



International Federation of Free Evangelical Churches

THE PUNE DECLARATION 2018

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF FREE EVANGELICAL CHURCHES – IFFEC GENERAL ASSEMBLY, PUNE/INDIA 24-28 SEPTEMBER 2018

90 leaders from 25 countries were gathered for the IFFEC General Assembly in Pune, India, with the theme “Free and United – Unlocking our Potential”.

We want to express thanks to Hindustani Covenant Church for being our host during the days in India. They also gave us a firsthand exposure to the Indian reality and their ministry to the people in need, challenging us to be “salt and light” in a fractured world. We ask our Lord Jesus Christ to bless them and to guide them in their work to expand the Kingdom of God in India and around the world together with other denominations.

We have come together to know and understand each other better and to practice freedom and unity. The balance of freedom and unity is biblical and at the same time relevant in the 21st century. With this declaration we want to share with our churches some lessons learned and some challenges from our time together.

The purpose of IFFEC is described in the mission statement of IFFEC as follows:

We are a growing network of national churches, united in Christ to glorify God by serving member federations as they equip and develop healthy churches.

Free and United historically – our roots

Historically “free” has been understood as freedom from the state and the state/majority church, freedom to celebrate the Lord’s supper with believers, freedom in regard to baptism, freedom to interpret the word of God within an evangelical frame, and freedom of conscience.

Free and United today – our reality

Within IFFEC personal faith in Jesus Christ and fellowship in faith and service are major issues. This does not mean other issues are unimportant, but they are subordinate.

As churches we are united in Christ to proclaim the good news to all human beings.

Christian unity and freedom are God’s gifts. And it is our crucial responsibility to maintain their integrity within IFFEC. This theological balance is relevant to a world longing for freedom and unity at the same time. The different cultures around the globe can be touched by

the focus that IFFEC has on freedom and unity, and thus gives attraction and meaning beyond IFFEC.

A biblical and modern definition of the concept of free and united – with the gospel of Jesus Christ at its center – provides a theological base for a vibrant movement:

- We are a contemporary body of national churches.
- We are a growing network.
- We benefit from each other by giving and receiving.
- We have freedom on a national level to adapt the principles to the culture we belong to.
- We strive for intentional openness towards churches in the Global South, since the gravity of Christianity has already moved to the south and east of the globe.

Unlocking our potential of being Free and United – our future

If IFFEC is to thrive into the future it should not only be based upon historical roots. However, the spiritual roots of IFFEC do nurture. God captivated the hearts of early IFFEC leaders for a fellowship that is centered in:

- Devotion to Christ.
- Scripture as the only authority for faith and life.
- Mission to a seeking and broken world.
- Helping one another.
- Practicing reconciliation in a fractured world.

If IFFEC sees its future in this way, IFFEC stands ready for our most fruitful days ahead.

Commitments

The discussions during the General Assembly led to a decision to organize smaller groups that meet regularly to discuss relevant theological issues and topics, to consider challenges posed by the youth leaders on behalf of the youth, and to think strategically regarding cooperation in God's mission in the world.

We commit ourselves:

- To work for freedom and unity, as one body of Christ, in a fractured world.
- To network with other leaders, partnering in ministry ventures, sharing resources and challenging each other in theological thinking.
- To strive toward greater diversity among representatives in our networks globally and regionally.
- To seek a growing unity, striving to include more IFFEC- minded churches globally, especially in regions where IFFEC's presence is non-existent or weak.

We are confident that IFFEC has the potential of having an even greater impact in the world than it has ever had before!

Participants in the IFFEC General Assembly in Pune, India 28th of September 2018

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