



A Call to Action to the Evangelical Community across Europe

EEA General Assembly, Germany, 8th October 2015

Throughout history, there have been mass movements of people into, out of and across Europe. As a result, we have seen invasion and conflict, prejudice and persecution, changing country borders and evolving and blending rich cultures. The present refugee crisis is frightening for many as rules and laws are laid aside, nations are overwhelmed, and the ethnic and religious make up of countries will change for ever. Many political leaders increase, rather than dissipate the unease.

However, the members of the European Evangelical Alliance rejoice at the spontaneous acts of generosity of so many ordinary citizens in response to desperate need. We are proud of countless brothers and sisters who have joined in this emergency effort as churches, NGOs and in partnership with others. At the end of our General Assembly titled "From Exclusion to Inclusion," we want to exhort the Evangelical community to embrace the stranger, be it the stranger newly arrived from outside Europe or the "stranger" of different ethnicity, culture or faith they have lived near for years.

Therefore,

Motivated and compelled by the love of Christ for us and for every human being, the undeserved grace He pours out to us and to all people,

Knowing we are strangers in this world and convicted by the repeated biblical command to welcome and bless the orphan, widow and stranger and not to be afraid, no matter the circumstances,

We commit ourselves and encourage other Evangelicals to step out of our comfort zones:

Allowing the Holy Spirit to examine and change our hearts and our Christian practice so that we might be cleansed of any fear or prejudice against those we perceive to be different,

Celebrating the cultural diversity of the one Body of Christ but not confusing our own cultural identity with theological essentials in order to be freely able to work, worship and witness with Christians of other cultures, including within our local faith communities. We look forward to our destiny of being a worshipping people from every tribe and tongue in the full presence of God. We rejoice whenever local Church is truly multi-cultural, celebrating our cultural richness.

Praying. We pray for all who flee war and persecution and especially remember our brothers and sisters in Christ. We pray for miracles of protection and provision for those who remain in danger and are destitute in countries of origin, particularly the Middle East. We pray for our nations and politicians, for peace and social cohesion. And we pray for the Body of Christ, that the Lord would give us love, wisdom and courage to offer His love.

Being examples of grace, hope and welcome in the immediate crisis. We call on Evangelical Christians to support financially the humanitarian work carried out in countries of origin. In our region, we call Christians to share the love of Christ through word and deed and generous giving as they work in partnership with others to serve the needs of those coming into our countries. We recognise we are part of an effort shared by the authorities, civil society and other faith communities.

Being peacemakers. We are not naïve about the enormity of the social, political and economic difficulties ahead. We demand a political solution to the conflicts causing the present exodus. Likewise, we stand firmly against the politics of fear and for the politics of grace.

Being good neighbours to all. Refugees will need help to feel at home in our societies. However, our nations are already made up of a blend of cultures, ethnicities and faiths. We commit ourselves to partnering with Christians of all backgrounds to befriend, build community and to witness to all.