



## “ WE OBSERVED HIS STAR IN THE EAST;”

*Invitation to pray together for unity and renewal*

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (WPCU) is an annual celebration which is traditionally held every year between January 18<sup>th</sup> (the Feast of the Confession of St. Peter) and January 25<sup>th</sup> (the feast of the Confession of St. Paul). But churches in the global south may move the observance to an appropriate week during the year, relevant to their respective contexts. During the WPCU Christians from all the different churches are invited to engage with each other to pray for the unity of all Christians, to reflect on scripture on a particular theme, and to participate in ecumenical worship and fellowship.

The year 2022 theme, “We observed his star in the East” (Mt. 2:2) was developed by the Middle East Council of Churches based in Beirut, Lebanon. Today, more than ever, in the world and especially the Middle East needs a heavenly light to accompany people to a renewal future. As it is stated in one of the meditations prepared by the ecumenical group in Beirut; the image of the star guiding the Magi, can be an enduring symbol of hope, of a light shining even when all is dark. In the midst of humanity’s darkness the star from the East shone...Throughout the ages, and ever since the star first appeared, the world has come to know through the lives of Christ’s followers the hope that is inspired by the Holy Spirit... Despite the vicissitudes of history and the changing of circumstances, the Risen One continues to shine, moving within the flow of history like a beacon guiding all into this perfect light and overcoming the darkness which separates us from one another. The desire to overcome the darkness that separates us compels us to pray and work for Christian unity.” Faced with the current Covid19 pandemic situation, Christians here would most probably be observing the WPCU in different cities and states via a virtual platform. The dates and times of the WPCU event will be made known through the different media platforms used by the respective churches.

As we contemplate the wise men who came to pay homage to the Christ-child and opened their treasures to offer him gifts, we are likewise challenged in our day and time, to be Christ’s instruments of unity and reconciliation, offering each other the treasures of our spiritual traditions, without losing sight that there is one Lord, and Saviour, who call us into the one body, which is His Church. Let us then prepare to join together in ecumenical solidarity, to move from the sin that divides us and in common obedience turn to Christ, our Redeemer. Such obedience revives, heals and reconciles everything that is broken or wounded in us, around us, and among us as Christians. With the blessing of Christ, who calls into unity in the one body, may the 2022 WPCU inspire and motivate us to work together to renew the earth, led by Spirit, and to ensure life in its fullness for all of God’s children now and for the coming generations.

Follow the Light Christ has planted in your hearts and let it shine with faith, hope and love to all people and communities around us.

*Yours ecumenically in- Christ,  
Rev. Dr. Hermen Shastri*

## VATICAN ASKS BISHOPS TO INVITE LOCAL PROTESTANT AND ORTHODOX LEADERS TO PARTICIPATE IN SYNODAL PATH

Vatican City, Jan 18, 2022.

The Vatican has issued a letter asking Catholic bishops to invite local Orthodox and Protestant leaders to participate in the diocesan stage of the two-year process leading to the 2023 Synod on Synodality. Cardinal Mario Grech, the general secretary of the Synod of Bishops, and Cardinal Kurt Koch, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, wrote a letter together asking Catholic dioceses to embrace the “ecumenical dimension” of the synodal process. “The dialogue between Christians of different confessions, united by one baptism, has a special place in the synodal journey,” said the letter highlighted by the Vatican on Jan. 17. “Indeed, both synodality and ecumenism are processes of ‘walking together.’” Offering “some practical suggestions to ensure the ecumenical dimension of the synodal journey,” the cardinals encouraged bishops to reach out to leaders of other Christian communities in their area. “.National bishops’ conferences are likewise asked to invite representatives from other Christian communities and national councils of churches to participate in the synodal process. The Vatican has asked all dioceses to participate, hold consultations, and collect feedback on specific questions laid out in synod documents. At the end of the current process, an assembly of the Synod of Bishops is scheduled to take place in Rome in October 2023 to produce a final document to advise the pope.

### CCM DIARY

1. CCM EXCO MEETING  
2ND MARCH 2022
2. BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEETING  
3RD MARCH 2022
3. CCM 17TH TRIENNIAL GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY 26-28TH APRIL 2022  
(via Zoom)

### PRAYER FOR THE UNFOLDING TENSE SITUATION IN UKRAINE

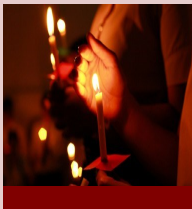
“As we follow the news of the mad progression towards war, we plead for a different logic than one based on geopolitical competition – a logic that considers the death and suffering that any armed conflict would inevitably visit on the children, women and men of Ukraine,” said Sauca. “We pray for a change of hearts and minds, for de-escalation, and for dialogue instead of threats.”

God’s people – and members of the ecumenical fellowship – find themselves on both sides of the current confrontation, added Sauca. “But our God is a God of peace, not of war and bloodshed,” he said. “Though the things that make for peace may be hidden from the eyes of those driving the march to war, we pray that they may yet be opened, and that peace may yet prevail.”

-Rev. Prof. Dr Ioan Sauca, on behalf of WCC member churches throughout the world



### SOLIDARITY WITH VICTIMS OF ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE



**Candlelight Vigil on Sunday,  
13th February 2022 at the  
Multi Purpose Hall,  
Council of Churches Malaysia  
26 Jalan Universiti, Petaling Jaya**

**from 8pm to 10pm (Registration starts at 7.30pm).**

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we have only 100 seats onsite and we appreciate if you could fill in the Google form

<https://tinyurl.com/and5kaiz>

as soon as possible before 31 January 2022 as seats are limited. We are looking forward to see you and will be very honoured if you will grace us with your presence in the Multi Purpose Hall that day.

#### Why a Candlelight Vigil?

1. To remember Raymond Koh, Amri Che Mat, Joshua Hilmi & Ruth Sitepu and other victims of enforced disappearance.
2. To stand in solidarity with the families.
3. To speak in one voice and through their presence show the government that they do not condone extralegal and extrajudicial acts.
4. To demand justice for the victims and families of the abducted.

We also hope that churches will encourage their members to join the livestream event (Youtube) and also to pray for the victims and their families on Sunday, February 13, 2022.