

## **Chiang Mai Declaration on Health, Healing, and Wholeness of Life in Asia**

We, the participants of the International Conference on “Faith, Health, and Healing: Christian Response in Asia Today” organised by the Christian Conference of Asia, held at Payap University, Chiang Mai, Thailand, from 10–12 October 2022, hailing as we do from different parts of Asia, are from different denominational and professional backgrounds, different cultures and contexts, yet united in the Body of Christ. We met in a post-pandemic context of conflict between communities and countries, climate emergency, threats to life and livelihoods, scarcity of food, water, and energy, and downward spiralling economies.

*We affirm that:*

1. Every human being is made in the image of God, created with dignity in diversity, irrespective of any personal circumstances, be it in health, sickness, or suffering.
2. Health, healing, and wholeness are central to God’s divine grace and purpose for humanity. This involves a harmonious living-in community with God, people, and the entire creation.
3. The Church continues to have a unique, relevant, and specific role to play in health, health care, healing, and wholeness of life. The Church is called to witness and participate creatively in the divine ministry of healing, restoring wholeness in broken human lives with compassion, and being one with our Lord in His self-emptying and unconditional love.
4. Many Asian churches have pioneered their health ministry by establishing Christian hospitals and by serving people and communities through health care over the decades.

*We want to see churches and Christian health care institutions:*

1. Reflecting Christ’s love, at all levels, in all dimensions including physical, mental, and spiritual, for all.
2. Recognising the changing paradigms in health, healing, and wholeness considering the emerging situations due to the climate emergency, post-pandemic context, conflict, and other mega-trends in Asia.
3. Shaping a world where everyone participates in the health and healing experience and no neighbourhood is left behind, based on a primary health care approach ensuring universal health coverage, including equity in financing mechanisms, thereby protecting individuals and families from falling into poverty through unaffordable health care.
4. Promoting social transformation and upholding human dignity; including committing to the ending of all forms of sexual and gender-based violence and discrimination, and its specific impacts on health and wholeness.
5. Working together with civil society and with people of other faiths and of no faith, including people living with disabilities or diseases, to mobilise governments, international agencies and the corporate world for greater justice in health, access to medicines, and quality health care.

6. Acknowledging, valuing, documenting, and deploying indigenous wisdom on herbal and traditional healing to benefit communities.

*We call on churches and Christian health care institutions to:*

1. Accept God's calling to be hospitable communities of health and healing, by being open and welcoming especially to those who are marginalised, poor, and vulnerable, upholding their dignity through their active participation.
2. Continue providing accurate and reliable health information to congregations and combat misinformation.
3. Invest in equipping youth and developing their capacities for resilience, which includes a greater commitment to the development of human resources through church-supported medical and para-medical educational institutions.
4. Contribute to the elimination of financial barriers to health care for those who are poor and marginalised.
5. Equip church leaders and local pastors with knowledge of health that allows them to be involved in partnership in providing holistic pastoral care and support health workers and communities.
6. Engage in health promotion, disease prevention, provision of universal health care, palliative care, elderly care, HIV and AIDS, mental health, and other services which constitute the unique contribution of the Church and Christian health care ministry to the arena of health care services.
7. Address environmental issues that contribute towards ill health and advocate for positive environmental health.
8. Advocate for health for all as a right, and for justice for the community.
9. Participate in healing ministry inspired by the gospel with efficient and fair-minded governance, transparency, and accountability to God and people, specifically in matters related to assets and finances.
10. Address the growing issues of substance abuse proactively by prioritising both the preventive and treatment aspects with compassion and in Christ's love so as to restore healing and wholeness in the afflicted.
11. Work together in solidarity to achieve global immunity and break the chain of COVID-19 and other vaccine-preventable diseases by advocating for and ensuring vaccine equity and the availability of countermeasures.
12. Work hand-in-hand to promote sustainable world peace by enhancing recovery efforts for regional and global situations and contexts.