.V.

Editors: Ute Dilg-Sassmannshausen,
Regina Karasch-Böttcher

Layout: B-Factor
November 2017

Cover

photo: EMS/Lohnes

“THE EVANGELICAL FAITH HAS BECOME A WORLD CITIZEN”	3
SHARING SPACE TOGETHER	4
LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER, LEARNING TOGETHER	5
STANDING BY THE DISADVANTAGED	6
EMS MEMBERS SHOW THEIR SOLIDARITY	7
A SPACE FOR PLAYING IN LEBANON	7
SOLIDARITY – A SIGN OF SOVEREIGNTY AND STRENGTH	8
YOU+ME: FRIENDS AROUND THE WORLD	11
“A GIFT FROM GOD” – THIS HOME IS MY HOME	12
A WEALTH OF EXPERIENCE FROM YOUTH WORK	13
SHARING RESOURCES IN THE COMMUNICATION NETWORK	13
TREADING PATHS TOGETHER INTO THE FUTURE	14
LIVING TOGETHER DESPITE MANY DIFFERENCES	15
SETTING A SIGN OF SOLIDARITY	16

“THE EVANGELICAL FAITH HAS BECOME A WORLD CITIZEN”

The anniversary of the Reformation has strengthened the common roots of EMS member churches. However, many see themselves exposed to a rising tide of oppression. The “broad place” is in danger.

“O LORD, you have set my feet in a broad place,” is what Christians pray in Psalm 31. In the very year of 2017 during which we celebrate 500 years of the Reformation, the “broad place” opened up in a special way. It is inconceivable to regard the Reformation as a purely European event. What happened as a spiritual movement at places such as Wittenberg and others shapes the faith of many millions of people all over the world today. The Evangelical faith has become a world citizen.

The member churches of the EMS have utilised the anniversary year to strengthen their roots within the family of reformed churches. In Germany, the primary thought was freedom. It took a long time for the Evangelical churches to understand that the “freedom of a Christian individual” was not compatible with authoritarian forms of government. Today, we know that the liberal democratic state conforms with the Evangelical faith.

In other parts of the world, churches have placed a stronger emphasis on highlighting the fundamental principles of the Reformation and comparing them with the challenges they are faced with. Although we

as Protestants maintain that “Christ alone” is the way to God, but how do churches then want to shape their relationship to Muslim, Hindu or other religious groups?

A theological symposium in Bad Boll in June 2017 gave us some inspiration for thought for the coming years (see p 14). We intend to continue working on this. The world-wide “broad place” which mission has created since the 18th century should not decay into “satellite places” where our spiritual beliefs diverge. The EMS network – which is world-wide but still coherent – provides us with positive opportunities to be Christians together within the doctrine of the Reformation.

However, the “broad place” is repeatedly faced with danger. In recent times, civil liberties have been curtailed in many countries. Nationalist forces have spread in Japan and South Korea and their intention is to ostracise everything that is “foreign”. In India, religious minorities such as Christians and Muslims are pushed to the fringes of society. In the Middle East, many Christians find themselves in life-threatening situations. In Indonesia, Islamic forces are gaining strength.

The Reformation with its doctrines has become a world citizen – that is what we have learnt from the anniversary year. But as Christians, we must make every effort to maintain the “broad place” on which God has set our feet.

Jürgen Reichel

General Secretary of the EMS



Photo: EMS/Lohnes

SHARING SPACE TOGETHER

In the beginning, God created space out of nothing. Then He filled it with plants, animals and humans. Sharing space together means community and community is also the basic element of the Christian faith. Jesus shared space with outcasts – people from Samaria, lepers, tax collectors, or even women from the “lower classes” of society.



Photo: EMS/Lohnes

When a small group of people claims more and more space without opening it up to the needy, there is no doubt that is nothing but sin. There are many of us “who join house to house, who add field to field, until there is room for no one but you, and you are left to live alone in the midst of the land!” (cf. Isaiah 5:8). We confront refugees without mercy since we do not want to share the God-given space. Men maintain that the social space belongs to them and women are the “subordinate gender”. Fundamentalist religious groups believe that the space is only intended for their own kind. In many parts of India to this day, Dalits and Adivasi, the “Untouchables”, may not use places which are open to the general public, not even the common wells. Racism and caste discrimination are painful examples of denying access to space to marginalised ethnic groups – in the end, this only serves the interests of the powerful and is intended to safeguard their privileges.

Increasing individualisation also endangers the common spaces of sharing. Despite the importance of preserving the rights of the individual, there is a danger that the individual becomes isolated and no longer connected to other fellow human beings. The spaces for love, care, compassion, community,

equality, attention and brotherliness are shrinking. This attitude of being introverted and of rising narcissism runs contrary to the Christian spirit whose main emphasis is on sharing and providing loving care.

Ultimately, this space also belongs to other creatures. People often succumb to the misconceived idea that the space on earth was only created for them. That is why they do not look after the environment. Men and women should become aware that the space was also created for other creatures.

Ultimately, the Christian mission aims at spreading the Kingdom of God. Missionaries of both genders dedicate(d) themselves to providing the underprivileged with access to education. They support(ed) them to claim their share of social space for themselves. The mission of the church and of all Christians should be to continue allowing everyone to share the space, also in the future.

Rev. Sunil Raj Philip
Church of South India (CSI)

LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER, LEARNING TOGETHER

How can we continue to improve our project work? How can we preserve the creation? What are the possibilities of doing more for young people? Many EMS member churches are faced by similar challenges and issues. They seek answers by pooling their resources – for example in the EMS Project Networking Forum.



Lesinda Cunningham from the Moravian Church in South Africa (MSCA), which is an EMS member, is head of Elim Home, a facility for children with disabilities in the Western Cape. Families with disabled children are still marginalised in South Africa.

“Children can develop much better in a care facility,” explains Lesinda. She shares this conviction with the staff of the Sternberg rehabilitation centre in Palestine which also belongs to the Moravian Church and the EMS. What could be more natural than working together? The staff and management maintain a lively exchange by email or Facebook. Exchange visits help facility managers get to know each other better, as Lesinda Cunningham

reported at EMS Project Networking Forum in Stuttgart in April 2017.

During their meeting in 2014, the Mission Council and the General Meeting of the EMS placed great importance on this kind of international project networking. Exchanging experiences and successes between projects was defined as an essential aim in the internationalisation process of the EMS. As a result, there is currently a lively spirit of co-operation on the project sector. “Everyone brings their contribution and in return they want to learn something from the others. It’s the ideal basis to create a successful network,” says Christine Grötzinger, Head of Programme and Project Support. Very promising ideas came from

Indonesia on the topic of fighting against poverty. Africa is the pioneer when it comes to combating HIV and AIDS. And in the sector of elderly work, Germany and Korea supply valuable experiences due to their ageing populations. So, what’s the next stop? At the networking forum in Stuttgart, the nearly 40 participants formulated clear proposals for further work: staff exchanges, exchange of materials, thematic workshops, exchange visits and inter-church and cross-border project sponsorships. Discussions will continue in small groups within the social networks. ■

STANDING BY THE DISADVANTAGED

The Presbyterian Church of Ghana has a very practical understanding of its Christian mission: the church believes that spreading the Good News means looking after poor and sick people – through a strong health care service.



Photo: FMS/Edwards-Raudonat

“I help as best I can,” says Rev. Roger Wegurih, pastor at Bawku Hospital which is run by the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) in the border triangle of Ghana, Togo and Burkina Faso. The hospital treats emergencies from the whole region as well as many patients who are infected by HIV or AIDS. The immunodeficiency disease is still regarded as a taboo and as a result the affected are often marginalised. Wegurih, who was Ecumenical Co-worker at the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Württemberg until 2016, looks after people infected by HIV/AIDS and their dependants. It’s especially difficult when the infected deny the disease, he says. “Many don’t accept the diagnosis and refuse treatment. As long as the illness has not broken out, I’m often their only person of contact.”

In addition to the immunodeficiency disease, eye diseases – especially cataracts – are widespread in the North of Ghana. Many go blind although doctors could save their sight with relatively uncomplicated outpatient surgery. Patients receive the operation free of charge at the regional eye centre of the Presbyterian Church. In 2005, Ghana introduced a health insurance. The annual charge of 12 Euro for people who are not permanently employed is very low by European standards. But many people in the rural areas of Ghana can still not afford the money or do not understand that a health insurance covers them while they are healthy for when they get sick. When they need help, they receive help from the Poor & Sick Fund of the Presbyterian Church.

To reach even more people in rural areas, the healthcare service of the PCG has also trained young people to become village health workers. They explain the need for hygiene and healthy nutrition to villagers, treat minor illnesses and transfer complicated cases to hospitals. All in all, the PCG runs five district hospitals, 30 health stations, nine primary healthcare facilities and two nursing schools.

Currently, a new malaria vaccine is under test at one of the hospitals, the Agogo Hospital in Central Ghana. The trials were initiated by the Institute for Tropical Medicine at the University Hospital of Tübingen. “The results are encouraging,” says Dr Samuel Adjei, who has researched the tropical disease locally for many years. At least the vaccine is 60 per cent effective with children over five months old. Doctors at the Agogo Hospital treat over 13,000 inpatients and just under 120,000 outpatients every year. ■

EMS MEMBERS SHOW THEIR SOLIDARITY

Member churches of the EMS have provided special funds to the Moravian Church in South Africa (MCSA). The church's financial situation has become very strained in recent years due to pastors' salaries as well as the maintenance and renovation costs for buildings. Despite all this, a path has now been found out of the crisis. The church's continuing existence has been secured by the MCSA selling plots of land and receiving financial support from the EMS and its member churches. The new church leaders are currently working on consolidating the budget for the future. ■

A SPACE FOR PLAYING IN LEBANON

There is hardly another place in the world where space is as well arranged as in the Middle East. Historical city centres such as Damascus or Jerusalem have Christian, Muslim and Jewish districts as well as markets which serve as meeting places. Even today, you can immediately recognise whether you are walking through a Christian or a Muslim village by the colours, smells and sounds. There is an enormous difference between private and public space and this also goes for the male and female areas in an Arab house, or storage rooms for milk and meat products in a Jewish kitchen, or the areas in front of and behind the veil in the former Jewish Temple, or the iconostasis in an Orthodox church.

In addition to all these places, there is now a very special "space for playing" at the Johann Ludwig Schneller School (JLSS) in Lebanon: a large football pitch that even meets FIFA strict standards. The pitch was donated by a family from Württemberg in memory of their deceased son. The parents decided to invest the young man's savings to provide children in the Middle East with facilities to give them a happy childhood. They were able to turn their mourning into a place of joy for boys and girls, Christians and Muslims, Lebanese residents and Syrian refugees. They all use this special space for playing together and practise peaceful coexistence in this way. ■



Photos: EMS/Gräbe

SOLIDARITY – A SIGN OF SOVEREIGNTY AND STRENGTH

Solidarity needs a willingness to share even to the point of sacrifice. And not only with material things. A much more sustainable form of solidarity, togetherness and connectedness is often just listening and giving advice as well as following advice. The two forms of solidarity – both financial and conceptual – are the basis for the work of the Evangelical Mission in Solidarity.

“I am what I am because of who we all are” is the translation of the Bantu saying “Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu”. The expression “ubuntu” means humanity to others and this is linked to the philosophy of giving mutual support, respect, independence, commonality, connectedness and responsibility. Solidarity is what grows from all this.

Solidarity in practice – 3.5 million euros for Programme and Project Support

As in previous years, the EMS and its world-wide fellowship has provided funds for projects and programmes. A lot of attention is placed on direct project support using funds from the international fellowship as well as the exchange of young volunteers and co-workers with an Ecumenical context. Project support has created a network between EMS members and partners and has established connections at all levels. Staff exchanges provide the basis for getting to know and understanding other cultures and ways of life. The exchange of young volunteers helps them encounter unknown peoples and cultures and expand far-sightedness and tolerance. However,

securing the funds for these tasks means an enormous challenge for the EMS Fellowship.

Where does the money come from? Where does it go to?

The growth in revenues in 2016 remained constant as in previous years. There were slight increases in contributions from regional churches and from donations and collections. The subsidies and allowances for projects and programmes dropped slightly. However, they were slightly offset by lower operational costs. Project support was increased by expanding the funds for small projects, whereas staff costs remained stable despite rises in collectively agreed wages. This was due to reductions in the number of staff.

EMS with broad positioning in Germany

The EMS works in various regions of the world in co-operation with other associations and societies. Work at the EMS churches in Korea and China is reflected by the rich experiences made by the German East Asia Mission and in the daily work with associated Christians in these countries. The two Schneller

schools in Lebanon and Jordan are models for many places in the world since they practise peace work between peoples and religions and beyond borders. The Evangelical Association for the Schneller Schools is solidly united with this work. In the same way, the work of the Basel Mission German Branch connects us to Christians in South Sudan, Nigeria and Cameroon. An act of solidarity which we practise daily is our commitment to justice and freedom of religion and belief in these countries and regions.

Challenges

The tasks are rapidly increasing in number but the funds needed for them are not so forthcoming. It needs financial resources to live and experience togetherness and connectedness. In general, funds are quickly raised in an emergency, but they are much more difficult to obtain for long-term solidarity measures. One of the important tasks of the EMS community of values will be to concentrate more on the topic of fundraising, not only within the context of Germany but also to strengthen the solidarity contribution on an international scale within the EMS Fellowship. At



OVERVIEW OF REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

Revenues 2016 (in €)

7,798,064.91

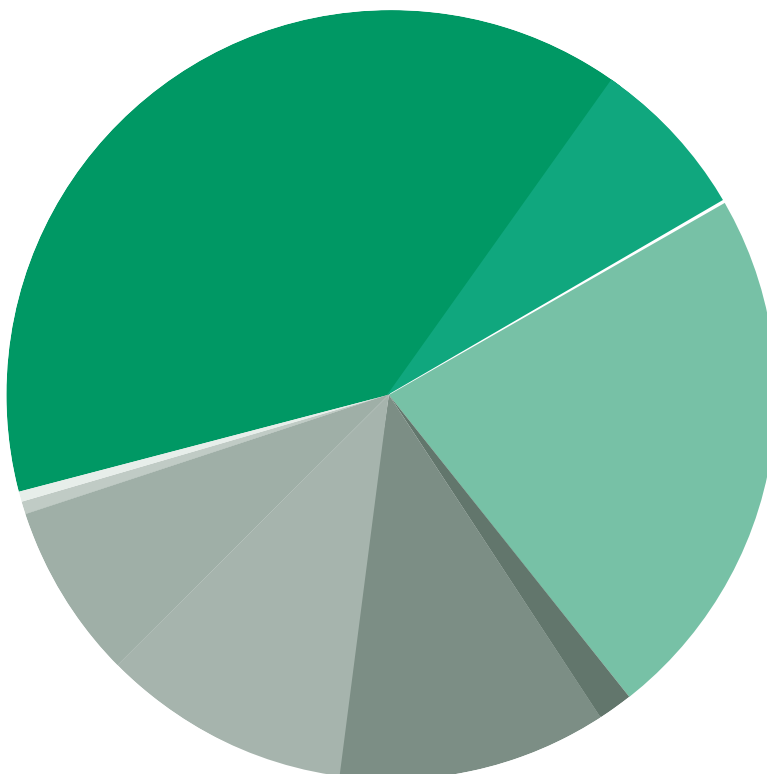
■	Contributions from churches	3,946,979.10
■	Refunds and subsidies	449,480.40
■	Interest, dividends	70,571.84
■	Return on investments	212,475.70
■	Rental revenues	86,303.00
■	Withdrawals from reserves	100,000.00
■	Sale from projects	47,389.18
■	Surplus prev. year	1,461.25
■	Donations, offerings	2,883.404.44



Expenditures 2016 (in €)

7,798,064.91

■	Donations to partners	3,059,376.93
■	Allocation to reserves	505,000.00
□	Annual surplus	222.46
■	Staff costs, programmes	1,770,944.56
■	Staff costs, ecumenical co-workers	111,539.65
■	Staff costs, administration	901,101.29
■	Material costs, programmes	794,127.76
■	Administration costs	578,127.76
■	Product sales	40,809.98
■	Write-offs	36,067.43



EMS IN THE INTERNET



Shopping for a better world

The new EMS online shop is stocked with products from Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Europe – all are fair traded and selected with care. Whether you are looking for culinary delicacies, high quality cosmetics, original gifts or informative magazines and materials for schools and congregations, this is where you'll find it. Your purchase also supports the work of the international EMS Fellowship. We wish you every enjoyment while browsing and shopping:

shop.ems-online.org



Close to EMS volunteers

In their blogs, volunteers taking part in the North-South programme chat about life at their places of work, about the experiences they make in the countries they are sent to and what their concerns are during their stay.

oefp-blogs.ems-online.org



the first EMS Project Networking Forum for project and programme co-workers in the EMS Fellowship, the nearly 40 participants formulated proposals to implement this goal (see p 5).

Social media

The use of social media has long become an established means of communication when dealing with young people who complete a year of practical training as part of our Ecumenical Youth Volunteers Programme (EYVP) in countries in Africa and South-East Asia. The digitised world of today and tomorrow is forcing people to be and stay at the latest state of the art. This is why the sector of social media has been expanded at the EMS in the past few years. More than 1,100 friends have subscribed on Facebook to receive news about the EMS Fellowship. More resources will be needed in the coming years to ensure continuing presence and keep up-to-date with technology. Our members – especially in urban areas in the Far East and also Africa – show us how to use electronic media and exchange important information and news in this way.

Solidarity needs a willingness to share even to the point of sacrifice

This opening statement says it all – and it is the mission of the EMS. We experience the impressive



Photo: EMS/Lohnes

commitment of volunteers and honorary workers, of employees who are at the heart where our solidarity work beats – in the common witness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, in a fellowship that sees itself as a member of the world-wide body of Christ.

Rudolf Bausch

Executive Secretary

YOU+ME: FRIENDS AROUND THE WORLD

Children get to know each other at eye level in the EMS Fellowship. They are accompanied by the big blue elephant Emso and the little bird Pipit.

Big blue Emso the Elephant and little Pipit the Bird have been with the EMS Fellowship since the start of 2016. These colourful figures belong to the educational programme YOU+ME: FRIENDS AROUND THE WORLD. Together with girls and boys at children's worship services and in primary schools, they discover different countries, cultures and religions. In this way, they help children from many churches get to know and appreciate one another.

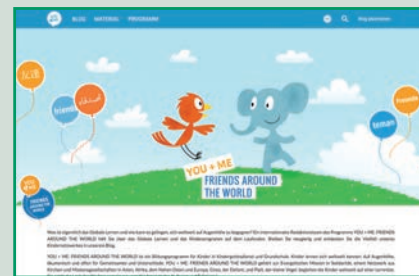
Emso and Pipit are also part of the booklet "Let's share our faith" which the You+Me team produced in 2016 together with an international advisory committee. The booklet is available in German, English, Indonesian, Korean and Kiswahili. Part of the concept is for children to exchange using painting sheets. ■



Photo: EMS/Heiligers

Emso the Elephant visits exhibitions and events "in the flesh" and talks to children. At the Fair Trade exhibition, he told the children where bananas grow and why it is important that they are traded fair.

EMS IN THE INTERNET



YOU + ME has its own blog

What actually is Global Learning and how can we succeed in getting to know each other world-wide at eye level? An international editorial team for the YOU + ME: FRIENDS AROUND THE WORLD programme keeps you informed about the EMS children's programme. Authors from all over the world write regularly about their children's worship services. But it is not only co-workers who have their say. Current studies on children's topics will be presented and there will be announcements about events revolving around Global Learning with children. If you want, you can also write and become part of the world-wide EMS Fellowship. For a better overview, the blog is divided into different posts:

"Exchange, Festivities World-wide, Intercultural Learning, Fair Trade, Children's Service, Children World-wide".

ems-friends.org/en

“A GIFT FROM GOD” – THIS HOME IS MY HOME

Many girls and boys in India live in poverty. They have to work hard and suffer abuse and mistreatment. They find a new place to live at the children’s homes of the Church of South India (CSI).



Having enough to eat, going to school, playing with other children, feeling safe and protected – these are things that many children in India simply do not experience. They often live in abject poverty, experience violence in their families or have to work to survive. Athira is a girl who has also had terrible experiences. Her father died at an early age. Her family was left behind totally destitute. When her mother married again, things seemed to look up. But her new partner was alcoholic and abused his step-daughter. To protect the child, her mother brought her to a children’s home in Chombala run by the Church of South India, a town on the coast to the south west of Bangalore. That is where Athira

started to live a childhood the way it should be. “I’m so happy here,” says Athira, who is now 14 years old. “I’ve got lots of girlfriends. And the carers are nice too.” And finally, she can go to school.

The EMS Fellowship supports a total of six children’s homes run by the Church of South India – four for girls and two for boys. Currently 215 girls and 125 boys live there. In addition, there is an education centre for young people where 30 young adults are taught. The aim is to provide as many girls and boys with a good education so that they can have access to a better future. Most of all, they should feel protected and be allowed to grow up in a loving community. Every

child assumes minor duties in everyday life. They help do household chores or feed the animals which are kept in separate shelters. In this way, they learn to take on responsibility for themselves and for others – regardless of religion since children living together at the home come from Christian, Hindu and Muslim families and they understand and respect one another.

Many of the children had to work hard before they found refuge in one of the church’s homes. Child labour is widespread in India. Despite high growth rates in the economy, many families are very poor, especially in rural areas. They hardly earn enough to survive. Girls in particular suffer in these conditions. Going to school is often inconceivable for them. They have to work and make a contribution to the family’s income from a very early age. To give them an outlook on life, the EMS is stepping up its support for girls’ homes such as the facility in Chombala where Athira lives. “A gift from God” is how Athira calls the home which has become her home. ■

A WEALTH OF EXPERIENCE FROM YOUTH WORK

Young Christians from EMS member churches discuss their role in the international fellowship at a youth meeting in India.

A “chest full of treasures”. That’s how Yessica describes the experiences she took home with her from the EMS international youth meeting in India. “I’ve learnt a lot about sharing, responsibility and acceptance of people from different backgrounds,” says the young woman from Indonesia in conclusion.

The 25 young people from 13 member churches of the EMS Fellowship spent a total of ten days in summer 2016 in the big cities of Chennai, Bangalore and Hyderabad at the invitation of the Church of South India (CSI). The young women and men were able to get to know each other and see themselves as part of the EMS Fellowship. They hoped to take store of their own situation as young adults in their churches, read the Bible, share examples of successful youth work and seek solutions to problems. And of course, having fun should not be forgotten.

“The trip was an eye-opener for me,” said Nangamo from South Africa. During the meeting with Indian young people, she got to know about the Indian caste system and what restrictions it means for many people. “It reminded me very much of apartheid in my country.”

The concerns of the young people not only included major issues such as injustice and discrimination. They also learnt about things such as filling out applications for travel expense subsidies from the EMS fund for small projects.

Currently, the EMS Youth Network is starting to organise themselves even more. Regional youth networks have already been set up in Ghana, Indonesia, South Africa and Germany. Social media help foster contacts. In addition, the EMS Youth Network has introduced a youth policy which has the aim of promoting more responsible participation, more contact between members and more influence on the topics of the EMS Fellowship. ■

SHARING RESOURCES IN THE COMMUNICATION NETWORK



Photo: EMS/Lohnes

Delegates from Ghana, India, Indonesia, South Africa and Germany met at the first workshop for communicators of the EMS member churches in December 2016 in Stellenbosch / South Africa. The aims: to organise exchanges on the general conditions for the work, to learn from one another and network with each other. The agreement: to set up a pool of stories, photos and contacts for special information – and to expand the network to all EMS churches.



Photo: EMS/Lohnes

TREADING PATHS TOGETHER INTO THE FUTURE

How do you bond young people to the church? What are the possibilities of peaceful coexistence with other religions? What do mission and proclamation mean in different cultural contexts? These issues are controversially discussed within the EMS Fellowship, says Kerstin Neumann, Deputy General Secretary and Head of the Mission and Partnership Department in this interview.

Due to its history, mission is a difficult term in our country. What does mission mean in the EMS today?

Kerstin Neumann: The Bible gives a clear message. We should assume responsibility for God's creation and give special attention to people on the fringes of society. Therefore, mission means proclaiming the word of God accompanied by action. In the EMS, we see ourselves as part of world-wide Christianity

which is capable of tackling the major problems of the world together, such as justice and peace. This also includes diaconical work. Our member churches are committed to a wide range of areas including aid projects for elderly, sick and disabled people.

"Mission moves" was the motto of a symposium which brought delegates from all EMS member churches of the world to Bad Boll in June 2017. What did they discuss there?

Neumann: Before the symposium, four team visits took place over the past two years. Teams of international delegates from all EMS member churches together visited four churches in Ghana, Indonesia, India and Germany. The aim was to get to know one another better and identify common issues. The symposium was the joint conclusion. What came out of it were three topics that were preying on everybody's minds: youth, interfaith dialogue, especially with Muslims, and evangelisation.

Why are these concerns so urgent for the member churches?

Neumann: Young people in many places of the world today rely on

the traditional structures in which they grew up. So, the question is how we can motivate them to become active in their churches despite all this. When it comes to interfaith dialogue, we see that some of our member churches such as in Jordan, India and Indonesia find themselves in a minority situation. The EMS churches in these regions have long been faced with the task of not simply surviving but also coexisting in peace and solidarity with other social groups.

And what about evangelisation?

Neumann: When it comes to this, there are very divergent theological convictions. Among the EMS member churches, there are also evangelical Christians for whom mission mainly means conversion to the Christian faith. Added to this is the fact that religion is a very high priority in the lives of most of our member churches. We Germans are far from having such an understanding of mission. For many people here, religion and spirituality are more a private issue which must be respected. That makes it difficult to talk about evangelisation. On top of that, the church world-wide is increasingly exposed to competi-



Photo: EMS/Lohnes

LIVING TOGETHER DESPITE MANY DIFFERENCES

Christians in Indonesia are in the minority. They are dependent on good coexistence with the Muslim majority society. EMS member churches foster dialogue between religions by means of interfaith programmes.



tion from charismatic movements which are very offensive in recruiting members. This is an enormous challenge for established churches.

How will you continue to work on these topics within the EMS?

Neumann: We will submit proposals on further work to the international mission council of the EMS. Independent of the topics discussed, it is still a significant value in its own right when an association manages to deal with such difficult topics together. An association that approaches such topics in an intercultural context and in practice is so important in our present world – a world which is not always at peace.

Ute Dilg-Sassmannshausen



In Indonesia, there are over 300 ethnic groups. Almost 90 per cent of the population are Muslims. In many areas, Christians and Muslims live together in peaceful coexistence. But outbreaks of violence take place every so often. That is when churches and mosques burn. How do we approach this?

The regional church council in North and Central Sulawesi has developed a number of interfaith projects. Two EMS churches, the Evangelical Christian Church in Minahasa (GMIM) and the Protestant Indonesian Church in Donggala (GPID), both belong to the church council there. The aim is to bring young people together from different religious affiliations and ethnic origin, break down prejudices and promote peaceful coex-

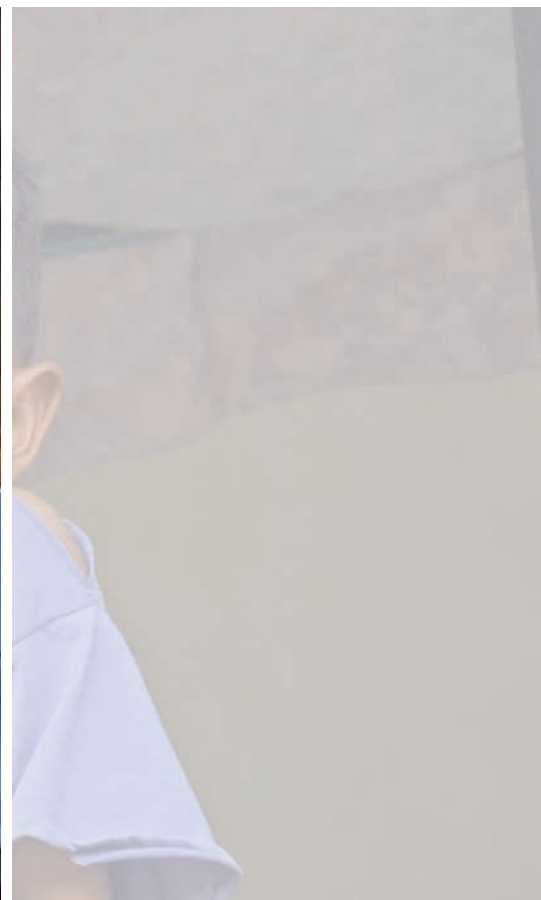
istence in a multicultural Indonesian society.

The church council offers holiday courses which address specific theological issues for students of theology and priests of various religions. Each course is attended by 30 young people who want to experience more about one another and understand the other's religion. What they experience is completely practical. It is vital to talk to each other in order to build a common basis, despite all the differences.

In addition, interfaith camps for young people from different cultural and religious backgrounds take place in the holidays. The programme includes discussion groups, games and fun as well as social activities. ■



Photo: EMS/Waltz



SETTING A SIGN OF SOLIDARITY

Opening up life opportunities for children and young people, supporting the sick, giving a voice to the disadvantaged, promoting dialogue between religions – the member churches of the Evangelical Mission in Solidarity (EMS) are linked by proclamation of the Gospel tied to diaconical and social commitment. With its projects, they set clear visible signs of solidarity, charity and peace.

Do you want to share in this valuable work? Then discover the EMS Foundation for Mission in Partnership.

An endowment in the form of an inheritance or legacy allows you to make a long-term investment in projects of the EMS Fellowship to help shape a more peaceful and just world of the future.



EMS Foundation
Mission in Partnership

YOUR CONTACTS

Jürgen Reichel
General Secretary

Tel.:
+49 (0) 711 636 78-21
E-mail:
reichel@ems-online.org