



Christian Conference of Asia

Asia Ecumenical Institute -2019

'Ecumenical Pilgrimage of Struggle for Peace with Justice in Asia'

1 – 30 July 2019 / CCA Headquarters, Chiang Mai, Thailand

1 April 2019

To: Member Churches and Councils of Christian Conference of Asia

Dear Ecumenical Colleagues,

We are pleased to announce the 2019 session of the Asian Ecumenical Institute (AEI), an intensive ecumenical formation training programme of the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA). Member churches and councils of CCA are encouraged to nominate names of suitable candidates to attend the AEI – 2019, which will be held at the CCA Headquarters in Chiang Mai, Thailand from 1 to 30 July, 2019.

The AEI, a month-long ecumenical formation training course, is designed to facilitate and assist prospective Asian church and ecumenical leaders in enhancing their ecumenical engagement which would be helpful for their leadership positions in the future. About 25 participants will be selected from CCA's member constituencies.

The outline and contents of AEI will help participants to envision wider ecumenism, as well as help them understand the concept and scope of ecumenism by being strongly rooted in one's own faith, tradition, heritage, and involve them in the crossing of boundaries across denominational, cultural, social, economic and political strata. The AEI also aims to help the participants expand the understanding of the vision of ecumenism in emerging contexts and seek the breaking up of an exclusive community, leading to a more inclusive human community, as well as the wholeness and integrity of all of God's creation.

This interaction with one another in a setting of common worship, Bible study, social analysis, theological reflection, and communal life together during the month-long experience will be a unique opportunity. The experiences gained from various stages of the academic and practical sessions will equip participants with greater clarity and commitment to a common ecumenical vision.

The living together of participants from various Asian countries in an inter-cultural and inter-denominational setting, worshipping together and learning emerging realities and identifying the ways of developing ecumenical response contextually will be an enriching experience for each participant of the AEI.

Theme

The theme of AEI-2019 will be: *'Ecumenical Pilgrimage of Struggle for Peace with Justice in Asia'*

In the past few decades, societies in Asia have experienced rapid and dramatic changes in their economic, social and political spheres. Despite the diversity, there is a wide array of problems that are precipitating in Asian societies. Armed conflicts and violence, increasing poverty, inadequate health care, economic exploitation, environmental degradation and exploitation of natural resources, militarization, arms build-up, nuclearisation, spread of small arms and light weapons, domination and intervention of major powers from outside the region as well as within the region; ethnic and religious conflicts, communal violence and political unrest; suppression of people's legitimate right to self-determination; lack of rule of law and

democratic governance are part of a series of issues affecting the Asian societies. Also, there are many challenges posed by the new development of conflicts in Asian regions such as the frequent environmental disasters which have affected the life of millions of people and the whole creation. As Paul mentioned “the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now” (Romans 8.22), communities in Asia today lament, suffer and struggle, facing an ever increasing level of multifaceted social, economic, political and security challenges.

The struggle for attaining the goal of peace with justice is a pilgrimage. A pilgrimage is not merely a concept of performing a ritual, or commemoration; it is also a search for truth, connection, transformation and a path leading to peace with justice. In Asia’s pluralistic cultural and religious contexts, pilgrimage has elaborate significance and spiritual values; it is also a journey of search, especially one of exalted purpose or moral significance. In various religious traditions in Asia, pilgrimage is an ongoing process that enables transformation through deep spiritual experiences. The pilgrimage in Asia also has integral components of peace building and nurturing harmony. It is in this context that we need to find the relevance of the struggle for peace with justice as a spiritual journey of pilgrimage.

As a body of Christ, we are called to witness Christ in the midst of increasing painful realities of fragmented communities in Asia today. We are called to commit ourselves to struggle with the contemporary social realities. We are called to take part in a pilgrimage of struggle for peace with justice in Asia. Jesus died on the cross and his suffering and pain signifies the supreme expression of solidarity of God with people’s suffering and pain. God is inviting us to be part of His mission of re-building our community of justice and peace.

It is expected that this month-long ecumenical training programme will empower and equip the participants to witness the Gospel and to participate in a pilgrimage with all God’s people in their struggle for peace with justice.

The main objectives of the AEI aim at:

- training a new group of young ecumenical leaders in Asia, from among men and women, laity, youth, clergy and seminary students who are committed to the ecumenical agenda;
- equipping prospective church leaders with sound theological, socio-political and practical skills with wider ecumenical vision, tools of analysis of Asian reality and development of leadership skills;
- enhancing their understanding and enabling them to be on an ‘Ecumenical Pilgrimage of Struggle for Peace with Justice in Asia’.

Preparation before joining the AEI:

- Reading books/articles on the various topics related to the ecumenical movement as well as the thematic focus of the AEI-2019; and
- Preparation of research papers on a certain theme among the given topics.

Focus of AEI:

- Biblical/Theological reflections on ecumenism and ecumenical movement;
- Analysis on Asian realities on various aspects of the theme: ‘Ecumenical Pilgrimage of Struggle for Peace with Justice in Asia’
- Community Building;
- Leadership training;

- Exposure visits; and
- Sharing research findings and papers on emerging issues in Asia.

Who can apply?

- Men and women, pastors, theological students, church workers, and/or lay leaders belonging to CCA member churches and councils;
- Persons who are between the ages of 25 and 35 years;
- Persons who have more than three years' experience in church/church related ministries/organizations;
- Persons who are interested in widening their ecumenical perspectives and sharing their learnings when they return to their respective countries;

Applications

Download the Application Form (www.cca.org.hk).

Please send applications to CCA along with the following documents:

- A short Curriculum Vitae of the applicant;
- A short description about the ecumenical and church involvement of the applicant; and
- Letter of recommendation from member church /ecumenical organization /institution.

Costs

Board and Lodging per student for one month	- U.S. \$	2,650.00
Registration Fee	- U.S. \$	100.00
Tuition fee and exposure visits	- U.S. \$	700.00
Total	- U.S. \$	3,450.00

Scholarship / Travel bursaries

CCA will offer scholarships to deserving applicants who are seeking grants to cover the expenses fully or partly. Limited travel grants will also be made available for candidates applying from South and South East Asian countries. Participants from East Asia, Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia are encouraged to find suitable partner churches/organisations to pay for their board and lodging expenses or travel costs.

Completed applications for the AEI 2019 should be submitted no later than 10 May 2019 through email: cca.aei@gmail.com or fax: + 66 53 247 303.

Selection will be based on competence, gender and confessional balances, sub-regional representations, and ability to communicate in English, and ability to contribute and participate actively.

We look forward to receiving your nominations.



Mathews George Chunakara
General Secretary