

Greetings to Hindus on the occasion of Diwali

Greetings from the WCC general secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit to Hindus on the occasion of Diwali.

22 October 2014

Dear Hindu friends,

On the occasion of Diwali, the World Council of Churches (WCC) offers you greetings of joy and good will. It is our wish that this festive season be a time of abundant peace, prosperity and happiness to you, your families and your communities across the world!

Commonly known as the festival of lights, Diwali celebrates the dispelling of despair and darkness within human hearts and lives and the overcoming of evil by good. That evil will not have the final say and that there is the hope of transformation in the face of adversity are integral aspects of a much-needed message of life for our times. The message of Diwali has the potential to ignite sparks of hope and joy in the hearts and minds of people across the globe. We sincerely hope that this will be the case.

The WCC, which is a global fellowship of Christian churches spread across 110 countries, cherishes the relationship that our churches in many parts of the world enjoy with our Hindu brothers and sisters. We believe that it is through the strengthening of such inter-religious relationships that peace and justice are possible in our world today. In a world of increasing fragmentation, the necessity for religious communities to come together in a spirit of solidarity and cooperation and to work toward the common good is increasing each day. In such a world it is important for Hindus and Christians to eschew any spirit of hostility, to embrace a spirit of hospitality, and to move together along the paths of justice and peace.

Following its 10th Assembly held in Busan, South Korea last year, the WCC resolved to understand its presence and activity in our world today in terms of a “pilgrimage of justice and peace.” We make our journey alongside other pilgrims from different faiths who are already in a quest for justice and peace. Recognizing our common humanity as a gift from the divine, and in a spirit of openness and oneness, the WCC seeks to engage in dialogue and service with people of different religious traditions for the service of God’s creation, especially in matters relating to human rights and climate change. In this regard we consider the relationship between Christians and Hindus to be important and look forward to strengthening our relationship further.

As you light your lamps of celebration to celebrate Diwali - the festival of lights - we pray that lamps of joy and peace, lamps of friendship and fellowship, and lamps of love and hope be lit in our human hearts this festive season and always. May God, the source of light and life, illumine our hearts, minds and lives now and always, so that we may together strive for the greater common good of all.

With very best wishes for a joyful celebration,

Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit
WCC general secretary