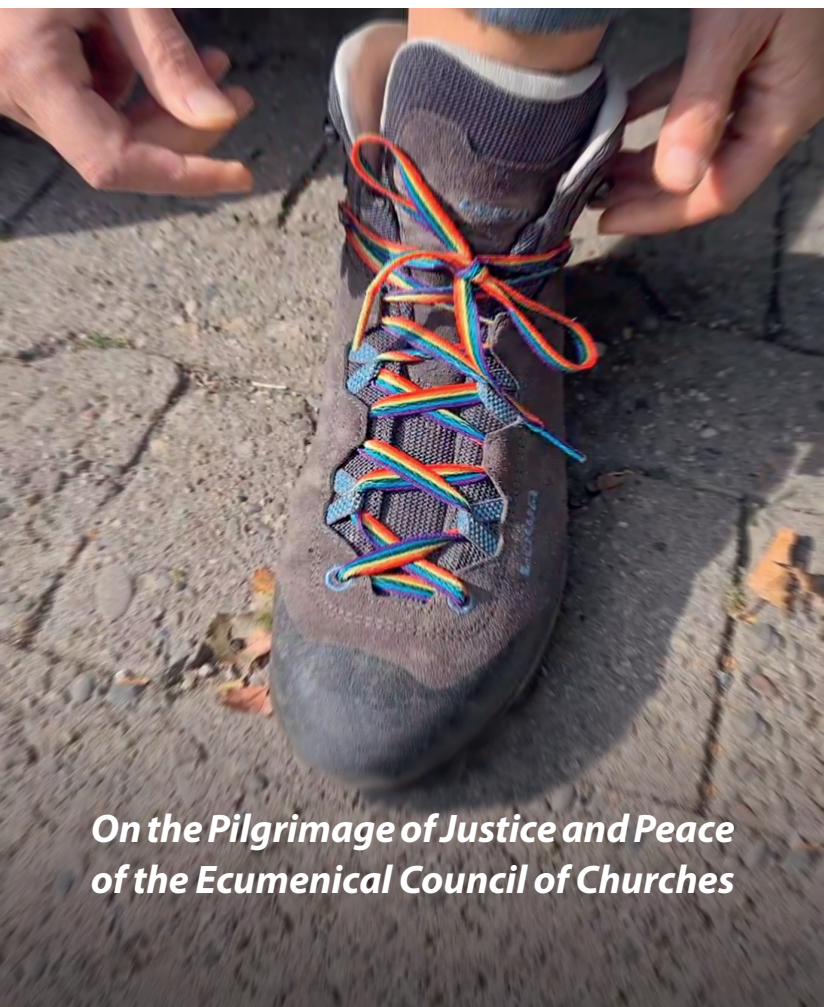




Go for Gender Justice

Guideline for the Organization
of Pilgrimage Initiatives On Site



***On the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace
of the Ecumenical Council of Churches***

Preface

“... that justice and peace kiss.”

(Psalm 85,11)

The dream of a just and peaceful world for every human being, irrespective of origin, gender, age, religion and sexual orientation, requires committed people who live this dream. Wherever they are. With the pilgrimage initiative **Go for Gender Justice**, we are launching this dream – regionally and locally, globally and ecumenically. We are inviting you to become a part of this great movement with your own pilgrimage project.

This guideline will show you how to plan and implement a pilgrimage project on gender justice on site.

In addition, you will find an overview of the development, goals and topics of the initiative **Go for Gender Justice**. Furthermore, it is about the chances and possibilities of the spiritual experience of pilgrimage. The course of a pilgrimage day and single elements of organization are described in an exemplary way.

Please find further information at “Organizing your own Pilgrimages” on the homepage **www.go-for-gender-justice.de**.

Apart from a large pilgrimage map with all the regional and local project initiatives, the website offers you detailed topical articles for a more intensive involvement with the various topics. They may be stimulations for congregational evenings or the configuration of your public relations or many others.

The editorial staff wishes you a beneficial application.

Background

Development and Goals of the Pilgrimage Initiative

It was in autumn 2013 that the General Assembly of the Ecumenical Council in Busan/South Korea appealed to all member churches to undertake a worldwide pilgrimage of justice and peace. Numerous initiatives have developed all over the world. www.oikoumene.org/de

The conference of gender and equality departments in the EKD member churches as well as churchly women's associations and groups in civil society picked up this idea. With the pilgrimage initiative **Go for Gender Justice** we are setting off.

We are approaching the upcoming General Assembly of the World Church Council in September 2022 in Karlsruhe with regional and local pilgrimage initiatives. At this, we wish to carry messages for more gender justice into the World Assembly of Churches.



Topics

we have on board

- Sharing work, power and influence
- Acknowledging and creating diversity
- Overcoming degradation, discrimination and violence

In nine evangelical regional churches, regional pilgrimage stages, which seize these topics and start them off, are planned. We are inviting church communities and church circles to additionally develop local pilgrimage initiatives on site.

We encourage everyone to keep their eyes and ears wide open in the church community, in the local surroundings, in the staff room: How is it going in terms of gender justice? On the pilgrimage trail, points of both hope and pain in church and society are to be searched and made visible.

We invite you to become connected with persons, initiatives, groups and organisations that attend to these topics in the local environment and introduce their perspectives concerning gender justice.

We wish to shine out beyond confessional and national borders. We invite partner churches to join us.

Let us become a major movement!

**Fair Pay Gender Diversity
Antifeminism Discrimination
Generational Justice
Justice for Single Parents
Violence against Women
Degradation Abuse of Power**

Pilgrimaging

Potentials of a special movement

Pilgrimaging can be done alone or in a group, on foot or by bicycle, short or long, ...

As a spiritual practise, pilgrimaging is familiar to people of all world religions. A large variety of motives incite them to set out for smaller or larger pilgrimage destinations. Occasionally, the journey is the proverbial reward. It is, however, always a way of change and of broadening the horizon.

One common feature of all pilgrimaging is the fact of leaving daily routines and referring to God's presence which accompanies the pilgrims. Occasionally, new paths arise on old paths.

Taking the Path of Justice

The roots of Christian pilgrimage are to be found in the pilgrimage to the Temple of Jerusalem. The path "up to Jerusalem" describes a form of being on the road towards the lovely homes of God (psalm 84,1). The migrational existence of the Jew Jesus and his disciples and his preached hope of Kingdom of God encouraged people to join him on his way. The succeeding community of the early Christians was called "people from the way." Their vision is one of the "peregrinating people of God", that walks the path of peace and justice (Lukas 1,79). At this, in their hearts they carry the stories of the God who walks along – on the paths of liberation from the slavery of Egypt (exodus).



On the Road

with heart and soul

When one pilgrimages, it means engaging in a comprehensive movement that captures the whole person. Therefore, the beginning is marked by a good reason, a major question or a deep longing, the “room for more in the heart” (Nelly Sachs). Occasionally, it is also simply the invitation of walking along and engaging in shared experiences on the way and movements of quest.

The path arises and carries the pilgrim along. Step by step, he follows the stations of pilgrimaging:

- Preparing and departing,
- Being on the road with stations and landmarks,
- Arriving, preserving experiences and insights.

Letting the soul loose – an appropriate image for pilgrimaging as a spiritual movement. Rituals and travel blessings for departure, devotions and impulses on the way, thanksgiving prayers for protection at the end of the pilgrimage **open up the space of blessing** for the presence of God.

Political evening prayers, intercessions and lamentation liturgies about existing need and injustices seize the experiences of points of hope and pain and **take the world to task**.

Pilgrimage stages in silent walk **enable deepened perceptions on varying paths**.

Travelling in pilgrimage educates. It strengthens internal and external mobility, sharpens the senses and **stimulates mindfulness**. The conversations within the group open up a space of resonance for own reflections and the perspectives and insights of the co-pilgrims.



Standing up

for Justice

One of the goals of the pilgrimage trail **Go for Gender Justice** is standing up for gender justice. When creating the common pilgrimage trail, the spiritual dimension of pilgrimaging unites with the discovery of realities and critical reflection. The perception of discrimination is to be sharpened and the commitment for justice strengthened. The participants collect contributions and ideas for the path to more gender justice and the reduction of discrimination in church and society.

The pilgrimage trial for gender justice unites methods of pilgrimaging with elements of socio-political education and campaign work with formats of visitation respectively exchange programs. The pilgrimage trail strengthens the projects, facilities and communities which are visited and creates networks between them. Around the pilgrimage initiative itself, educational and informative meetings can be planned. These also reach out to people who are not pilgrimaging and invites them to join the walk for gender justice in their minds.

Pilgrimage trails take place in the local public and create awareness. The results of the pilgrimage initiative, reports or messages can be made available to the local parliaments or other agents. Blogs, social media, press articles or diaries offer the possibility for those interested to join the pilgrimage paths or walk them later.



Planning steps

Paving and Walking the Path

The guideline is connected with the wish of making many pilgrimage stages of **Go for Gender Justice** happen in various local contexts and constellations. The eventful advocacy of justice and the thematically based layout of pilgrimage stages require extensive planning. That way, a reliable frame is established for visits in facilities, but especially for the spontaneous encounters on the path.

No boundaries will be set to your creativity and imagination, however. The following planning steps are meant for orientation.



Pathbreaking

1

Finding the topic

Finding a topic for one's own local pilgrimage initiative is already an eventful process in itself, which may begin with questions:

- What are the on-site challenges or topics concerning gender justice?
- What is to be brought to attention?
- What is worth approaching?

It is, however, also possible to pick up one or several of the topics of the total initiative mentioned in the prefix and connect them with the current questions in your context.



No Solo Effort

2

Finding Company

Essential aspects for the process of topic selection are the cooperation partners, who can be gained for the pilgrimage initiative and bring along their perspectives. This is about assembling the **project team**, which is willing to plan the pilgrimage event, and the **target group**, which is to be reached by the invitation to join the pilgrimage:

The composition of the team should be clarified in advance, for example:

- across genders or generations
- ecumenical resp. interreligious
- with various agents, whether on-site or from out of town

Contemporary witnesses or impulse givers concerning the respective topic focus could be further companions. It is also worthwhile asking for suitable sponsorship for the project or appropriate influencers to walk along in a real or medial way.

Keeping up with the Times

3

Establishing the Schedule

Whether a weekend, a day trip or a distance of several days is planned, plays a decisive role. The time and effort for accommodation, stops and board, transport connection and encounters should feel obliged to the basic focus on pilgrimaging, sensitize for places and topics, be feasible and sustainable for the hiking “grass roots”.

An elaborated schedule makes sense and should include sufficient times for breaks and buffer. Walking times and stations with hope and pain points or spiritual impulses alternate in a balanced way and should each have their space of time.

(Please find an exemplary pilgrimage day on pages 15/16)



Defining

4

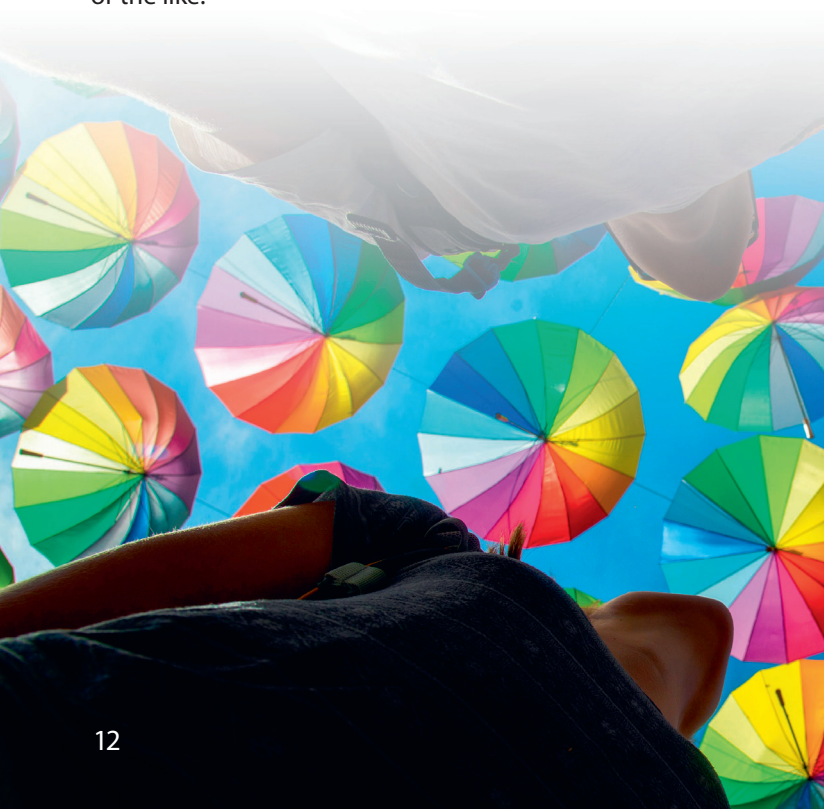
Planning the route

Pilgrimage stages are as diverse as the places that they lead through. The following aspects can be an orientation for precisely planning the route:

- local initiatives which correspond to the topic
- spiritual places
- landmarks with special historical backgrounds, e. g. of the initiative FrauenOrte (Women's Places)
- impressive landscapes, sights

Find out whether signposted pilgrimage or hiking paths or marked town routes already exist so they can be used partly or completely. If applicable, local tourism associations or hiking clubs can be of help with the route.

It is recommendable to walk the elaborated route in advance, make a time check and clarify local circumstances, such as street festivals, construction sites or the like.



Promising

5

Finding possible Financing

The pilgrimage movement believes in simpleness: on foot with light day packs and overnight stays in simple lodging – that is economical in principle. Costs arise due to the accompanying measures, a preparational seminar to attune to the topic and the spirit of pilgrimage. Extensive publicity and documentation are cost factors. Therefore, it is sensible to compile a calculation of costs when doing the overall planning. Apart from the revenues from participation fees and cost absorption by cooperation partners, there is also the chance of third-party funds:

The topic “Gender Justice” facilitates obtaining funds from the areas of educational work and democracy support. It is worthwhile inquiring with the state centres for political education, equal opportunity commissioners or church funds for educational work or foundations related to gender issues.

There may also be city-historical funds or means for local cultural activities. There is no limit to your imagination and networking.



Walk correctly!

6

On the Road as a Pilgrimage Group

The practice of pilgrimaging requires prior planning and common rules.

The participants should receive the following in advance:

- **Packing list** with suggestions for packing, suitable clothing, etc.
- Course of action with **route** and meal stops
- **Information** about safety, road traffic and, if applicable, a phone list
- Songs and texts for **devotion** and spiritual impulses

Within the group, **pilgrimaging rules** should be communicated and clarified in advance. This includes questions such as the use of mobile phones on the road, safe conduct in the pilgrimage group, board / picknick.

It may be sensible to hold a **pre-departure meeting**, also digitally, so as to exchange ideas concerning practical issues, give an attunement on the topic and make agreements concerning wrap-up and results saving.



Go!

Exemplary course of events of a pilgrimage day

Meeting

the group at the agreed location

- in the town at a calm/safe place (park, courtyard etc.) or in a church / chapel, a meeting place / facility with a group room.
- in the countryside at a prominent point / building, fork or the like.

Welcoming

the attendees, introducing the guidance team

Introducing the Daily Program

route and stations

Agreements

to pilgrimage (safety, group codex)

Spiritual Guidance

with reference to the topic, words of blessing on the way





Go

Pilgrimage in silence

Goal: getting under way, becoming attentive, getting used to walking together as a group, observing the town or surroundings



Visit

of a facility, a memorial site, meeting with groups or activists



Pilgrimage

Lunch Break

A picnic with food and beverages one has brought along at a previously explored convenient location is very suitable; as an alternative at a place of encounter together with people the group wants to come into dialog with



Pilgrimage

further stations and sections, if applicable, with a coffee break in between



Last Section in Silence

if applicable, as an impulse for gathering oneself and sorting out the experienced and the explored internally



Closure

in a calm, protected place or a place of encounter, community centre or the like



Exchange

feedback, dates to save the results



Thanksgiving Prayer

for the experience and protection on the way



Addition

Publicity and documentation

1. Preparation of the activity

When date, place and program have been fixed, enter them on the pilgrimage map of the homepage ***www.go-for-gender-justice.de***. You will find an entry mask there!

Think about the following: Where do you want to make this project known in addition? Make use of the parish newsletter but also of the local press, radio and/or TV, social media channels, the partners' networks.

Compile suitable advertising material. You can find various versions of the logo on the homepage.

2. While Walking

Document the pilgrimage by means of photos, films, diary entries, reports, quotes from conversations.

Use the social media and invite virtual co-pilgrims.

3. After the Event

Classify the documented material and decide what you want to publish on the homepage of the initiative and in other places. For this purpose, you may plan a prompt meeting in a format suitable for you.

Plan an evaluation with the cooperation partners and the initiative group.



Appendix

Further Links

- www.pilgern-bayern.de
(Bavaria)
- www.pilgerschoen.de
(Evangelical Women's Pilgrimage in Baden)
- www.pilgern.de
(Evangelical Pilgrimage Portal for Germany)
- www.klimapilgern.de
(Ecumenical Pilgrimage for Climate Justice)
- www.pilgerwissen.de
(Web Presence by Beate Steger, Wiesloch)

www.go-for-gender-justice.de



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