

Report on the KMC-UMC-WMC Round Table for Peace in the Korean Peninsula

Date: 9:00 am to 12:00 pm, 25 March, 2017

Venue: 15th Floor Conference Hall of the Korean Methodist Church Headquarter

Participants: Rev. Chun-Hee Kang (KMC Delegate, General Secretary, General Board of Missions), Bishop Hee-Soo Jung (UMC Delegate, President of General Board of Global Ministries), Mr. Thomas Kemper (UMC Delegate, General Secretary of General Board of Global Ministries), Rev. Dr. J. C. Park (WMC Delegate, President of World Methodist Council), Bishop Yong-Jai Jun (Advisor, Former President Bishop of KMC), Bishop Young-Hwa Kwon (Observer, Chairperson of External Relations, KMC), Mr. Jay-Seung Yoo (Observer, Vice Chairperson of World Methodist Men), Rev. Heung-Gyu Kim (Observer, WMC Council Member, Naeri KMC), Rev. Jun-Ku Cheon (Observer, WMC Council Member, Logos KMC), Rev. Bog-Hyun Shin (Executive Secretary, National Church Mission of KMC), Rev. Steve Emery-Wright (Missionary from Methodist Church in Britain), Rev. Myung-Im Kim (Observer, Southeast Asia Regional Executive, GBGM), Rev. Susan Nam (Facilitator, Executive Secretary of General Board of Missions, KMC), Rev. Paul Kong (Facilitator, Asian Regional Representative of GBGM), Rev. Sang-Hyun Song (KMC Staff, General Board of Missions), Mr. John Lee (Translator, Jungdong First KMC)

The Round Table began with Bishop Hee-Soo Jung's message and opening prayer. Bishop Jung mentioned on the need to discern the times we are living in. Reading from 1 Thessalonians 5:2 "The day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night", he invited the participants to be aware of being "the children of light and children of the day" (1 Thessalonians 5:5) who have been called by God to work for peace.

Rev. Dr. J. C. Park presided over the Round Table. He asked each delegate of three bodies of the Round Table to present on its own involvement with peace and reunification efforts. Rev. Chun-Hee Kang explained the significance of the "Seoul Theological Declaration: Status Confessionis 2016" which was adopted by the 32nd General Conference of KMC in 2016. Per Seoul Theological Declaration, "In the present time of nuclear threats to the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia, we are currently standing at the crossroads between giving our lives to the God of life or the idols of death, i.e., nuclear weapons." And it calls for "renewing the covenant before God in creating denuclearized zone" among the members of KMC, UMC, and WMC.

Mr. Thomas Kemper shared on UMC participation in the Ecumenical Forum for Korean Peace. In "the International Ecumenical Conference on a Peace Treaty for the Korean Peninsula" which was held in Hong Kong from 14-16, Nov. 2016, participants reaffirmed their commitment to "a process for a peace treaty to replace the Armistice Agreement." He pointed out that UMC has been in solidarity with the ecumenical efforts of NCKK and WCC

to “say a clear and emphatic ‘No!’ to war and to the threat of pre-emptive attack.” Mr. Kemper pointed out several things from the General Conference approved statement regarding Korean Peninsula peace stance. In addition, he gave his personal testimony as a German on the story of German reunification. Remembering the day of reunification Nov. 9, 1989, he mentioned that he felt like the “dreamers” in Psalm 126:1, “When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.” Quoting the former German chancellor Billy Brandt, he emphasized the importance of “change through approximation” in building relationship crucial to reunification.

Bishop Hee-Soo Jung reported on the 5 loaves 2 fish movement of KUMC which donated 2.5 million USD to North Korean people as an expression of our solidarity with the poor in relation to Matthew 25:35 (“When I was hungry and you gave me something to eat”). Regretting the division in political ideologies among Korean diaspora churches outside the Korean peninsula, he appealed to maintain good relationship with others, especially the Korean Christian Federation in North Korea.

Rev. Dr. J. C. Park reminded the delegates and participants of the 10.4 statement of North South presidents in 2007 according to which a process of peace treaty should be done by the 4 parties, i.e., North Korea, China, U.S.A., and South Korea. Concerning helping North Korean people, he proposed ‘Visit Christ’ project for sending food, cloth as well as medical aid. Instead of having a condescending attitude to the poor, one should have such an attitude as one visits Christ (Matthew 25:36) He invited Mr. Jay-Seung Yoo to share on his work and experience in relation to peace ministry. Mr. Yoo was one of the leaders of Korean Christian ‘Rice of Love’ movement in 1991. In 1992 5,000 tons of rice was delivered to North Korea. Being the vice president of World Methodist Men, he made a proposal to organize Korean Methodist men for sending food and medicine to North Korea. Concerning the desperate need for medical aid, J. C. Park added that North Korea is one epidemic away from destruction. Former president bishop of KMC Rev. Yong-Jai Jun also shared on his ecumenical work for peace in relation to ‘Tree Planting in North Korea’ movement. 10,000 trees were donated to plant in Najin, North Korea. Rev. Jun proposed for the World Methodist Council to lead the movement to donate 80 million trees which symbolizes the total number of Koreans in the Korean peninsula as well as in Korean diaspora

The delegates of the Round Table have agreed to have the next Round Table at GBGM headquarter in Atlanta Georgia, U.S.A. for two days in the 3rd week of June, 2018. Besides the delegates 6 persons of each body of the Round Table will be invited. The theme is “Christ is Our Peace” (Ephesians 2:14). The agendas are the following: 1. to construct a theology of peace and reconciliation, 2. to discuss on a process of peace treaty, 3. to collaborate in ‘Visit Christ’ project for sending food, cloth, medicine, and trees to North Korea. Mr. Kemper proposed to invite a delegation from North Korean official church. In addition, we should look into possibilities of speaking with the North Korean defectors who have now become Methodist pastors in Korea.