

The International Ecumenical Fellowship on a new Continent

Report of an ecumenical Mission to Nairobi, Kenya

The International Ecumenical Fellowship was launched in Africa in 2013, at an ecumenical conference held in Mbarara, Uganda with the theme “Healing Wounded History”. Held under the patronage of the Rt Revd Fred Sheldon Mwesigwa, Anglican Bishop of Ankole diocese, the Bishop Stuart University, Mbarara and the Interreligious Council of Uganda, it was decided to form an Interim Council of IEF Africa – in essence a group taking responsibility for this emerging new dimension of IEF on a new continent; the Interim President, Bishop Fred Sheldon Mwesigwa, the Interim Secretary Dr George Christian Muganga of Bishop Stuart University, and the Interim International Liaison Officer, Revd Fr Martin Onyango MAfr. from Kenya were appointed. It was decided that the second Ecumenical Conference would be held in Kenya

The group under its former name of Nairobi Ecumenical Group [NEG], has been meeting regularly for over twenty years, initially by the example of the Minister of the Presbyterian Church of St Andrew’s and the priest of the church of St Paul’s Catholic Chaplaincy, who met informally for prayer; as the group grew, they started organising twice a year a Round Table for serious ecumenical discussion and learning, and the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity became a regular commitment.

Now the moment has come when, with the formally registered name of the International Ecumenical Movement-Kenya Chapter IEM-K, they have embraced the IEF vision and have accepted to organise the 2nd IEF Conference in Nairobi in May 2016? The way in which NEG embraced the ethos of IEF seems to me today to have been a miracle. Now that I know some of the history of NEG [see Appendix 1], I can see how extraordinarily similar to our own in IEF has been their growth and development as informal, grassroots groups, feeling their way towards a unity of spirit, unity in diversity, perceived by both groups to be the true path to Christian Unity.

The purpose of my trip to Nairobi was to accompany members of IEM-K as they visited the main Church Leaders to enlist their spiritual, prayerful and financial support in organising an international ecumenical conference in Nairobi in 2016. As Fr Martin Onyango, MAfr, is the only member of IEM-K who has experience of the International Ecumenical Fellowship [IEF], it was my role to paint a picture for them of what IEF has become during the nearly fifty years of its existence, its vision, its spiritual development over the years, and the constant challenge, as the membership grows older, of Quo Vadis IEF?

The importance of different elements of Networking

The growth and methodology of both our fellowships is in essence all about networking – making ourselves known by personal encounter and conversation by prayer and worship. This occasion was no exception, best outlined as follows:-

Encounter: Introduction and meeting with Christians at all levels, church leaders, academic teachers, students, as well as with congregations and other ecumenical organisations. All these are crucial to our establishing grassroots ecumenism as lively gospel sharing.

Dialogue: on an official level, but also as very personal and individual exchanges – deep spiritual sharing.

Prayer and Worship: at all times before and after meetings; and particularly richly, of course, when united in ecumenical worship.

Record of events and encounters. This is a synopsis of my full daily journal, available on request.

A welcome lunch was given for me by Njeri Kangethe, Secretary of IEM-K [International Ecumenical Movement – Kenya Chapter], the newly registered name of what was formerly the Nairobi Ecumenical Group. A splendid and joyful afternoon spent sharing our ecumenical experiences and talking about the two weeks to come –GREAT ANTICIPATION – and a wonderful feast prepared by Njeri's sister. The party ended just before 6pm!

Most of the principle members of the group were present:

Chairman: Elder Solomon Gacece, Presbyterian Church of East Africa, [PCEA]St. Andrew's Church, Nairobi; founder leader of the Boys Brigade in 1975; Deputy Team Leader The Association of Evangelicals in Africa; and Executive Secretary of the Youth and Sports Commission.

Secretary: Njeri Kang'ethe, PCEA St Andrew's. Lawyer and Human Rights Consultant and Civic Educator. She is an Advocate of the High Court of Kenya, and a certified International Investigator for Gross Violations of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law; active at St Andrew's Church, Nairobi where she is a Deaconess.

Treasurer: Judge Lee G Muthoga, PCEA St Andrew's. Lawyer, has held the offices of Chairman of the Law Society of Kenya, President of the African Bar Association, Chairman of the African Forum of the International Bar Association, Chairman of the International Commission of Jurists (Kenya Section), and Chairman of the African Network for Prevention of and Protection Against Child Abuse and Neglect. Founder-Director of the Public Law Institute and Director of Liberty International. Since October 2003, Judge Lee Muthoga has served as ad litem Judge in Trial Chamber II of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR).

Convenor of the Conference: Fr Martin Onyango, MAfr.,[Missionaries of Africa] in 2002 he became the first African member of IEF, the only person in IEM-K with experience of IEF.

The other members representing the Protestant, Catholic, Methodist, Baptist, Orthodox, Anglican, Evangelical, Pentecostal and other church traditions, participated in several of the meetings with the church leaders, which covered the next two weeks.

After an introductory business meeting to earmark the different stages of organising a conference, we visited the **Focolare Movement Centre at Mariapolis Piero**, at Thika on the outskirts of Nairobi.

Giovanna and other members of the community welcomed us; had a delightful community lunch with them, a time of prayer, and then some of their multi-national volunteers told us about their experience, and danced for us.

The place is run as a retreat centre, conference centre, and a place of work, with a Nursery school which would be the envy of any parent of my acquaintance. Wonderfully, they integrate children with learning difficulties into normal classes, and the happy atmosphere is a joy to behold.

One of their leaders, **Dr Remy Beller**, a French medical missionary most of his life, from Strasbourg, in retirement is a writer of some wonderful books on African inculturation, [a trendy word in ecumenism today] particularly explaining the deeply rooted spiritual life which existed in Africa long before the Missionary Societies of the 19th century imported Christianity. One of the disservices that colonialism did to the African culture was to deny them this ancient tradition.

An Italian runs the workshop where everything necessary for their different buildings is made - their windows and doors, home designed furniture, stunning wooden crucifixes and other craft objects for sale to the public – and BAMBOO framed bicycles!

They had done their homework and knew in advance that, many years ago, I had had close contact with the Focolare, both in the UK and in Rome, meeting Chiara Lubich on both occasions. What a beautiful site, so close to the city centre, but in fact a haven of calm and peace in the countryside. This could be a possible venue for the conference, although there is not enough accommodation on site. A delightful day, with a great sense of sharing the same kind of spiritual ecumenism.

In just such a united spirit we met with the small **Taize Community, Fr Luc and Fr Denis** – joined in their midday prayer and fellowship over a shared meal. They are already members of IEM-K in which whenever possible they participate actively.

Each day, battling against the endlessly frustrating gridlocked traffic of the city of Nairobi, we met with the leaders of different church traditions: –

His Eminence John Cardinal Njue, Chairman of the Catholic Bishops' Conference;
Metropolitan Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Church of Kenya, His Eminence Dr. Makarios Tillyrides, a Cypriot;
Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Rev'd Julius Guantai Mwamba;
Presiding Bishop of the Methodist Church, Rt. Rev'd Joseph Ntombura Mwaine;
General Secretary of the Association of Evangelicals of Africa, the Rev'd Dr. Aiah Foday Khabenje;
Anglican Bishop of Nairobi, Rt. Rev'd Joel Waweru who interrupted a week's leave to meet us – and, although already after 7pm, picked up the phone to arrange for us the next day to see the **Anglican Primate and Archbishop of Kenya, His Grace the Most Rev'd Dr Eliud Wabukala**.

At this point I must stress the overwhelming sense of privilege I felt at being received by these people, not with any sense of pride, but because we were all welcomed with such warmth and excitement on their part for what we are endeavouring to do; in particular their interest lay in the internationality and grassroots character of our groups. We were listened to, questioned, sometimes quite challengingly, as equal partners in evangelisation. They accepted our challenges to them over the essential necessity for financial, spiritual and prayer support, and contributed greatly with most helpful logistical suggestions. The effect on us was a sense of awe at the generosity of their partnership.

As a start to the second week, we went for the inauguration of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, held at the **Presbyterian Imani Church at King'Ongo parish Nyeri**, about 100 miles north of Nairobi, where I was the preacher. The minister is a most dynamic young woman theologian, **Rev'd Lucy Wambui Waweru**, who, after the service and the usual 'African hospitality', initiated a discussion on ecumenism with members of her congregation and with the director of the Catholic Diocesan Seminary **Rev'd Dr Fr. John Baptista Gichuhi**, who joined us.

This conversation continued over our shared meal, and later at Rev'd Lucy's home, before we had to take our leave in order to fulfil another appointment with **His Grace Archbishop Peter Kairo, Catholic Archbishop of Nyeri, and Chairman of the KBC-Commission on Ecumenism**. It is through his support that we hope to be given funds towards the conference. He had been attending an ordination anniversary celebration way out in the country, but returned early in order to meet us. A small, quiet, humble and holy man, he understood at once the concept of receptive ecumenism, particularly in the dimension of interreligious dialogue; he had been enjoying a very successful dialogue with the Muslims in his area, but was most distressed that, through some incident, these conversations had come to an end. Again, we received huge encouragement and understanding.

Ecumenical Structures

Nairobi is a real hub of ecumenical structures. It is the seat of the **All Africa Conference of Churches [AACC]** where we were most warmly received by the **General Secretary, Rev'd Dr. André Karamaga**, a Rwandan, who had been present at our conference in Uganda in 2013; together with him we met one of my ecumenical heroes, **Rev'd Dr. Sam Kobia**, erstwhile General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, and now, in retirement, has been appointed by the AACC to the onerous position of Ecumenical Special Envoy to Sudan.

Then we met with the **National Council of Churches of Kenya [NCCCK]**, Anglican Chairman **Rev'd Canon Rosemary Mbogo**, General Secretary **Rev'd Dr. Peter Karanja**, and deputy General Secretary **Rev'd Dr. Oliver Kisaka**, himself a longstanding member of NEG. In their enthusiasm they even suggested that they might second a couple members of their staff to assist in the organisation of the conference.

Universities

The universities are a source of students and staff who are potentially important among the people we most wish to target. Several of our members teach at the **Catholic University of East Africa [CUEA]** and at its associated **Tangaza College**. Here we enjoyed a morning with the heads of various departments in the School of Theology, who each gave a report on their students and work that they do; these included Theology, Missiology, University Chaplaincy, Social Ministry in Mission, the Maryknoll Institute of African Studies, Christian Union etc.

This was followed by the **Christian Unity prayer service** organised by CUEA [Catholic University of East Africa] where again, I was the preacher on the theme 'Give me to Drink', [John 4:7]. First we met with the Vice Chancellor and his staff. The service was well attended, and there was a performance given by a Deaf [signing] Choir, which I had heard previously. Movingly there was a standing ovation at the end, only interrupted by the voiced leader explaining that of course they could not hear the applause, but that the accepted response is to wave trembling hands in the air. This we did!

Important Educational Advice to Academics and Publishers

On the way back, I was taken to meet **Jesse Mugambi**, Professor of Philosophy and Religious Studies at the University of Nairobi, of whom I confess I was entirely ignorant – do please look him up in Wikipedia, [I know of no-one else with such a long entry] – what an unbelievably distinguished man! I was terribly tired, and it was quite late too, but I was sitting on the edge of my seat as he spoke of his experience, and of what he holds to be of crucial importance for ecumenism today.

'Mugambi is critical of the idea that the Christianity's demographic centre of gravity has shifted to Africa – an idea that is highly publicized especially by Kwame Bediako in his works. Mugambi contends that the apparent numerical growth of African Christians is not necessarily positive, at a time when there are only a few books authored and published by African Christian theologians. He notes that a significant number of the few books already authored by African theologians are published in the North Atlantic, making them largely inaccessible and too expensive for African Christians. He observes that even the most outspoken advocates of "indigenisation" and "inculturation" have been foreign missionaries to Africa – and not African Christians themselves! The Gospel becomes "rooted" when "the converts live in it in their own lives with full appreciation of their cultural and religious heritage" and not when they theorize about it.' [Wikipedia]

In order to bring this about, Mugambi has started his own publishing company, and it seems that the North Atlantic publishing houses are beginning to realize that all these years, they, through their editing have emasculated the African integrity of their authors – they are likely to accept distribution of

Mugambi's imprint in the future. A thrilling visit, and I am so grateful for having been taken to meet him. We have many friends in common from WCC where he has given so much of his time.

Just two more visits to record – firstly to renew acquaintance with **Rev'd Fr. Dr. Agbonkhanmeghe Orabator, SJ**, a Nigerian, until recently Provincial Superior of the Jesuits in East Africa, and having finished his mandate, is now **Principal of the Jesuit Hekima College**, part of CUEA. We had met last June at the Receptive Ecumenism Conference held at Fairfield University, CT, USA, where he was the outstanding star of the show. Though only in his 4th day in his new job, and only with 15 minutes at our disposal, we had no need of more, as he was already informed by me of the African plans – we have another important supporter.

Second visit was to the Greek Orthodox Church, to visit the **Metropolitan Archbishop of Kenya, His Eminence Makarios Tillyrides**, a Cypriot [now you know why the name!]. In an area of Nairobi where you would not expect to find any such thing, here is a huge campus with church, large Seminary, schools, playing fields, also open for public use, and the Archbishop's residence. We spent the whole day from 11.30-5.30 in conversation, [again we discovered mutual friends; a doctoral student of Bishop Kallistos Ware in Oxford, and studied also with Archbishop Gregorios of Thyateira and Great Britain], sharing a meal, exchanging introductions and ecumenical news with each other, and meeting all 40 seminarians who come from all over Africa. They belong to the Patriarchate of Alexandria and all Africa. They are also strong supporters firstly of NEG and now IEM-K.

The climax of the week was **the Final Service of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**, held at the Missionaries of Africa Parish church of Our Lady Queen of Peace at Mariakani, South B, Nairobi, of which **Fr Martin Onyango, MAfr** is parish priest. It was one of the best attended services of prayer that IEM-K has ever organised and hosted. A sense of deep Christian love and fellowship pervaded the worshippers.

I found myself preaching again – not on the schedule, but the intended preacher, **the Rev'd Dawn Gikandi**, the newly inducted Minister of the PCEA Bahati Martyrs Church was delayed and then stuck in the proverbial traffic jam, so it was suggested that as very few present would have heard me preach at the University, it would be good for me to be invited to repeat my sermon. I was particularly pleased that the most fulsome compliments were given me by the Rector of the Orthodox Seminary, who was present with two other priests and about 25 of the seminarians.

After the service a woman from the back of the church and introduced herself as **Dr Agnes Abuom**, whom I had met at an ecumenical Kirchentag in Munich three years ago. She is now not only the first woman, but also the first African to be **Moderator of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches**, so also a great mutual friend of Dr Mary Tanner, Dr John Gibaut and others of my acquaintance. She is a friend of our Secretary, Njeri Kangethe and had at the last moment found herself free to come. Great celebrations and photos.



Reflection on return

Following the end of the visit, the members unanimously agreed that my visit was not only a great success, but was in many ways an affirmation that the mission of IEM-K has the Lord's seal of approval. In two weeks I had assisted IEM-K to visit the top Church leadership in Kenya and the region, and obtain promises of commitment to IEM-K's work, tasks it had been unable to accomplish for well over two years. The way is now clear for the detailed logistics to be worked out, a task made easier perhaps by the momentum of excitement aroused by our encounters.

There is no doubt in any of our minds that the Holy Spirit has taken a firm hold, and through commitment to prayer, not just by our steering committee, but by volunteers or secondments from all the visits we made, we will see the fruits of our labours.

I must pay tribute to the excellent planning of the programme – yes, there were the inevitable changes in schedule, to be expected with such busy people – most delays were due to the notorious problems of traffic circulation in Nairobi, and it is certainly a lesson in patience, and the power of meditation, to succeed in maintaining sanity when stuck in a traffic jam for 3 hours. Njeri Kangethe, the Secretary of IEM-K manages to combine a busy life as a lawyer and teacher with a consummate skill in writing reports of meetings and circulating the latest amendments to the programme. Infinite thanks are due to her organisation. I should also like to thank the members for their presence with me as support – in particular, Judge Lee Muthoga who was with me on all but two of the visits, and Elder Solomon Gacece too, with the added blessing that each morning he was present at St Andrew's Church at 6am for an hour of prayer, in which I joined on one occasion when, surprisingly, I arrived an hour early for a meeting.

It was a delight for me to find a group of Christians so joyfully committed to a mission – like my fellow members of IEF, none of them in their first youth, but with an enthusiasm and faith necessary to move mountains. They were all the most powerful witnesses of how the Spirit works in those for whom a God of Surprises is the One they want to follow. Open-minded, committed to an every day life of prayer in action, showing themselves to be rich in the fruits of the Holy Spirit, love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control – and generosity in large measure.

As for the Church leaders who received us, I am overwhelmed by their generous welcome and hospitality; by their readiness to listen and respond to us as grassroots Christians in a spirit of equal partnership and encouragement. I am so grateful to all of them for their grace, hospitality and enthusiasm.

My only question is this - would a grassroots ecumenical group such as ours ever have enjoyed the same access and welcome from the hierarchy of our own churches as we were blessed with in Africa? It saddens me to consider the answer as doubtful! Would an ecumenical group of fifty years standing have been graced with such serious credibility?

The German theologian Father Karl Rahner, SJ in *The Shape of the Church to Come* wrote: "The church in the future will be one built from below by basic communities as a result of free initiative and association. We should make every effort not to hold up this development but to promote it and direct it on the right lines."

The French theologian Father Yves Congar, OP in *Lay People in the Church* wrote that Small Christian Communities [and the same could perhaps be written of IEF and IEM-K] are "little church cells wherein the mystery is lived directly and with great simplicity... the church's machinery, sometimes the very institution, is a barrier obscuring her deep and living mystery, which they can find, or find again, only from below."

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APPENDIX

THE INTERNATIONAL ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT – KENYA CHAPTER (IEM-K)

[MAY THEY BE ONE JOHN: 17:21]

OVERVIEW

1. INTRODUCTION

The International Ecumenical Movement-Kenya Chapter (IEM-K) [formerly the Nairobi Ecumenical Group (NEG)] is a grassroots ecumenical fellowship that brings together clergy and lay Christians from the City of Nairobi.

1.1 Background

IEM-K's predecessor, NEG, was born in the early 1990s as a result of a long term fraternal friendship between two neighbours, the Roman Catholic St Paul's University Chaplaincy and PCEA St Andrews Church in Nairobi. In the 1980s, Rev Fr Joseph Donders of the St Paul's University Chaplaincy and the then PCEA St Andrews Parish Minister, Rev Dr George E Wanjau would once in a while, meet over a cup of tea and pray together. This "over the fence" fellowship must have trickled down to their congregants and in 1992, members of the two Churches saw the need to get together and organise a joint service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

The St Paul's Prayer Fellowship which was coordinated by Mrs Wakuraya Wanjohi, took leadership in organising and hosting the activities of the nascent fellowship. Mrs Wanjohi was to later serve as NEG's Secretary for many years and is still an active member of IEM-K. The "getting together" of the PCEA St Andrews and the Roman Catholic St Paul's Chaplaincy faithful worked well and in 1996, the Group decided to organise additional activities at which topics of concern to both Catholics and Protestants were discussed.

In order to regularise the relationship between the two Churches, on 27th February 1997, Rev Dr Isaiah Wahome Muita, the then Parish Minister at PCEA St Andrews, formally "donated" Rev Dr Gershom M Kirika, Elder Solomon Gacece and Deaconess Njeri Kang'ethe to represent the PCEA St Andrews Church at the NEG.

Later, as the Group grew, it incorporated Christians from the Anglican, Methodist, Lutheran, Pentecostal, Greek Orthodox, Orthodox, Coptic and Baptist Churches among many others. Thus began a long and exciting journey of a family that prayed, worked and evangelised the City of Nairobi together to the honour and glory of God.

Under the leadership of its two co-Convenors, Elder Solomon Gacece of PCEA St Andrews and Rev Fr Jan Lenssen of Missionaries of Africa, the Group grew in leaps and bounds. More and more members joined, and the witness of its work was felt within and without the borders of the City of Nairobi.

2. TRANSITION INTO THE INTERNATIONAL ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT – KENYA CHAPTER (IEM-K)

As a Fellowship, NEG had no financial, human or structural resources. This did not stop the Fellowship from doing the work of the Lord, but the oversight of the work, and the responsibility for the bulk of the

financial, structural and administrative support that was needed, fell on the parent Church communities namely St Paul's University Chaplaincy, PCEA St Andrews Church, and the Missionaries of Africa.

As the mandate and scope of the Fellowship's work grew, it became obvious that there was need for the fellowship to come of age, by being registered as a legal entity, capable of raising and managing its own resources, and more importantly, acquiring the requisite corporate character to enable it undertake its ministry of reaching out to others in the city.

2.1 Registration as a Society

In May 2014, the Fellowship hosted a Church Leaders' Prayer Breakfast to brainstorm this new development. The Prayer Breakfast was attended by the Leaders of the main Churches, Para Church Organisations and Church Umbrella bodies domiciled in the City of Nairobi. At the Prayer Breakfast the Church Leaders gathered together, gave the Fellowship the go ahead and the blessings to seek legal mandate to operate as an autonomous society registered under the Laws of Kenya.

On 11th November 2014 the Registrar of Societies, registered the Fellowship as the **International Ecumenical Movement – Kenya Chapter (IEM-K)**, under Certificate of Registration Number 46166. The fifteen initial subscribing members were drawn from all the Churches in Nairobi. The membership continues to grow in leaps and bounds.

2.2 Objectives of IEM-K

The overall goal of IEM-K is to provide a forum for an inter-denominational Christian fellowship. The objectives are:-

- ✚ To promote Christian unity and ecumenism in obedience to the Lord's call contained in John 17:20-21
- ✚ To provide a forum at which Christians from different denominations can meet, pray, work and play together
- ✚ To better understand each other outside of the confines of denominational prejudices
- ✚ To evangelise the city of Nairobi by living a faith that does not shy away from addressing in a practical manner, and from a Biblical perspective, social, political, governance, economic and justice issues that affect the communities we live in.

2.3 Achievements

IEM-K hopes to build on the achievements made by its predecessor NEG, especially in partnering with the larger Ecumenical Family in various initiatives. Some of the highlights of these partnerships are:-

- ✚ In December 2009, on invitation by the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCCK), NEG (now IEM-K) became a member of the NCCCK led Global Christian Forum-Africa (GCF-A) Steering Committee.
- ✚ In October 2011, NEG (now IEM-K) hosted a Tree Planting session and special talk "*Environment and Development with Special Emphasis on Global Warming: The Christian Response*" in commemoration of the life and times of Afrika's own heroine and Nobel Laureate, the late Prof Wangari Muta Maathai.
- ✚ In October 2012, his Grace Archbishop Boniface Lele, late Archbishop of Mombasa and Chair of the Kenya Episcopal Conference Commission on Ecumenism (KEC-CE), and Rev Fr Dr Charles

Odira, Secretary KEC-CE, played host to NEG (now IEM-K) representatives. At this meeting they committed KEC-EC to support and work with NEG (now IEM-K) in the mission of the Church of Jesus Christ which is to convert souls and converse with them in order to build God's kingdom on earth in line with the early Church.

- ✚ In January 2013, when the first ever International Ecumenical Fellowship (IEF) Chapter in Africa was launched in the quiet and serene ambience of Bishop Stuart University (BSU), Mbarara Western Uganda, NEG (now IEM-K) was represented. It was at this global meeting that the idea of having a Kenyan grassroots ecumenical body host a regional conference was mooted.
- ✚ In January 2013, NEG (now IEM-K) hosted Lady Kate Davson the International President, International Ecumenical Fellowship in Nairobi Kenya, who graced with her presence, the 2013 Service of Prayer for Christian Unity held at the St Paul's University Chaplaincy.
- ✚ NEG (now IEM-K) was represented at the 42nd International Ecumenical Fellowship held in Avila Spain from 22nd -29th July 2013. It was at this meeting that the desire to have NEG (now IEM-K) a Kenyan grassroots ecumenical movement host a regional conference was concretised and a tentative date (May/June 2015) set.

2.4 Challenges and Opportunities

IEM-K inherits from NEG a fully functional programme.

In addition to hosting annual Week of Christian Unity Prayer Services and incidental activities, IEM-K holds two Round Table Discussions every year. These 'Round Tables' have addressed issues of concern to the Church and Society. Some of the topics that have been covered are "***Salvation, a Protestant and a Catholic View,***" "***Spiritual Discipline: Worship in Spirit and in Truth,***" "***My Neighbour in the City: Building Christian Solidarity in Nairobi;***" "***New Religious Movements: Challenge to the Churches;***" "***Poverty: A Challenge to Christians;***" "***Christ, the One Foundation of the Church;***" "***Churches Together: Celebrating and Making Visible the Compassion of Christ;***" "***Building a Righteous New Earth: are Christians in the forefront?***" "***The Year of Jubilee;***" "***What Criteria Should Guide a Christian in Electing a Political Leader?***" "***Rising Inequality in Kenya: Can Churches Working Together Make a Difference?***" "***Walking Together with Jesus In Word and Action: Ecumenical Activities in the Nairobi Area;***" and "***Inculcating a Reading Culture: Our Christian Responsibility.***"

These activities must continue to the honour and glory of God.

Of great importance and urgency is that at the 42nd International Ecumenical Fellowship Conference held in Avila Spain from 22nd -29th July 2013, NEG (now IEM-K) was honoured by being requested to host a regional conference. IEM-K has begun working on this and has tentatively planned to convene and host the conference mid June 2016.

PCEA St Andrews continues to give IEM-K a home and hospitality. Missionaries of Africa continue to underwrite IEM-K's expenses. St Paul's Chaplaincy gives IEM-K support in kind. We praise the Lord for this sacrificial giving and stewardship by faithful servants.

However, we must now appreciate that IEM-K has come of age. Although it must remain under the spiritual oversight and authority of the parent Churches, it must of necessity, wean itself from the parent Church communities. IEM-K therefore leaps into the future with few or no resources except willing

hearts, obedience to the Lord's command to "go ye into the world", and faith in a God who owns the cattle on a thousand hills.

2.5 The Way Forward

The challenge which is a great opportunity for growth is to bring the cattle on the thousand hills into IEM-K's *boma*.

IEM-K hopes to do this by enlisting the Churches' partnership in raising requisite resources for the work. The immediate needs being:-

- A fully functional IEM-K Secretariat
- Requisite Human Resources for the Secretariat
- Office Space and Equipment
- Dedicated prayer/spiritual/moral support from the Churches

Is anything too hard for the Lord (Gen: 18:14)?

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