

WCC moderator reflects on Reformation in today's world



Dr Agnes Abuom visited the new Sami alter in Nidaros Chatedral in Trondheim. This alter was consecrated on the 6th of February. Photo: Berit Hagen Agøy/Church of Norway

04 August 2017

Dr Agnes Abuom, moderator of the World Council of Churches (WCC) Central Committee, offered her reflections on the concept of reformation at a seminar during St Olav's Festival in July.

Olavsfestdagene – Olav's Days – is a festival held annually in Trondheim, Norway, and named for the eleventh-century Norwegian king Olav II, also known as St Olav.

“Reformation processes can be peaceful or violent as was witnessed in Western Europe during the Protestant Reformation,” she said. “Today we experience low-profile conflicts within the church when change is undertaken and even departure of members who do not accept the proposed reforms.”

Throughout the history of humankind, she continued, change is directed, informed and even initiated by pull and push factors within the socio-economic and political landscape. “Five hundred years ago, the driving factors for Reformation included spiritual, ethical, political and sociological aspects,” she said.

A bird's eye view of our current context today may be slightly different from five hundred years ago but many of the issues of the time have metamorphosed in our church structures around the world, Abuom added.

"I therefore submit that reformation today is an imperative and our church, political and economic context dictates the same," she said. "It is an imperative because we have practices, beliefs, systems and policies in our churches and society that call us to protest and to re-order our way of life, relationships and use of power."

Reformation in the church today continues to bear the mark of overcoming the wounds of division and conflict, she concluded. "Therefore, through the pilgrimage of justice and peace, we can argue that today we can revisit the wounds and pain but seek to transform them as is already being done through the various ecumenical dialogues."

[Talking Points shared at a seminar during St Olav's Festival in July 2017](#)

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