Holistic Mission and the Role of the Church in Eradicating Gender-Based Violence in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania West Central Diocese

Baraka Zakayo Mungure, Elieshi Ayo Mungure

Faculty of Theology: Tumaini University Makumira

DOI: https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.101000390

Received: 07 October 2026; Accepted: 12 October 2026; Published: 03 November 2026

ABSTRACT

This article explores how the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania West Central Diocese (ELCT WCD) can better respond to the growing challenge of gender-based violence (GBV). The study employed qualitative research and interview methods to examine biblical, theological, and ecumenical understandings of holistic mission for victims of GBV. Data were collected through 16 interviews to gain practical insights from pastors and other lay church leaders in the field about their daily work with GBV cases. The collected information was analysed in relation to the study's objective. The study recognizes the sensitivity of GBV and the need to protect participant's dignity, privacy and safety. The article describes obtaining research authorization, explaining the purpose of the study, seeking voluntary participation and informed consent, and protecting participants' confidentiality

The study showed that although the Bible and the church support human dignity, some pastors and other church leaders lack in-depth knowledge of GBV. This is one obstacle that contributes to the escalation of GBV in church-based settings and in communities. The paper suggests biblical and human rights teachings that insist on justice, empowerment, and advocacy for policymakers, pastors, and communities where GBV is practised. It calls on all groups and organisations working against GBV in communities to collaborate and combine their efforts to combat GBV by reminding communities that all humanity is created by God and in God's image, regardless of gender. All need to be loved, protected, and to live a dignified life. Although GBV affects both females and males, this paper focuses more on GBV against women and girls in the area of study. By combining spiritual and biblical teaching with action for justice, the church can take a leading role in reducing and ending GBV in Tanzania.

Keywords*:* Holistic Mission, Gender Based-Violence, Justice

INTRODUCTION

Gender-based violence (GBV) is still a serious problem in many parts of Tanzania. The World Bank reports that 40% of women aged 15–49 have faced physical violence, and 17% have been sexually abused [1]. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania West Central Diocese (ELCT–WCD) plays a unique role in the communities it serves. Christians undeniably trust the church and its leaders, and the church can reach people at the grassroots level and shape their spiritual and moral behaviour. Therefore, the church mission must go beyond preaching by taking action to address the causes of violence and empowering those already affected to restore their dignity. Unfortunately, the reality on the ground shows the church's insignificance in dealing with GBV.

As part of her prophetic call to afflict the comfortable and comfort the afflicted, the church must adopt a holistic mission that addresses all aspects of human well-being physical, emotional, spiritual, and social including legal support. Theologically, the above understanding comes from the concept of *Missio Dei*, or God's mission, which

[1] The World Bank, "Gender-Based Violence: Tanzania Overview," 2023.

sees the church as part of God's work to heal and renew the world. [2]. It calls the church not only to speak about the gospel but to live it by helping the hurt, standing up to injustice, and creating peace.

This article argues that unless the ELCT–WCD rethinks its mission and uses a holistic lens, it will never realise justice and the transformation of human creation. The paper therefore draws on a desk review of theological documents and interviews to show how the church can integrate its spiritual calling with actions that fight GBV. Having said the above, we must look at doing holistic mission to the victims of GBV or to combat GBV in society.

Theological and Missiological Foundations of Holistic Mission

To respond to Gender-Based Violence (GBV), the church must start by understanding its core call in mission. Holistic mission is based on the belief that God's work, *Missio Dei*, involves caring for every part of life: spiritual, physical, emotional, and social. [3]. This section explores how the Bible, theology, and Church documents support a mission that confronts GBV.

Biblical Calls to Holistic Mission

The Bible shows that God's mission is to heal and free people. Isaiah 61:1 and Luke 4:18–19 say God has sent His servant "to bind up the broken-hearted, proclaim liberty to the captives, and free the prisoners." These words are about helping people who are hurt and oppressed, including survivors of violence.

Jesus did not just preach. He healed the sick, welcomed outcasts, and defended women. His care for the bleeding woman (Luke 8:43–48) and the Samaritan woman (John 4:1–26) shows that the gospel is lived through dignity, justice, and healing.

The biblical narrative consistently affirms that God's mission is not limited to spiritual salvation alone but encompasses the restoration of the whole person physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually. Isaiah 61:1–3, often called the "mission statement" of the Messiah, outlines a divine agenda of healing, liberation, and comfort for the broken-hearted and oppressed. Written during Israel's post-exilic period, this passage speaks to a people longing for renewal after captivity. It promises beauty for ashes, joy instead of mourning, and praise in place of despair.[4]. When Jesus begins His public ministry in Luke 4:18–19, He reads directly from Isaiah 61, declaring, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing," thereby aligning His mission with this prophetic call[5].

Jesus' ministry exemplifies this holistic mission. He did not merely preach repentance; He embodied compassion and justice. His interactions with marginalised individuals, such as the bleeding woman who had suffered for twelve years (Luke 8:43–48) and the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:1–26), demonstrate His commitment to restoring dignity and healing broken lives. These encounters were not incidental; they were central to His message. Jesus broke social taboos, crossed ethnic boundaries, and uplifted women in a patriarchal society, showing that the gospel is not just proclaimed but lived through acts of mercy and inclusion.

[2] David J. Bosch, Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 368.

[3] David J. Bosch, Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 368.

[4] Wilhlemi, Gary. "Exegesis of Isaiah 61." Sixty-One Three Ministries. https://www.61-3ministries.com/blog-2-1/exegesis-isaiah-61

Isaiah 61 is traditionally understood as a messianic prophecy, written during the post-exilic period to offer hope and restoration to Israel. It emphasises themes of healing, justice, and renewal

[5] Isaiah 61: Expository Sermon Preaching and Study Guide." Video Bible. https://www.videobible.com/sermon-preaching/isaiah-61. In Luke 4:18–19, Jesus reads from Isaiah 61 in the synagogue, publicly declaring that He is the fulfilment of this prophecy, thus inaugurating His ministry with a focus on holistic restoration

Furthermore, God's holistic mission calls the church to engage in ministries that reflect this same compassion.

Caring for the poor, advocating for justice, and healing trauma are not peripheral to the gospel; they are its very expression. Isaiah's vision of rebuilding ancient ruins and restoring devastated places (Isaiah 61:4) speaks to the church's role in societal transformation. This includes addressing systemic injustice, supporting survivors of violence, and creating communities of healing. The biblical call is clear: mission must be holistic, encompassing both proclamation and demonstration of God's love.[6].

Mission as Liberation: Lessons from Liberation Theology

Liberation theology is a religious movement that arose in late-20th-century Roman Catholicism and centred in Latin America. It seeks to put faith into practice by helping the poor and oppressed through involvement in political and civic affairs[7]. It stresses both heightened awareness of the "sinful" socioeconomic structures that cause social inequities and active participation in changing those structures.[8]

Liberation theology is not only a Latin American understanding; the idea has been adopted and used elsewhere. In Africa, for example, Charles Nyamiti emphasised inculturation, the idea that theology must be rooted in African cultural identity. African theology must be a theology of liberation, not only from sin but also from all forms of oppression, including cultural alienation.[9]

Liberation theology teaches that mission should stand with the poor and oppressed. Gustavo Gutiérrez wrote that the church cannot talk about freedom and ignore injustice.[10] In GBV, every human being suffers differently. However, women and girls often suffer silently, making them today's "crucified people."

In the West, Miroslav Volf adds that true healing and reconciliation must begin by facing the systems that cause violence.[11] Theology cannot avoid questions about patriarchy or harmful traditions; it must speak clearly and stand with survivors. All of this brings the idea of how injustices are practised in the world due to power abuse and, in many places, patriarchal culture, which undermines the other. However, theology should not be gender-biased; instead, it should proclaim justice, which is the core value that brought Jesus Christ into this world.

The Ecumenical and Global understanding of mission

Church bodies like the World Council of Churches (WCC) and Lutheran World Federation (LWF) support holistic mission. The WCC's *Together Towards Life* describes mission as Spirit-led, rooted in justice, and guided

[6] Exploring Isaiah 61: A Message of Hope and Restoration." Watermark Waves. https://watermarkwaves.com/blogs/explore-the-bible/exploring-isaiah-61-a-message-of-hope-and-restoration

[7]. Modelled after Christ's ministry, the church's mission includes both spiritual and social dimensions—healing the sick, defending the oppressed, and rebuilding broken communities.

[8] Liberation theology is a religious movement that arose in late 20th-century Roman Catholicism and was centred in Latin America. It seeks to apply religious faith by aiding the poor and oppressed through involvement in political and civic affairs. It stresses both heightened awareness of the "sinful" socioeconomic structures that cause social inequities and active participation in changing those structures.
Encyclopaedia Britannica. *Liberation Theology*. Last updated September 6, 2025. Available at: https://www.britannica.com/topic/liberation-theology

[9] Charles Nyamiti, "African Christian Theology: The Contribution of Charles Nyamiti," in African Christian Theology, ed. Bénézet Bujo and Juvenal Ilunga Muya (Nairobi: Pauline Publications, 2006), University of Nairobi Repository.

[10] Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983), 86.

[11] Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996), 100.

by voices from the margins, including survivors of violence.[12]

The LWF's *Mission in Context* says mission includes preaching, service (*diakonia*), and advocacy.[13] It encourages churches to fight systems like poverty and GBV, showing that faith and justice must work together.

These global documents help ELCT–WCD to act boldly, reminding us that real mission means walking with victims, creating partnerships, and changing unjust systems.

ELCT-WCD can use this theological mandate to amplify survivor testimonies, shape policy, and design programs that reflect lived realities. ELCT-WCD can also use this to advocate for legal reforms, train clergy, and lay leaders on GBV prevention, and engage men and boys in reshaping gender norms.

African Theologies of Wholeness

African theologians like Jesse Mugambi and Mercy Amba Oduyoye stress that theology must speak to African realities of people's spiritual and material needs. Oduyoye argues that theology should bring healing, respect, and resistance against violence, especially for women whose stories are often left out.[14]

The ELCT–WCD is beginning to incorporate African wisdom and local knowledge into its mission work. In African communities, justice for women and care for nature often go hand in hand, making holistic mission feel familiar and powerful.

Church Accountability and Integrity

The church must do more than preach transformation; it must live it. If Church spaces tolerate patriarchy, ignore survivor pain, or stay silent, they become part of the problem.

Bosch warns that focusing only on evangelism and forgetting justice misses the heart of the gospel.[15] Without courage, action, and advocacy, the mission is incomplete. ELCT–WCD can become a prophetic leader if it fully embraces holistic mission.

Practical Expressions of Holistic Mission in the ELCT–WCD Context

Building on theological foundations, this section looks at how ELCT–WCD puts holistic mission into practice, especially in addressing gender-based violence (GBV). It uses insights from interviews, Church programs, and local challenges.

Different Views of Mission Within the Diocese

Interviews from March to May 2025 showed that Church members have mixed ideas about what "mission" means. About 40% of those interviewed thought mission means spreading the gospel to areas where people have not heard it, especially in Muslim-majority places. However, 60% said mission also includes caring for people socially, such as education, health, food, and speaking out for the vulnerable.[16]

[12] World Council of Churches, *Together Towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in a Changing World* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2012).

[13] Lutheran World Federation, *Mission in Context: Transformation, Reconciliation, Empowerment* (Geneva: LWF, 2005).

[14] Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Introducing African Women's Theology* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 14.

[15] David J. Bosch, Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 401.

[16] Baraka Mungure, Holistic Mission, and the Role of the Church in Eradicating GBV in ELCT-WCD (Tumaini University Makumira, July 2025)

This gap matters. When leaders only focus on spiritual conversion, they miss the full picture of God's mission. As David Bosch explains, if the mission does not include social change, the church is not sharing the full gospel.[17] The growing interest in a broader mission is hopeful, but the Diocese needs training and clear teaching, so everyone understands mission the same way.

Empowerment through Advocacy That Change Lives

The Diocese has created programs that help survivors of GBV. For example, the *Binti Mama project* helps teenage mothers who had to leave school due to early pregnancies, many linked to sexual violence. It gives them education and skills so they can find hope again and be respected.[18]

Another example is the beekeeping project at Urambo. It teaches women survivors how to make honey and earn money, giving them independence and self-worth. These kinds of projects show the gospel in action, bringing healing, justice, and renewed life.

Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden argue that mission must include both preaching and transformation.[19] Moreover, Romans 12:2 reminds us: "Be transformed by the renewing of your minds." When survivors receive education and economic empowerment, they begin living with dignity and purpose, which is a holistic mission.

Mungure affirms that the process toward transformation should be governed by justice, whether in the church or in society. This will check imbalances in gender and power relations. The prophet Micah says, 'He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God (6:8)'. God wants people to remember the saving act through which God has shown fidelity to the covenant. Hence, people should offer themselves through a life of justice so that no one is victimised, but rather all relate in justice".[20]

Pastoral Counselling: Helpful but Not Enough

Many pastors said counselling is the main way the church responds to GBV. However, they also admitted they lack sufficient training in trauma, psychology, or legal matters.

Matinya, the coordinator of the Women and Children's Desk, said the church has no official manual to guide clergy on GBV cases. So, pastors often rely on Bible verses or personal judgment. Sadly, this can unintentionally harm survivors or repeat patriarchal ideas and practices.[21]

This lack of tools is what Rosemary Radford Ruether calls "theological silence" when the church does not name or fight the systems that allow abuse to happen.[22] Without proper training, even caring pastors might miss the chance to help survivors in the right way.

Using Scripture and Theology to Support Equality

Pastors like Kiula and Shani clearly use Scripture to speak about Equality. They often cite Genesis 1:27 ("God

[17] David J. Bosch, Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 401.

[18] Baraka Mungure, Holistic Mission, and the Role of the Church in Eradicating GBV in ELCT-WCD (Tumaini University Makumira, July 2025)

[19] Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden, eds., Mission as Transformation: A Theology of the Whole Gospel (Oxford: Regnum Books, 1999).

[20] Elieshi Mungure, "Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality: Pastoral-Theological Reflections from Africa," in Diakonia in a Gender Perspective, ed. Stephanie Dietrich et al. (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2016).

[21] Baraka Mungure, Holistic Mission, and the Role of the Church in Eradicating GBV in ELCT-WCD (Tumaini University Makumira, July 2025)

[22] Rosemary Radford Ruether, Sexism and God-Talk: Toward a Feminist Theology (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1993), 122.

created humanity in His image, male and female") and other verses, including Luke 4:18 and 1 Corinthians 12:12–26.

However, some Bible stories like Tamar's rape in 2 Samuel 13 are rarely discussed in churches. Cultural taboos stop these important conversations. Scholars like Phiri and Nadar argue that the church must "break the sacred silence" and use these texts to promote justice, not shame.[23]

Pastors agreed that seminaries like Tumaini University Makumira should teach about GBV, gender theology, and trauma care. Clergy need tools to read Scripture with fresh eyes so they can respond wisely and boldly.

Partnering for Justice

Church leaders consistently emphasise that collaborating with groups beyond the church's own structures is essential for a comprehensive and effective response to Gender-Based Violence (GBV). Mrs Bumi, the diocesan lawyer, highlighted the ELCT Women and Children's Desk (WCD) role in forging partnerships with a diverse range of stakeholders, including local government authorities, legal aid centres, and civil society organisations. These collaborations enable the church to extend support to survivors in multifaceted ways, providing not only spiritual care but also tangible access to justice, medical aid, and psychosocial services.[24].

This approach powerfully reflects the biblical call found in Micah 6:8: "Act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God." In this light, the church is not an isolated spiritual institution but a vital bridge connecting faith and concrete community action. By partnering with external agencies, the church multiplies its capacity to advocate for justice, protect survivors, and address the systemic issues that perpetuate violence and inequality.

Despite these benefits, many existing partnerships remain informal, often dependent on individual relationships rather than institutionalised frameworks. While goodwill and personal commitment have driven significant progress, the lack of formal structures sometimes limits the sustainability, coordination, and accountability of these efforts. Recognising this, the Diocese can strengthen and deepen these collaborations by establishing regular multi-sectoral forums. These forums would provide platforms for dialogue, joint planning, and sharing of best practices between church leaders, government officials, legal experts, and community advocates.

Additionally, creating clear referral systems is critical. Such systems would ensure that survivors of GBV receive timely and appropriate services, whether medical, legal, or psychosocial, with smooth transitions between agencies. Formalise referral pathways through memoranda of understanding (MOUs) that define roles, responsibilities, and confidentiality protocols. This would build survivor trust and enhance the efficiency of support networks.

Education and awareness-raising is another crucial pillar of this strengthened partnership. The ELCT-WCD can lead efforts to equip communities with knowledge of legal rights and available resources, helping to empower survivors and prevent further violence. Workshops, seminars, and community dialogues can demystify complex legal processes and reduce stigma associated with reporting abuse. By fostering an informed and engaged laity, the church not only provides direct assistance but also helps create a cultural environment intolerant of GBV.

The ELCT's collaborative approach, grounded in faith and justice, holds great promise for holistic transformation. By formalising partnerships, organising forums for coordinated action, establishing referral networks, and educating communities about their rights, the Diocese can elevate its mission from isolated efforts to a powerful movement for justice and healing.

[23] Isabel Apawo Phiri and Sarojini Nadar, African Women, Religion, and Health: Essays in Honour of Mercy Amba Oduyoye (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2006), 28–30.

[24] Baraka Mungure, Holistic Mission, and the Role of the Church in Eradicating GBV in ELCT-WCD (Tumaini University Makumira, July 2025)

Challenges: Silence and Confusion

Even though some leaders care deeply, some think that fighting GBV is only the government's responsibility. This shows how some leaders still separate church work from public action. It also suggests that theological education has not helped them connect spiritual care with social justice.

Silence around GBV also comes from deep-rooted traditions. Survivors, especially girls and women, are often told not to speak up, especially if the abuser is a relative or church person with some responsibilities or leadership position. Scholars like Trible and Oduyoye warn that if theology stays silent about this, the church loses its moral strength and lets harm continue.[25]

Theological Implications

This study shows that the church's ministry must include spiritual, mental, and physical care to bring social change and, in turn, transform the church and society at large. The Bible teaches that all people have God-given dignity (Genesis 1:27), and it also tells us to "seek justice and correct oppression" (Isaiah 1:17). GBV in our communities calls the church to look inward to check how its teachings, worship practices, and leadership may (even unintentionally) support silence or inequality.

This is an opportunity for theological training institutions such as Tumaini University Makumira and others to lead the change. Institutions are encouraged to design new courses on gender justice, trauma, healing, diakonia, and the church's public ministry. GBV is not just a "social issue;" it is part of the spiritual and bodily life of Christ. When survivors of GBV suffer silently, the whole church suffers likewise.

God's mission is peace (*shalom*) for everyone. That peace cannot exist when people of God, especially women and girls, live in fear and pain.

Pastoral and Institutional Implications

First, there are challenges faced by pastors when supporting survivors of GBV. Some pastors find themselves unprepared and uncertain when survivors of Gender-Based Violence come forward seeking help. Despite their spiritual role and pastoral care responsibilities, some clergy members still lack essential knowledge and practical skills to respond effectively. This includes knowing how to guide survivors toward appropriate medical care, legal protection, or psychological counselling. The absence of clear protocols or training often results in inadequate or inconsistent support, leaving survivors vulnerable and at risk. Moreover, this gap in response damages the credibility and trust that the community places in the church, potentially alienating those who need its refuge the most. Without pastoral confidence and competence in these matters, the church's mission to care for the whole person, body, mind, and spirit, remains incomplete.

Second, the need for institutional policies and gender frameworks. Another significant challenge is the absence of formalised diocesan policies or gender-responsive frameworks in many Church structures. Currently, responses to GBV vary dramatically from parish to parish, influenced by individual pastors' beliefs, experiences, and level of awareness. This lack of institutional consistency can lead to confusion, mixed messages, and even harm, as survivors may receive different levels of care depending on where they seek help. To foster meaningful, lasting impact, the church, and here, the ELCT-CWD, through its gender and mission departments, must move beyond goodwill and good intentions. It needs to establish clear, comprehensive, and enforceable policies that define how GBV cases should be handled, emphasising survivor dignity, medical, human, and legal rights, confidentiality, and other support they may need. These frameworks should include referral protocols, collaboration with external agencies, and accountability mechanisms. Only through such institutional commitment can the church become a reliable and safe haven for those affected by violence.

[25] Mercy Amba Oduyoye, Introducing African Women's Theology (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001).

Third, transform Church spaces into safe, healing communities. The required transformation goes beyond policy; it demands a cultural and spiritual shift within the church and communities. The Churches must be re-envisioned as more than places for worship and prayer; they should become safe spaces where survivors of GBV can find healing, education, and empowerment. This shift requires profound changes in how pastors and church leaders are trained, how worship services are structured, and how congregations engage with issues of justice and healing.

Training programs must equip clergy and lay leaders with trauma-informed approaches, gender sensitivity, and pastoral care skills specific to GBV. Worship content should reflect themes of liberation, restoration, and solidarity with survivors, helping communities confront injustice from a faith perspective. Furthermore, the church's outreach and engagement must foster open dialogue, encourage community education on GBV prevention, and create support networks that empower survivors to speak freely without fear of stigma or reprisal. This transformation rests on a commitment to justice and healing as central pillars of faith practice, underscoring the church's role as a sanctuary and advocate for vulnerable individuals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To make its holistic mission more effective in addressing gender-based violence (GBV), the ELCT-WCD should take several important steps. First, it should create a Gender and Protection Policy that gives pastors clear guidance on how to counsel survivors, when and how to report abuse, what help victims can receive, and how to use compassionate, respectful theological language. This policy would help create a consistent and safe environment in every parish. Second, seminaries should introduce lessons on gender justice, trauma care, and how faith can be practised in ways that support public life and social healing.

Educating future pastors about these issues will help them respond to GBV with wisdom and courage. Third, every parish should appoint both a male and a female GBV focal person who is trained to listen well, document cases confidentially, and connect survivors with medical, legal, and counselling services.

Fourth, the WLCT-WCD should build strong partnerships with hospitals, legal offices, human rights organisations, and community groups so that survivors receive full support beyond the church. Fifth, preaching and Bible study should be used to confront harmful teachings and silence around GBV. This includes speaking clearly about justice, respectful relationships, and dignity for all people, especially when explaining verses like Ephesians 5:22–24 through the lens of mutual love and Equality, as highlighted in Ephesians 5:21. Finally, the church should regularly check if its programs are truly helping survivors, using honest feedback and ethical standards to improve where needed and ensure lasting impact.

CONCLUSION

this study has examined holistic mission and the role of the church in addressing gender-based violence in ELCT-WCD. The findings indicate that GBV is associated with patriarchal attitudes, economic inequalities, harmful cultural beliefs, and a culture of silence. The study also hights the gap between biblical teachings on human dignity, justice, and equality, and some practical responses of some church leader and institution.

The study demonstrates that the church has an important role in addressing GBV through theological education, prevention, pastoral care, survivor support, advocacy, social and economic empowerment. Initiatives such as Binti mama project and the Urambo beekeeping initiative illustrate practical expression of holistic mission. However, these efforts need to be strengthened by clear institution guidelines, appropriate training and coordinated support systems.

Future research should examine the implementation and effectiveness of church based GBV prevention and response initiatives. Comparative studies involving other dioceses could also help identify effective practices and inform broader church polices.

Holistic mission requires the church to translate its theological commitments into practical action. By integrating spiritual care with justice, prevention, protection and empowerment, ELCT-WCD can strengthen its contribution to building safer, more inclusive, and more compassionate communities.

As Miroslav Volf says: "There can be no reconciliation without justice, no embrace without truth."[26] The church's voice must be heard not only from the pulpit, but in schools, hospitals, courtrooms, and quiet places where survivors wait for hope. A commitment to justice brings transformation and hope for humanity, especially for the vulnerable, and it happens when the gospel is preached and lived holistically.

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