

# UNMASKING EMPIRE



# Foreword

It is eight years since CWM produced its theological statement in 2010 on Mission in the context of Empire. This critique has been at the heart of CWM's programmes ever since and shaped so much of our work and witness. It has put CWM at the forefront of the ecumenical community as we have pushed forward a vision of mission that many find inspiring and others uncomfortable.

The conditions which led us to this theological statement then continue to define our global and local realities now. Inequalities of wealth have spiralled. The ecological crisis deepens. Conflict is rising between nations, religions and communities. Intolerance is precipitating violence and oppression, especially of vulnerable people.

In my address to the General Assembly of the Council for World Mission in 2016, I spoke of these challenges in the context of Hope and Healing. In order for us to offer ourselves as a balm of healing, we cannot ignore the forms of systemic, structural, ideological and pervasive violence that Empire employs to dominate, destroy and dehumanize. This healing hope filled vision invites us to be fearless as we enter into vulnerable spaces that are occupied by the violence, threat and intimidation of Empire so that we can speak the name of Jesus in ways which bring peace and transformation.

As we come to the end of a strategic plan that came from this theological statement we want to share again the key elements of this theology to assist the critical part our members and partners will play in imagining the next strategic plan. We will create a number of opportunities to reflect on where the Spirit is leading us now and how the agenda of mission in the context of Empire needs to develop.

I am grateful to the Mission Development team for producing this timely piece. I invite you to take the time to engage with the various manifestations of Empire as revealed in the document. It is my hope that it will equip you to see the signs of Empire at work within your context and alert us to the Spirit of Jesus showing Christ's alternative community amongst us.

**Rev Dr Collin Cowan**

General Secretary for Council for World Mission  
Pentecost 2018

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# A Summary

The use of the term '**Empire**' is a way to name powers at work in our world which are not located in one country under one government, but in many places, locally, nationally and globally. It is a **concept** which helps us see manifestations of power and their connections in history and today.

**Empire is all around us.** We live in the culture of Empire because it locates itself in all aspects of our life and world. It is present in our political, economic, ecological, social, legal, religious, personal, relational, biological, sexual, spiritual lives. The culture of Empire is oppressive and destructive. Some of the outcomes of Empire's power and presence in our lives include **economic injustice, climate change, patriarchy, conflict and xenophobia.** As we become alert to the concept of Empire, we will start to glimpse it in our own context and communities.

All empires desire obedience and control. As such, **asking questions** becomes an important way to identify the culture of Empire around us, whether it is in our communities or our churches. Questions like: 'In whose interests is this being done?' 'In whose interests is money being spent?' 'How is difference treated?' 'How is dissent treated?' Answers to questions like these will begin to identify how Empire is present, assuming you can even ask such questions.







**Empire is the context for mission.** Empire destroys all that God creates. Empire oppresses all who God seeks to liberate. Empire distorts the vision of life in fullness Christ offers. Empire seeks to make God useful to Empire and resists and silences God and the prophets God calls when they are not useful. Therefore, God's people are part of an uprising of God's life and love against Empire. Empire is the context for mission because it is the context that shaped the Bible and it is the power that thought it could put Jesus to death. This is the struggle God joins on the side of those Empire despises and destroys. And God calls the church to this side also.

CWM understands that we are **Living under Empire and beyond Empire.** There are places and people who seek to be different, who are countering Empire. Church is called to be one of them. The work of CWM is to continue exploring how to be these alternative communities, who can embody the new heaven and earth which God is bringing amongst us already. If people want to see life beyond Empire they can certainly see it in Jesus. They should be able to see it in us too. But, so often we are compromised to the cultures of Empire. CWM's work as a partnership of churches is to call each other to Christ's side and Spirit, to choose life over death and discover the ways, like the early church, of being missional congregations in the context of empire, who share the Good News of Jesus through bringing hope, healing and change.



# Empire as a concept

Many have difficulty understanding our use of the term 'Empire' because we usually look at the world through the frameworks of the nation state. 'Empire' has to have some shape in political geography. For example, the British Empire was centred on London and extended the national boundaries and interests of the British nation, even though it was in the territories of Africa, Asia etc. Thus, we look for the national manifestation of the beast we term 'Empire' and cannot readily see it and are doubtful then about the existence of this 'Empire'.

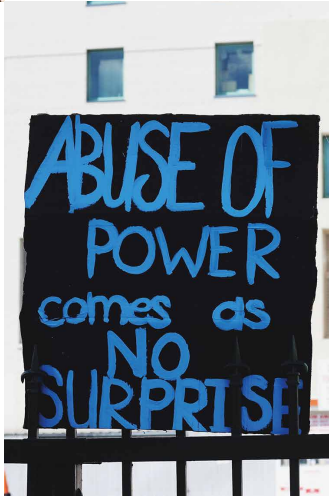
Ironically since the fall of the British Empire the nation state has become less and less significant in the operation of power, wealth and authority. In some cases, this has been to allow accountable inter-national structures to emerge, like the UN or the EU or in trading blocs like ASEAN etc. But, in many ways the authority of national states is overtaken by the powers of non-accountable international structures, like Transnational Corporations who dictate terms for their investment in a nation, or bodies like IMF which impose regulations and economic models without democratic mandate. There are still nations who impose their power internationally, like the US and China, but without seeking to govern such nations directly.



Empire is a way to speak about these powers and operations of power. While this dispersed multi centred form of Empire is distinct to our time, the term also helps us see continuities with its antecedents. The Empire we speak of hasn't fallen out of the sky but is part of a history of Empire and empires. So, we use this term not to define a political geography like the US or Singapore, **but as a concept to name how power operates and who for and against in the world today.**



As CWM has looked at the world, it has discerned forces and interests that are connected in their desire to control, profit, occupy and exploit peoples, planet, minds, bodies and allegiances. In a world of national differences, global movements nevertheless exert power and influence which destroys the earth, divides peoples and damages the most vulnerable. This is not accidental or unintentional. It is deliberate and planned. These forces and interests are political, economic, financial, military and cultural, and also religious. They might be disconnected in geography but have a connection in intention and interest.



These connected forces are what we name Empire. It brings death and destruction to the many and wealth and security to the few. Empire makes itself most evident in how power is used and profit made and for whom. Empire enables us to name the contested space between God and the world, for this is not the world as God wants it, not the fullness of life for all that Christ promised, nor the vision of shalom inspired by the Spirit. This contested space is where God enters in mission and calls others to share in counter-creating the world beyond Empire.





# Empire all around us

We all live within the boundaries of the Empire. The power of Empire is evident from the global to the personal. Its forces and powers affect our national governments, economies and systems. They shape if we have employment and in what way this employment rewards us. They shape our freedoms or lack of them.



They commodify us and determine if we are 'worthwhile' human beings and if our lives and bodies are our own. They make divinely created persons, species and territories 'objects' who can be used and exploited as the Empire needs and dictates - be it for profit, pleasure, convenience or security. They seek to make God in its image, and distort our image of God, such that we have learned to think of God as an Emperor, as male, because this is how Empire brands power and us as its slaves. Empire makes use of 'God' for as long as the idea of God sanctions or leaves unchallenged the power and interest of Empire. It will look to co-opt and colonise rival and counter powers and then dehumanise or destroy them if they cannot be co-opted.



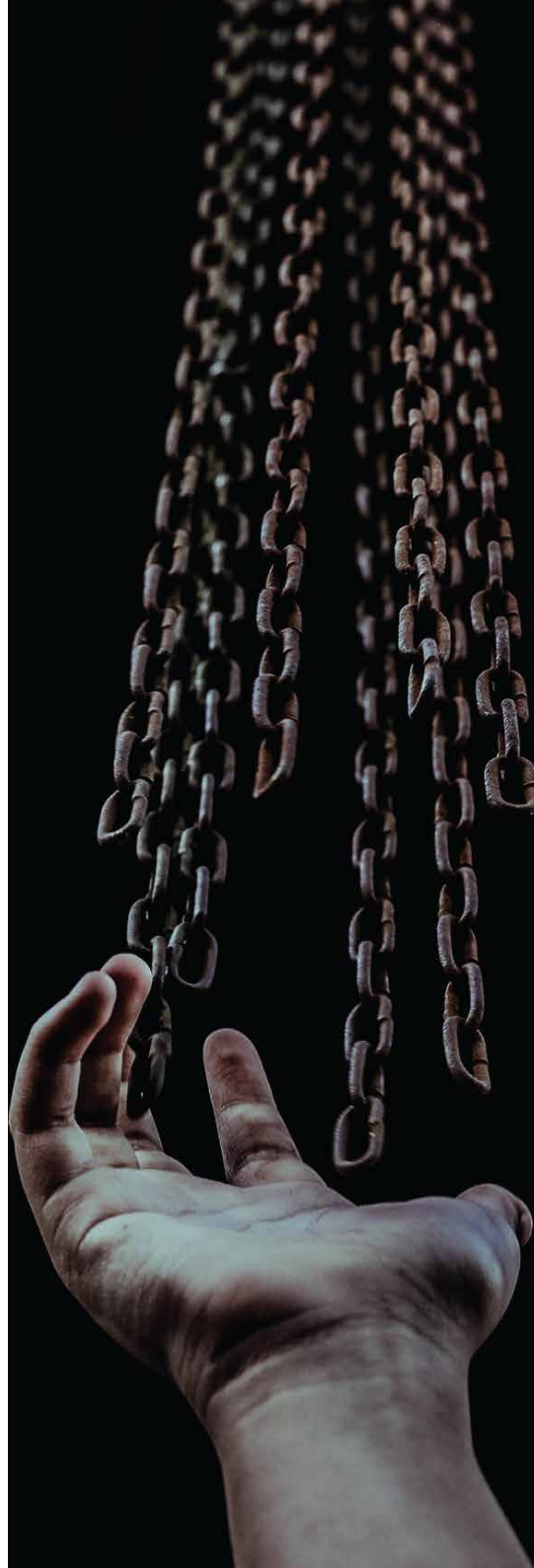
## Some Global manifestations of Empire's power and presence:

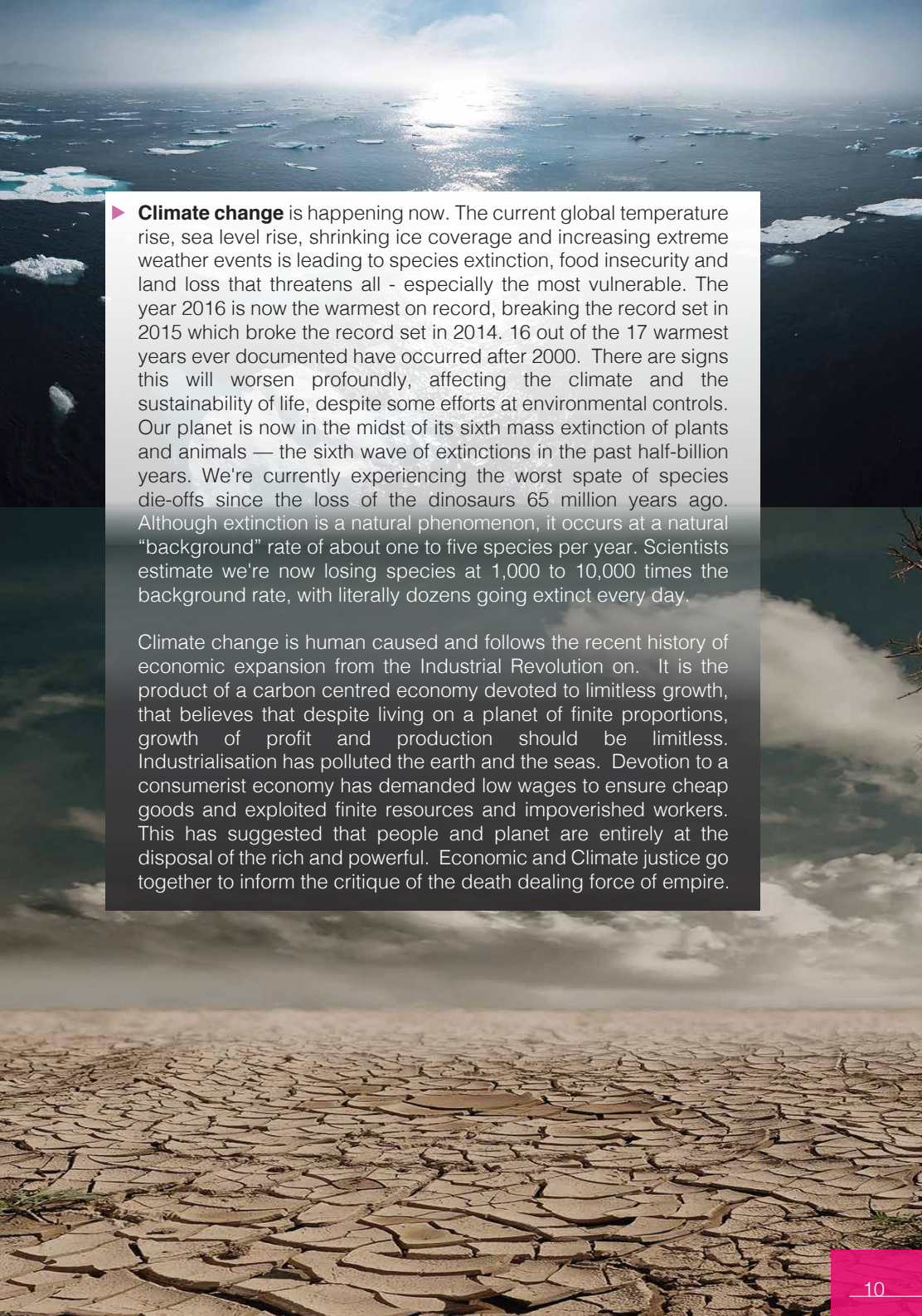
- **Economic injustice.** The global economy is marked by runaway inequality. According to Oxfam in 2018, 1% of the world's population own 82% of the wealth. The pursuit of profit for this 1% drives most of our economies and the global corporations central to them. This economic injustice is a crucial part of Empire, both past and present, and shows their continuities. Global capitalism is a particular legacy of Western colonisation and of slavery. The colonisation of the world by white Western nations produced and entrenched an exploitative, genocidal economic system which now operates internationally.



Firstly, slavery depopulated the African continent, stealing its young and productive members over 350 years. This had profound implications for the political history and economic development of Africa. Secondly, this system of slavery consolidated the 'dominant-dominated' relations between Europeans and non-Europeans, making racism the primary justification for colonial exploitation. This racism continues to the present in different guises, in Africa and beyond. Thirdly, Europeans and their descendants reaped more than economic benefits from slavery. Fed better, their population increased. With new wealth and industry, they developed better technology with which to further conquer and exploit others. The Atlantic Slave Trade therefore intensified the mix of different motives. Greed for material possession and consumption, combined with racism and self-aggrandizement began with the Crusades and continues to mark out global Capitalism. This built on the annihilation of indigenous populations of places like the Caribbean and the US and the appropriation of their land.

The consequences of these global inequalities fall heaviest on those Empire has most objectified and commodified: the earth and on poor communities, women, children and people with disabilities. The genocidal power of Empire is also eco-cidal.





► **Climate change** is happening now. The current global temperature rise, sea level rise, shrinking ice coverage and increasing extreme weather events is leading to species extinction, food insecurity and land loss that threatens all - especially the most vulnerable. The year 2016 is now the warmest on record, breaking the record set in 2015 which broke the record set in 2014. 16 out of the 17 warmest years ever documented have occurred after 2000. There are signs this will worsen profoundly, affecting the climate and the sustainability of life, despite some efforts at environmental controls. Our planet is now in the midst of its sixth mass extinction of plants and animals — the sixth wave of extinctions in the past half-billion years. We're currently experiencing the worst spate of species die-offs since the loss of the dinosaurs 65 million years ago. Although extinction is a natural phenomenon, it occurs at a natural "background" rate of about one to five species per year. Scientists estimate we're now losing species at 1,000 to 10,000 times the background rate, with literally dozens going extinct every day.

Climate change is human caused and follows the recent history of economic expansion from the Industrial Revolution on. It is the product of a carbon centred economy devoted to limitless growth, that believes that despite living on a planet of finite proportions, growth of profit and production should be limitless. Industrialisation has polluted the earth and the seas. Devotion to a consumerist economy has demanded low wages to ensure cheap goods and exploited finite resources and impoverished workers. This has suggested that people and planet are entirely at the disposal of the rich and powerful. Economic and Climate justice go together to inform the critique of the death dealing force of empire.



- **Patriarchy.** Empire is built on hierarchies and dominates by keeping diversity in check. Value, rank and position is ascribed in society on the basis of patriarchal attitudes to gender, race, ethnicity, class, caste, sexual identity and ability. Patriarchy is the way Empire operates domestic as well as social control. It typically favours whiteness, maleness, heterosexuality, high class/caste identities, and terms them the 'norm' and privileges them in society. It is also one of the clearest collusions between religion and Empire. Under this heading we can observe how religions have worked with Empire to create excluding communities rather than inclusive community and have sought to defend and even baptise the views and needs of dominant groups and empire. **Empire alters our ethical and moral compass so that we often fail to see these issues and has taught us to blame the poor for being poor.**

Patriarchy is more than a domestic and social force. It is also an economic force. We are under economic injustice that wealth models patriarchal interests and histories. Women are paid significantly less than men, and protected and rewarded less in the labour market. Patriarchy is also accompanied by violence. Gender based violence, racial violence, homophobic violence is on the increase in many contexts. Slavery is also returning. Human trafficking is the second largest source of illegal income worldwide exceeded only by drug trafficking (Belser 2005). People trafficking is the fastest growing means by which people are enslaved. Besides being the fastest growing international crime, it is one of the largest sources of income for organised crime. UNICEF estimates that 1.2 million children are trafficked every year. At least 20.9 million people are victims of forced labour worldwide.





While it is difficult to establish a precise amount, research done by the ILO (International Labour Organisation) in 2012, conservatively estimated trafficking victims as comprising some 44 percent of this figure. (*ILO 2012 Global Estimate of Forced Labour*). The reason for Trafficking lies in an economic system that wants labour costs as low as possible, and feeds from patriarchal attitudes that permit the exploitation of those considered low status, especially women and children. The UN estimated in 2016 that 71% of trafficked persons are either women or children.

- **Conflict and xenophobia.** The lack of geographical borders to Empire belies the violent conquest at the heart of its method. The World Bank estimated in 2015 that 1.2 billion people - roughly one fifth of the world's population, are affected by some form of violence or insecurity. Militarisation is evident in such conflict areas as Korea, Syria, Iraq and Palestine. But, it is also evident in the police and security forces and in the US and Africa. Religious conflict continues to rise at communal, national and international levels. One third of the world's population meet hostility because of their religious affiliation, be they Christians, Muslims, Jews or of other faith traditions. The military establishments continue to command public spending as welfare services suffer cuts. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) estimates almost \$1.7 trillion was spent on militarisation in 2016. 10 percent of this would be enough to fund the UN Sustainable Development Goals to end poverty and hunger by 2030.



The security of the Empire is a paramount issue, but its policies create insecurity. Climate change is displacing populations, and coupled with poverty, forcing migration. The movement of refugees is being greeted with greater and greater hostility and feeding xenophobic politics in some of the main centres of Empire, like Europe, the US and Asia. Chauvanistic Conservatism and Ultra nationalisms have captured the political will of many nations. It is visible in Europe, and in emerging and established Far right political populist parties in France, Sweden, Austria and the Netherlands. It is also seen in the decision of the UK to leave the EU, in the anti-immigrant policies of Hungary, in Erdogan's shift to autocracy in Turkey. This reflects Putin's Russia and Assad in Syria. The state of Israel continues to repress Palestinian rights to their land, and legitimises its ultra-nationalist settler programmes.



Hindu ultra-nationalism holds sway in India under Modi and the BJP, and the Islamic style nationalisms of Pakistan or Malaysia. The treatment of the Rohingya people by the authorities in Myanmar is ethnic cleansing, in other parts of the world, homophobic and gender violence is a global phenomenon, but in many jurisdictions, it is not sanctioned in law. Minorities are being scapegoated in many contexts and this feeds a vision of human history as a culture war. Civic visions of nationalism have been usurped by exclusivist interests and are accompanied by supremacist and chauvinistic ideologies which threaten minorities and migrants. They also risk international consensus on key justice issues, from climate change to human rights and threaten peace at a national, regional and even international level.





# Unmasking Empire

Empire shows itself in global forces and issues, but, is also evident in our contexts, communities and churches. This section offers some links to video materials which give some examples of how Empire operates through a range of issues and settings. They may be relevant to you or they may alert you to see other dimensions in your place.

## Empire, economics and inequality

Oxfam Inequality Report Reveals Billionaires' Soaring Wealth  
Link [<https://bit.ly/2Lkgj7e>]



It's Time to Even It Up | Oxfam GB  
Link [<https://bit.ly/2kKYMZ8>]



How to Fix India's Shocking Wealth Inequality  
Link [<https://bit.ly/2JpTMEq>]



## Empire, race and power

The UK government has been exposed for its racist treatment of the 'Windrush Generation'. The quiet policy of stripping this generation of Black people of their rights as citizens to repatriate them to countries they left fifty and sixty years ago

Windrush citizens: 'It's like having your world torn apart'  
Link [<https://bit.ly/2uxkJAo>]



The stories of the Windrush veterans  
Link [<https://bit.ly/2LIPXSt>]



6 Artists On Black Identity  
Link [<https://bit.ly/2L8YYS5>]



## Empire, environment and resistance

Berta Caceres in her own words

Link [<https://bit.ly/2L8Piab>]



Kiribati - A Climate Change Reality

Link [<https://bit.ly/2fh2GJ6>]



Kiribati Vision 20 in the face of Climate Change

Link [<https://bit.ly/2mgZfnM>]



Vanishing: The extinction crisis is worse than you think

Link [<https://bit.ly/2uAUAKk>]



Transition Town Totnes: where we've come from

Link [<https://bit.ly/2zQexET>]



## Empire, gender and patriarchy

Indian Women on India's Rape Culture

Link [<https://bit.ly/2zIvcPx>]



Capturing Hate: Analysing Videos of Violence Against Transgender People in the US

Link [<https://bit.ly/2KY09T5>]

***Be aware strong language and scenes of violence***



This Disabled Activist Refuses to Be Fetishized by Men

Link [<https://bit.ly/2L1C8N3>]

***Be aware strong language***





Disabilities activists in action

Link [<https://bit.ly/2h2CZO3>]



Why I Stay - LGBTQ Christians In The Church

Link [<https://bit.ly/2JqlpMg>]



## Religion, power and empire

The bouncer Ad

Link [<https://bit.ly/2NQ7js9>]



Jesus and money

Link [<https://bit.ly/2L7VjUD>]



What if the homeless gave you money?

Link [<https://bit.ly/1HojK6u>]



Pastor asks congregation to pay for \$65 million jet

Link [<https://bit.ly/2LOsOIU>]



Is the Church mirroring culture or transforming it?

Link [<https://bit.ly/2KXYSGx>]



## CWM Mission Stories Videos

Halmoni movement and The Persistent Widow

Link [<https://bit.ly/2mnwQwq>]



Let's bring them here

Link [<https://bit.ly/2LIF3w7>]





# Exposing Empire

Understanding and discerning Empire is rooted in questioning what power and tradition tell us is normal. It becomes evident to the dissenting imagination and spirit.

The following might help to look at our different contexts and to see where Empire is present and where we have been co-opted by it.

**How is power being used?**

**In whose interests?**

**How is money being used?**

**In whose interests?**

**Are the needs of capital being placed above the needs of people?**

**How is the environment being used?**

**When you travel, do you ever have visa problems?**

**Are you ever stopped by the Police going about your day to day life?**

**How are people of different races, genders, identities, sexualities and abilities named, treated included?**

**Is diversity and difference encouraged?**

**How is dissent treated?**

**Is change invited? In whose interests?**

**Who can remove the people with power in your setting?**

**How does this apply to our churches?**

**How does this apply to our CWM?**



# Empire as CWM's context for Mission

CWM has worked with this theology of mission since 2010 and continues to do so - remembering we are a product of mission and Empire going together.

'Because we are participants in God's mission we are called to live in opposition to Empire'.

(Mission in the Context of Empire: CWM Theology Statement 2010).



*"We intend to continue our focus on mission in the context of empire, embracing our conviction that there are alternatives to this life-denying regime, and engage in actions aimed at healing, peace and reconciliation".*

Rev Dr Collin Cowan Gen Sec  
Address to CWM Assembly in Jeju,  
Korea 2016.

We seek a faith perspective on this context, a self-understanding rooted in the mission and witness God calls us all to share.



We recognise how the Bible is shaped in dialogue and contest with empire, from Genesis to Jesus to Revelation. Our texts emerge under and against the Empires of Assyria, Egypt, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, and Israel, when it has acted in an Imperial mode. We also recognise that Christianity is Imperial and that the Bible has been a weapon of Empire used to harm people on basis of gender, race and orientation.

We are children of God, the Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer of all that is and is to come, who is calling all creation into new relationship with each other and with God. To this God we owe love and honour above all other and to whom we offer our lives and will as a gift in which God rejoices.

We are disciples of One who was condemned by Empire because he confronted injustice, hatred and hurt and counter-created justice, love and liberation. This counter-creation is at work amongst and beyond us through God's liberating Spirit.



We are citizens of a land that exists as a counter reality to Empire in the many contexts we inhabit day by day. We seek to live as signs of this counter-reality through all we do in mission and witness. We are a people whose chains have been broken by Christ, and live under a call to liberating life, empowered by the Spirit, sharing in a mission that proclaims only one Lord to all powers, forces and systems.

Yet, we are often willingly or unwittingly put back in chains and made to work to the profit of lesser goals and gods, participating in oppressing structures, perpetuating hateful attitudes and actions that do not befit followers of one who has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; and filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. (Luke 1: 52-53)





# Living under Empire and beyond Empire

## **Fullness of Life through Christ: CWM's counter-Imperial vision and communities**

Empire makes the exclusive claim to bring prosperity to life, where every nation, government, corporation, community and individual needs to be devoted to the profit-making processes of the Empire. But CWM, in common with the Christian faith, sees Christ as the only one who can bring fullness of life, to the individual, the community and earth, indeed the whole inhabited Cosmos, (Col 1:19-20). And also to Empire.



Empire's devotion to money and desire for profit, is the thief coming to destroy (John 10:10).

Jesus' vision of fullness, in contrast, is as a blessing, especially of the earth who will be made new, (Rev 21) and of the poorest people upon it who will be lifted up (Luke 1:52-53). The healing miracles of Jesus offer us signs of the fullness Jesus brings without cost or exploitation. Indeed, attempts to profit through God's healing power are condemned, as with Simon the Magician in Acts 8 or Elisha's servant Gehazi in 2 Kings 5. The early church described in Acts builds further on this, seeking a community of solidarity, where property is held in common and its profits equitably shared as they seek to be faithful to the mission of God.

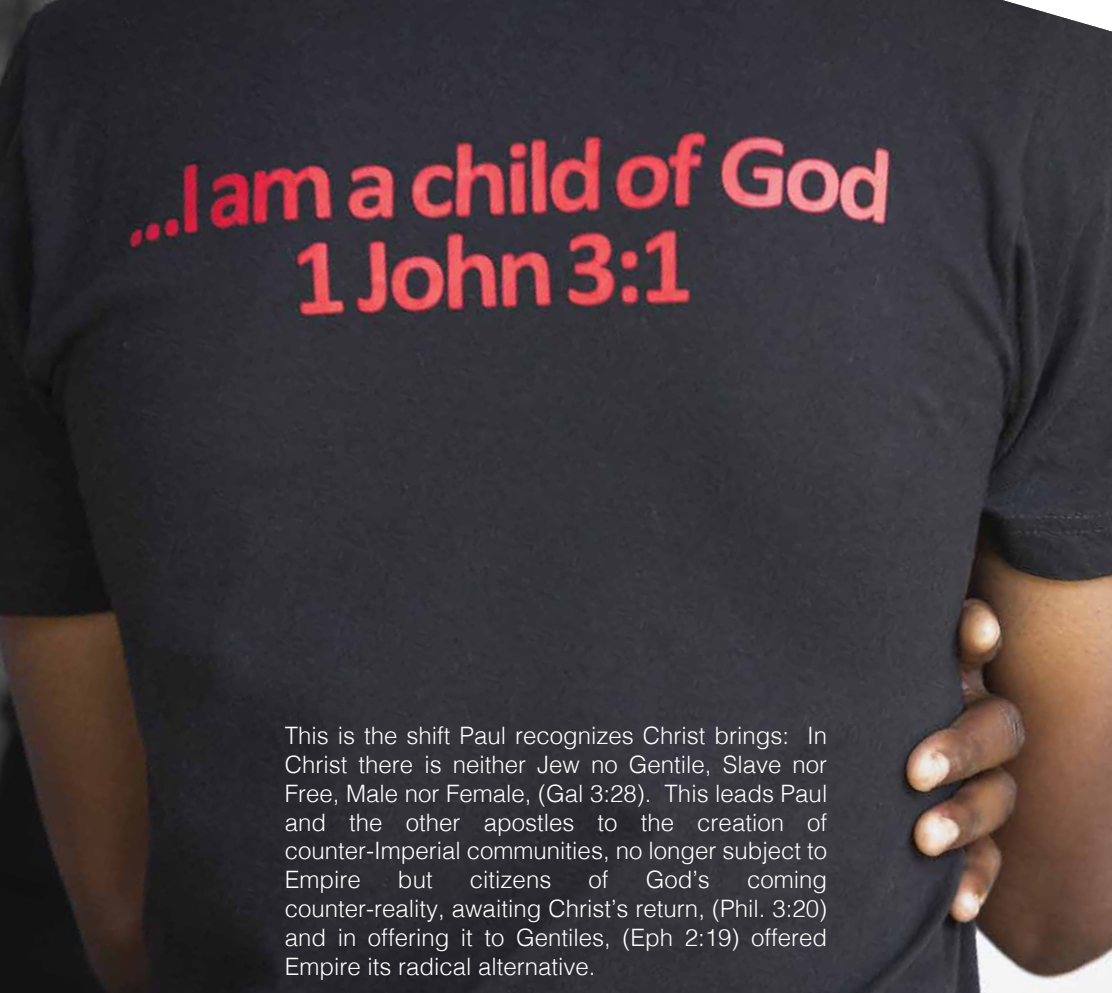
Empire favours power, prestige and strength. Its monuments are fetishes devoted to the great and the glamorous. The power politics of Empire are about preferment and status, and ego and testosterone reveal its Patriarchal core. It functions by co-opting and coercing others to its desires and schemes. Discrimination on grounds of gender, race, ethnicity, ability and orientation are all integral to its hierarchy and shows itself in many forms of slavery, violence and repression.



In Jesus we see the inversion and subversion of this practice of power. **Fullness of life begins particularly with those denied life by Empire and flows from communities built amongst those excluded by Empire.**

Jesus's commissioning of the marginalized, his mission from the margins offers a vision of life that contrasts strongly with Patriarchy and Empire. This drew particular criticism from religious power then and still does now. Yet, this is Jesus' radical practice of fullness of life, amongst and with those people power despises and dispossesses.



A photograph of the back of a person wearing a black t-shirt. The t-shirt has red text printed on it. The text reads "...I am a child of God" in a large, bold, sans-serif font, and "1 John 3:1" in a slightly smaller, bold, sans-serif font below it. The person's right arm is visible on the right side of the frame, with their hand resting on their hip.

# ...I am a child of God 1 John 3:1

This is the shift Paul recognizes Christ brings: In Christ there is neither Jew nor Gentile, Slave nor Free, Male nor Female, (Gal 3:28). This leads Paul and the other apostles to the creation of counter-Imperial communities, no longer subject to Empire but citizens of God's coming counter-reality, awaiting Christ's return, (Phil. 3:20) and in offering it to Gentiles, (Eph 2:19) offered Empire its radical alternative.

CWM remains committed then to inviting and equipping such counter-Imperial communities through missional congregations. The mission context and God's mandate of 'fullness of life for all creation' demand a holistic understanding of mission. This compels churches today to be faithful in proclaiming God's fullness of life. We believe that this can be best lived out in the context of local congregations. We therefore commit ourselves to enabling member bodies to develop missional congregations where the affirmation of life and hope are experienced in community.





# CWM and Mission in the context of Empire

CWM programme builds from this theology in a range of ways, through **Partners In Mission (PIM)**, **Capacity Development (CDP)**, **Mission Support (MSP)**, **Discernment and Radical Engagement (DARE)**, **Cutting Edge Mission Initiatives** and **Leadership Formation**. The **DARE Global Forum** brings together the critics and prophets of Empire to further the theological analysis of Empire's shape and way.



The **DARE**, **PIM** proposals will develop resources for member churches and others to use. **New International Economic and Financial Architecture Colloquia** and partnership work aims to critique the present unjust financial system and propose alternatives. **Face to Face** confronts theological students with the realities of Empire through issues like Palestine, Migration and Inter-faith Dialogue.



**A New Face** programme focus is on how ministers can develop inclusive community. This is developed further through the **More Able Church fund** and projects with FKJM, PCT, URC and CSI. The **Consultation on Human Identities, Sexualities and Communities** in 2018 presses forward with inclusive community and addresses what Empire does to our vision of humanness.



**Legacies of Slavery** is exposing our historic complicity with Empire and identifying urgent areas of future work on counter-Imperial mission and on racial and economic justice. **Hearing God's Cry** is helping member churches focus on what Empire is doing in their context. **Mission Stories** is sharing what member churches are doing in the face of Empire.







Member churches are addressing this in a range of ways with **MSP** and **CDP** funds from CWM, whether it's **UCZ** addressing Gender justice, **UCJCI** developing missional congregations, **HKCCCC** developing churches that are more open and compassionate, **PCT** national self-determination for Taiwan, **PKN** developing pioneering churches and evangelism, **MPC** Nuclear Testing in the Pacific or **CSI** work on Dalit issues. **Worship materials** for daily use and for the liturgical festivals also extend the vision of mission in the context of Empire and are developed from resources and people across and beyond the CWM family.

**Partners in Mission** continue to be ways the member churches express solidarity with each other in the key tasks of mission, evangelism and service, so that we remain united in our commitment and concern despite all that Empire does to divide us.

The current CWM Strategy and programme is under evaluation and review as a new strategy is developed for post 2020. The theology of Mission in the context of Empire remains urgent and pressing. So, CWM commits itself to share and dare together again in naming Empire and its threats to life and place itself at the commissioning of God's healing, restoring counter-creating Spirit of Life.





## Some Visualisations of Mission in the context of Empire using the Graffiti Artist Banksy



"Don't Forget Your Scarf" - Banksy (Bristol, undated).



"Girl and a Soldier" - Banksy (Bethlehem, 2007).





"Rage, Flower Thrower"- Banksy (Jerusalem, 2003).



"Forgive Our Trespassing"- Banksy (Salt Lake City, 2010).



"Untitled"- Banksy (Unknown Location, undated).



"Keep Your Coins, I Want Change"- Banksy (Melbourne, undated).



# Suggestions for using this document

Our aim for producing this document is to re-engage member churches and partners with CWM's Mission theology as we come into a time of strategic review. You can find the original Mission in the context of empire document here - <https://bit.ly/2LJF39q>

Member church structures and committees may like to engage with it, as well as mission enablers and theological colleges. But it would also be good to share this with congregations, gatherings of ministers, or anyone who wants to equip and familiarise themselves with the issue of Empire.

We are keen that you find ways to read and reflect together on the materials here and then share with us in any ways you wish. You may email the Mission Development team at [missiondevelopment@cwmission.org](mailto:missiondevelopment@cwmission.org) If you have contributions and comments, we would love to hear from you.

Please feel free to add to and deepen the resources with further analysis - especially practical and community examples of mission in the context of Empire.

## Further steps

CWM programme continues to engage with Mission in the context of Empire. But we are hoping to organise some seminars on Empire now to bring together some further conversations at this time of strategic programme review.

We hope that the discussions around Empire and how we see, understand and challenge it will give vital direction for CWM programme in the post 2020 period.

"Art should comfort the disturbed  
and disturb the comfortable"

- Banksy



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