



## **Cevaa Executive Council** **Sète, France – 4<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> April, 2022**

### **Final Communiqué**

The Executive Council of Cevaa met in Sète, France, from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup> of April, 2022. It was the first “face-to-face” meeting of the Council elected by the General Assembly in October 2021. As the President of the Community, Rev. Michel Lobo, was not able to travel, the Council was held under the chairpersonship of the Vice-President, Rev. Eléonore Bouanga Kissadi. Another member of the Council, Rev. William Jourdan, also was absent for family reasons, therefore part of the sessions - including the closed one - were organized by videoconference. The Secretariat and the members of the Council present in Sète were joined by the usual guests, the General Secretary of Défap and the Director of DM, and by the elected General Secretary, Rev. Claudia Schulz, who will take office on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September, 2022.

Each morning before work began, one of the participants guided the Council into a moment of contemplation. The meditations shared during this session were based on the following texts: Psalm 8: 3-4; Isaiah 40: 31; Psalm 27: 4; Psalm 145; Deuteronomy 6: 4-9; Luke 11: 33-36; Matthew 6: 28-34; 1 John 3: 19-20; Philippians 2: 3-8; Mark 4: 35-41.

This Council meeting began with a session of theological empowerment, led by the Executive Secretary in charge of the Activities and Youth Pole, Rev. Omer Dagan. The Council worked on the recurring topics of the past April sessions, as well as on some specific points. It adopted the minutes and checked the proper execution of the decisions of both October 2021 Council sessions; it adopted the minutes and checked the proper execution of the decisions of the 2021 General Assembly; it adopted the minutes of the January 2022 Bureau meeting. After receiving the activity reports of the General Secretary and of the Executive Secretaries, the Council started to work on the thematic and specific files.

#### **Projects and Exchanges**

Once again, this year, the Council was able to validate a dozen new projects, financed by the funds provided by the OPM Office, Otto-Per-Mille, organ of the Waldensian Evangelical Church in Italy. These projects focus on the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, on providing support for the elderly and disadvantaged, on other themes related to ecology and food security, and also on the aid to life in violent societies or in the face of pandemics.

As in previous years, some projects could not be validated, either because of the lack of available funding, or failure to meet the eligibility criteria for Cevaa projects.

Regarding the exchange of persons, the Council, in response to a decision made by the 2021 General Assembly, appointed a team to reflect and work on the exchange of persons, with the aim of coming up with concrete proposals for the future of exchanges and envoys to the next 2023 General Assembly.

#### **Activities and Youth, training and scholarships**

This year, the Council awarded only two (2) new scholarships, taking into account the current commitments. It also approved three (3) projects of a religious nature.

Moreover, the Council validated four (4) Youth projects, mainly youth exchange projects between several Churches or regional community projects.

#### **Health-Solidarity Project**

The Council received the report of the Health mission leader, who presented her activities related to phases 1 and 2 of the Health-Solidarity Project and proposed, in a framework document, a new cycle, namely phase 3 of the Health-Solidarity Project (PSS3). The Council unanimously approved this third phase and appointed an Operational Technical Committee (CTO) to study future Health projects. These will need to be validated by the Council, which represents a new task for the Council in the future.

### **Renewal of mandates**

During a closed session, the Executive Council decided to renew for a period of three years the mandate of the Health mission leader, Dr. Mathilde Guidimti, in order to carry out phase 3 of the Health-Solidarity Project.

In this session, the Council also renewed the mandate of the Executive Secretary in charge of the Projects and Exchange of Persons Pole, Mrs. Anne-Sophie Macor, for a third and final four-year term.

### **Communication and Cevaa Jubilee**

The Council received the report of the Communication mission leader, who presented an overview of her activities during the past six months, and during the period of the Cevaa Jubilee. The Council decided that the next session of the Council, to be held in October 2022, will focus on the communication strategy of the Cevaa Community.

### **Finances**

In accordance with the new French accounting rules in force since 2020, the Council adopted the 2021 annual accounts, which are showing an excess profit of €43,597. It was decided to make a proposal to the 2023 General Assembly for the excess profit to be allocated as a retained income.

In addition, the Council, aware of the uncertainty regarding the development of the Community's finances, decided to appoint two groups to reflect and work on financial matters: the first one will work on the revenues and the contributions from the Churches in order to propose new financial guidelines to the 2023 General Assembly; the second one will focus more specifically on the budgetary distribution of the various Cevaa activities after the 2023 General Assembly.

### **Specific topics of the session**

With the start of a new Council's mandate, the Executive Council adopted a document on the "Responsibilities of the various members of the Bureau". The Council expressed its interest in "inclusive language" and appointed a working team to make proposals in order to possibly introduce inclusive language in all Cevaa texts (official ones and others).

This Council also responded to a concern of the former Council by designating a working team on the question of the periodicity of Cevaa General Assemblies. Finally, in response to a demand from the 2021 General Assembly, the Council chose a theme of Shared Action: "Inhabit the creation otherwise", and appointed a team in charge of developing this theme, for proposal to the 2023 General Assembly.

### **Community solidarity**

The Executive Council decided to respond to the call for help of the FJKM, the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar, severely shaken by two cyclones in January and February, by granting the Church an emergency aid of €5,000, along with a letter of fraternal support.

Throughout the session, the prayers of the Council were extended to the Member-Churches that remain in turmoil, and also to the two Council members who were absent from the session, and to their families.

### **Thanks**

The Executive Council thanked the General Secretary, Rev Célestin Gb. Kiki, who will complete his third and final term on August 31, 2022, after 13 years of service. The Council expressed its great gratitude to the outgoing General Secretary, offering him a book bearing the farewell messages of the members of the Council.

Rev. Célestin Gb. Kiki took the opportunity to thank his wife and children, the various Presidents of the Cevaa, the members of the successive Councils, his colleagues of the Secretariat, as well as the various General Secretaries of the Défap, of DM and of ecumenical Organizations, as well as the leaders of the Churches. Commenting on his record, he referred to two biblical texts: Luke 17, 10 and 1 Cor. 3, 6-8. He urged the members of the Council and the future General Secretary to keep the flame. For him, one page closes and another one full of hope opens.

### **Closing**

The Vice-President closed the session by quoting Psalm 116 v. 12-14 and thanking all Council members, guests and the Secretariat team, for their presence and availability. She scheduled the appointment for the next Council meeting, to be held in October 2022 as a "face-to-face" meeting or by videoconference.

The Secretariat, 14<sup>th</sup> April, 2022.