



Evangelische Kirche in Österreich
Oberkirchenrat A. und H.B.

Evangelische Kirche A. und H.B. in Austria

Partnership Agreement

The Presbyterian Church of Ghana and the

- In creating networks of people in Ghana and Austria, committed to the ideals of partnership of all members of the *Body of Christ*,
- Respecting and accepting each others' identities and cultures,
- Providing a common space
 - for mutual support in realizing the missions of both churches,
 - for reflecting on their history of suffering, hope, and achievements,
 - for learning from each other, and
 - for the ministry and spiritual welfare of all those who will or do choose to join a Vienna congregation established by both churches,

the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and the *Evangelische Kirche A. und H.B. in Austria*

will cooperate and collaborate in the following areas:

a. *Information Sharing*

Both churches wish to promote and support the exchange of information, in all appropriate forms, concerning their respective situations and activities, with a view to better understand the contexts of their respective work, to foster and encourage networks, and to empower each other through worship and ministry.

Specifically, both churches agree to regularly participate in the bi-annual conferences to which all the partner churches of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana are invited in order to exchange information, experiences, to discuss the results of evaluation reports, and to design future actions, either held in Ghana or alternately, in another partner country.

b. *Schools, Education; Joint Projects*

Both churches wish to involve the educational institutions of all levels and in all fields connected to them in Ghana or in Austria in order to establish sustainable forms and projects of collaboration. They will promote and support, as much as they are able to, programmes facilitating youth, student and teacher exchanges, particularly providing exposure to cross-cultural education.

Specifically, cooperation will be welcomed in the forms of internships, practice periods, projects and consultations of the respective youth organizations and of the educational institutions and authorities in both countries, particularly in theological studies at university level and in vocational education, such as medical and paramedical training or the crafts taught at the *Evangelische Gymnasium* in Vienna.

For personnel exchanges, the host country will assume all local costs, the home institution all costs of travel and related expenses, including costs of the return and, if applicable, of re-entering into the professional work at home.

As a rule, cooperation shall be based on projects and the usual forms of project management. The individual project agreements must include aims and measures of implementation, the duration of the project, the finances, from whichever source funds are acquired for the purpose, and their accounting and reporting, monitoring and evaluation. In principle, support should never perpetuate dependency but facilitate and contribute towards independent and sustainable activities.

c. *A Joint Vienna Congregation*

Both churches join efforts to establish and sustain a congregation in Vienna in order to provide a spiritual home in Austria to members of the Presbyterian Church, if and when the prospects for a viable congregation are clearly positive.

The congregation will be open to all who care to join in its religious services.

A special contract, required by Austrian law, will have to confirm and elaborate the concrete intentions of both churches when they establish a joint congregation.

They agree on the following elements of the joint congregation:

- It will be a congregation ("Personalgemeinde") according to art 25 of the Constitution of the *Evangelische Kirche* in Austria.
- The *Evangelische Kirche* in Austria will employ the minister of the congregation, selected by the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, according to the regulations for ordained ministers in Austria, and support his or her family; all other costs will be borne by his or her home institution. In case no joint congregation exists or during transition periods, the minister will be entrusted with special tasks.
- The duration of the minister's term of office will be limited to 5 years, with a possibility of an extension of one year, especially respecting the given family situation.
- The responsible authority in Austria, especially with the right to visitation, will be the Consistory of the *Evangelische Kirche* in Austria ("*Oberkirchenrat A. und H.B.*"), chaired by the bishop; in all matters, he will work closely with the moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana.
- An annual report on the activities will be received by both churches.

The Partnership Agreement will be assessed and reviewed every 5 years, beginning with the day on which this agreement is signed by all partners and becomes effective. Both churches will jointly appoint a rapporteur or rapporteurs.

The Partnership Agreement will remain in force indefinitely unless a partner church intends to modify or terminate the agreement. In such cases, the intentions will be notified a year in advance. Both churches agree to consult each other without delay and to decide on the future of the partnership and the ongoing projects of cooperation.