



Gemeinschaft Evangelischer Kirchen in Europa (GEKE)  
Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE)  
Communion d'Eglises Protestantes en Europe (CEPE)

European elections 4 to 7 June 2009

# Strengthening Democracy in Europe

Pulpit declaration and Prayer of the Community of  
Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE) for Pentecost or  
Trinity 2009





EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

## **Pulpit declaration for Pentecost or Trinity**

### **European Elections 4-7 June 2009: Strengthening Democracy in Europe**

Between 4 and 7 June the elections to the European Parliament will take place in the member states of the European Union. The European Parliament represents citizens at a European level. Delegates from 27 countries work together in it in 23 languages.

Many people complain that the work of the European institutions is impenetrable. However, the European Parliament is the institution whose members are chosen by the citizens themselves and through which they can exercise influence on European politics in a direct way. In the view of the churches, for many years good and substantive work for people in Europe has been done there.

Today many political questions are decided at a European level: for the solution of the financial and economic crisis we need solidarity between the European states. Peace and security in Europe can be secured only with one another and not against one another. Only together can we prevent climate change. Particularly in times of crisis it will be important for us to help those in need. Responsibility for others may not stop at national frontiers.

In the "Charta Oecumenica" the churches of Europe together state: "We are convinced that the spiritual heritage of Christianity

constitutes an empowering source of enrichment and inspiration for Europe. On the basis of our Christian faith we work together for a humane, socially conscious Europe in which human rights and the basic values of peace, justice, tolerance, participation and solidarity prevail.”

This year we celebrate the 20th anniversary of democratization in Central and Eastern Europe. The right to be able to vote freely was fought for in these countries with much courage and personal commitment. Democracy lives by the involvement of men and women. That is true today as it was 20 years ago. Therefore we ask you to go to vote at the European elections.

Vienna, April 2009

The Presidium of the CPCE

## **Prayer for the European elections 4 to 7 June 2009**

Lord, at this time we celebrate Pentecost. We celebrate the way in which you have united men and women of different origins and different languages in your church. In the church we experience how men and women become one in your fellowship, beyond all boundaries.

So we are grateful when in the world, too, people find one another beyond boundaries. We are grateful for the process of European union, which has also made friends out of enemies. We pray that people in Europe may continue along the way of reconciliation and peace.

We pray for those in Europe who at this time are in distress. For those who are affected by the financial and economic crisis, who are worried about their work, their very existence. Help us to stand together in difficult times and not to close our eyes to the needs of others.

We pray for those who come to us as strangers, from other countries of Europe or other parts of the world, because they are seeking work or protection from persecution. You have asked us to make friends of strangers (Lev.19.33-34). Help us to find a place for them in your church where they are safe.

We pray for those who bear political responsibility: in our community, in our country, in Europe. Strengthen them with your

Spirit, that they may make the right decisions when facing difficult challenges. Help us not to leave them alone with their responsibility but to support them and to strengthen them in their work for the common good.

You have asked us to “seek the welfare of the city... and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare” (Jer. 29.7). So we pray to you for the welfare of our community, our country, of Europe and the world. Help us, so that the elections to the European Parliament contribute to strengthening democracy in Europe and promoting responsibility for the peace and well-being of all. Amen.

## **Information on the European work of the churches**

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The ecumenical organizations represented in Brussels have produced a guide to the European elections for churches and communities. You can obtain this guide from the Church and Society Commission of the Conference of European Churches or download it from the CEC website.

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