

Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace: “Walking with Peace, Reclaiming Hope”

- Submitted to the World Council of Churches -

1. General Information

- Date of Application: August 6, 2018
- Title: Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace: Walking with Peace, Reclaiming Hope
- Proponents: Justice and Peace Committee/Reconciliation and Reunification Committee, the National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCCK); Ecumenical Youth Council in Korea (EYCK)
- Beneficiaries: 150 Christian Youth of the NCCCK member churches and organizations/civil society/ecumenical partners
- Implementation Date: August 6-12, 2019
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2. Background

1) The two leaders from North and South Korea governments met on April 27, 2018 in Panmunjom and announced the Panmunjom Declaration. Korean people, together with the whole world, celebrate and affirm the Panmunjom Declaration as it paves a new way to peace, prosperity, and unification of the divided nation. The most significant point of the Declaration is that the two Koreas will work together on ending the Korean War and begin a new era of peace and sharing commitments in ending divisions and confrontation. But we are all aware that it will be a long journey to achieve justice, peace, healing and reconciliation as for a long period the division system has controlled people's minds and life style as well as the governance and policy of the two Koreas.

2) Young Korean men must complete two years' military service. During the military service, they are exposed to distorted information about North Korea and forced to learn antagonism and hatred against North Korea. Furthermore, for the last 10 years two conservative governments did not provide the youth with proper opportunities for

peace education which enables them to understand the truth of the division system, reconciliation and reunification. Therefore it is natural for them to negatively respond to such issues like peace, reconciliation and reunification: North Korea is still an enemy or an object of fear to them. A survey conducted in 2016 by Seoul National University's center for International Studies exactly shows the reality of the youth: "only 7% in their 20s (or 14% in their 30s) acknowledge the necessity of reunification."

For a long time reunification has been justified by "nationalism," but it no longer appeals to the youth. Reunification is a secondary issue to them as the survey shows. Today the youth in South Korea call themselves the "N-generation." It is a coined word referring to a generation that gave up such important things on their life-journey like love, marriage, childbirth, owning a home, career, hobbies, human relationships and eventually hope. The reality they face in their everyday life is a "hell." Therefore, it would be "pouring oil on the fire" if they consider having to bear a huge reunification in the future.

3) The 10th General Assembly of the WCC in Busan declared the "Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace" (PJP) to be the most important follow-up work leading up to the 2021 GA meeting. The PJP aims to be a spiritual movement that inspires the Christian community to participate in "a transformative journey that God invites us to in anticipation of the final purpose for the world that the Triune God brings about." With the spirit of the PJP, the NCKK aims to transform the chronic division system into a permanent peace system for reunification. Especially, as more than 70 years' division has created hatred and fear among young people and made them indifferent to the issue of reunification, it is very urgent for the Korean Church to provide various opportunities through which they can raise their awareness of peace and reunification in Korea.

3. Objectives

- 1) To learn about "peace, healing and reconciliation of Korea" and its connectedness to the global peace issues
- 2) To be attentive to the wounds of the victims of the Korean War and the division system
- 3) To develop a "peace sensitivity" and search for ways to enhance global ecumenical solidarity among the youth
- 4) To develop youth leadership for peace-building in Korea and the world
- 5) To share ecumenical fellowship among the youth and learn about peace issues in the different parts of the world

4. Beneficiaries

- Korean Church: 55 Christian youth aged 20 to 35 (from the NCKK member churches & EYCK)
- Partner Church: 65 Christian youth aged 20 to 35 (from the WCC member Churches, etc.)

5. Project Details

- August-September, 2018: Completion of project concept & preliminary budget
- September-October: Composition of a preparation team
- November-December: Initial research and study session of the preparation team
- December-March, 2019: Recruiting participants

- February-March: Confirmation of the logistics
- May-June: Orientation and study session for the Korean participants
- June-July: Preparation team meetings
- August 6-12: Actual implementation of the project (please refer to page 5 for the daily schedule)

6. Key Places of Pilgrimage

- 1) Kwangju Mangwol-dong 5.18 Memorial Cemetery: Kwangju is the place where people stood up against the military dictatorship in May, 1980. People in Kwangju peacefully demanded democracy, but the military regime brutally suppressed their movement, killing hundreds of the innocent people including youth and students. The military government announced that the mob were instigated by North Korea, and thus condemned them as communist rebels. The Kwangju Massacre is a good example of how the military dictators used “national security” and the “division system” to maintain their unjust power.
- 2) Nogun-ri, Young-dong: Nogun-ri is a place where more than 300 refugees were killed by the machine guns of the US army during the Korean War in 1950. The US claimed that they were not merely innocent refugees, but the North Korean enemy had infiltrated them. In 2001 President Bill Clinton issued a statement of regret, but they have never made an official apology so far.
- 3) Imjingak, Paju and the DMZ: Imjingak is a park located on the banks of the Imjin River in the city of Paju. The park was built to console those from both sides who are unable to return to their hometowns, friends and families because of the division of Korea. Imjingak is where the "Bridge of Freedom" lies. The bridge does actually cross the Imjin river which divides north and South. It is a former railroad bridge which was used by repatriated POWs/soldiers returning from the North. As a finale of the Pilgrimage the participants will cross the DMZ as a symbolic action of reconciliation and peace.

Preliminary Daily Schedule

Time / Day	8/6	8/7	8/8	8/9	8/10	8/11	8/12		
07:00-08:00	Arrival/ Opening Worship	Breakfast	Morning Devotion / Breakfast						
08:00-09:00		Travel to Kwangju	Breakfast				Workshop: “Walking with Peace, Reclaiming Hope”		
09:00-10:00			Pilgrimage of 5·18 Kwangju	Pilgrim of Nogun-ri	Pilgrimage of DMZ	Pilgrimage of Seodeamun Prison History Hall			
10:00-11:00									
11:00-12:00									
12:00-13:00									
13:00-14:00		Pilgrimage of 5·18 Kwangju	Travel to Nogun-ri	Pilgrimage of Nogun-ri	Pilgrimage of the DMZ	Participation in “2019 Sunday Prayer Worship for Peace and Reunification of the Korean Peninsula”	Evaluation		
14:00-15:00				Workshop on the different global peace issues			Closing worship		
15:00-16:00							Departure		
16:00-17:00									
17:00-18:00		Move to Hostel		Travel to Seoul					
18:00-19:00	Dinner reception	Dinner					Departure		
19:00-20:00	Orientation	Workshop		Travel to Paju	Workshop on the different global peace issues	Free			
20:00-21:00	Free	Group session			Group session				
21:00-22:00									