

# community

The New Apostolic Church around the world

03/2015/EN

## Trusting in the power of the Holy Spirit

Refugees: Holy Communion  
is celebrated everywhere

Catechism: Man in need of  
redemption

Administration: Their busi-  
ness is to serve the Church

New Apostolic Church  
International



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# | Unity

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Many of the trips I take leave a lasting and especially beautiful impression, and on the way home I often think about how exciting, interesting, and diverse our Church is!

But this diversity does not always make things easy. We are at home in almost all countries of the world, speak hundreds of languages, come from the most diverse cultures, and have our own opinions.

For Jesus Christ, however, it is important that we are one. He even prayed for this in a special moment, shortly before He was arrested.

But how is this supposed to work? We cannot achieve this on our own, but we can do it with God. The best example for oneness is the Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

- They want the same.
- They share everything.
- They do not speak much about themselves but testify of the others.
- And together they work toward the same goal.

And how do we manage to become one in this way? The first step was taken by Jesus Christ Himself. He became man in order to share everything with us. He gave us His life. Through the baptism with water and the Spirit He lives in us. And through Holy Communion His life can unfold in us.

The rest is up to us. We have to make sure that God really lives in us. The more we are united with Jesus Christ, the easier it is to be united among each other. Let us work on this so that

- we want the same as He does. He wants us to enter into eternal fellowship with Him.



■ NAC International

- we share everything with Him. His thoughts are our thoughts. His feelings are our feelings. His friends are our friends.
- we bear witness of Jesus Christ. When we do this, we do not speak so much about our own deeds, but speak about the things He has done, about His love and His sacrifice.
- we work with Him toward His goal. Let us engage ourselves together with Him in His work.

Unity does not mean that we all have to become the same. It is not required that we give up our personality, our tradition, or our culture. We are all different, but have one and the same will: we follow Jesus Christ.

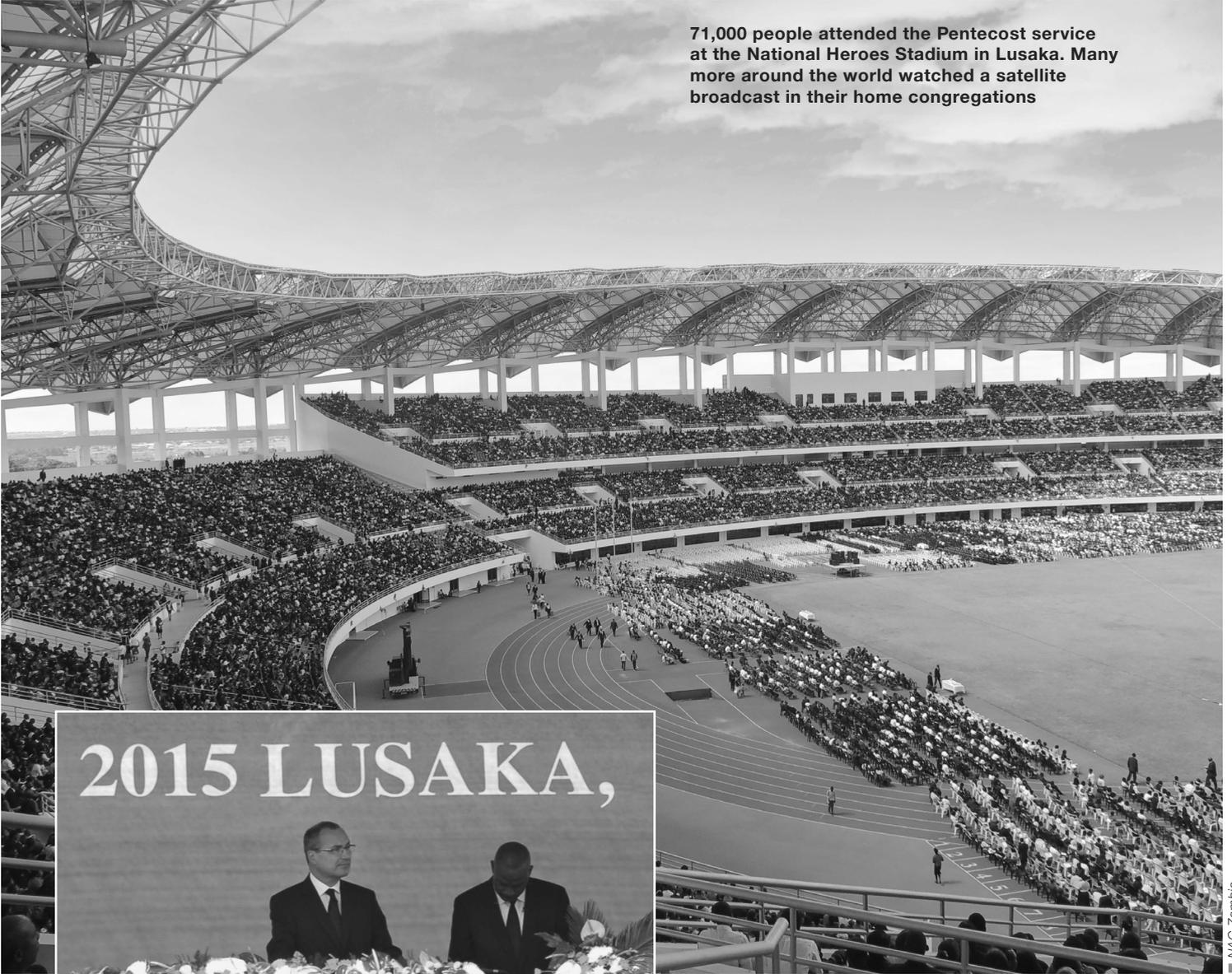
Dear brothers and sisters, let us stick together in good and in bad times. Let us unite ourselves in praising and worshipping God instead of criticizing each other, and let us pool our strengths to serve the Lord.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive script that appears to read 'Jean-Luc Schneider'.

Jean-Luc Schneider

71,000 people attended the Pentecost service at the National Heroes Stadium in Lusaka. Many more around the world watched a satellite broadcast in their home congregations



# Pentecost 2015

Revelation 22: 17

*“And the Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come!’”*

Dear brothers and sisters here in the stadium and in the connected congregations, first we will listen to a Bible reading. For this year's Pentecost we will hear a passage from the prophet Joel and another one from Ephesians.

*"And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days" (Joel 2: 28–29).*

*"For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen" (Ephesians 3: 14–21).*

*Our joy in Christ is based on our trust in God. And the stronger our trust in God is, the bigger our joy in Christ is.*

My dear brothers and sisters, and dear guests, it is a great joy to celebrate this Pentecost feast here in Lusaka in Zambia. Nearly all Apostles from Africa are present. And yesterday we praised and thanked God for His grace, because God has blessed His work here in Zambia and in Africa, and the work has had a wonderful development on this continent. Thousands of congregations are connected with us all over the world. And our wish is to share with them our joy. May they feel the joy in Christ that lives in our hearts here in Lusaka.

I am aware that in some places, in some hearts, there might be a hint of sadness when brothers and sisters look at the African continent and see that there are so many children of God here. Some may be a little sad, thinking,

"Why do they have such a blessing in Zambia and we are such a small number?" It is a fact that in many other African countries there are far fewer members. That is also the case in Europe. And sometimes the membership is even on the decline. And then one could be sad, thinking, "What is wrong with us?"

Think of the history of the church. It began in Jerusalem with the pouring out of the Spirit. And then the church began to grow. After a certain time there were more Christians



in western Asia than in Jerusalem. And one could have thought, “Oh, did Jesus lose the battle in Jerusalem? Now there are more Christians elsewhere.” And then the church developed in Europe. And there were many Christians, and later on many New Apostolic Christians. Did Jesus lose the battle in Asia? Today there are more New Apostolic Christians in Africa than in Europe. What is wrong with that? We have to keep in mind that for God such notions as countries, borders, or tribes are not relevant. Paul said, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3: 28). All of these notions do not matter for God. What is important is that those who are called by God answer this call, believe, and remain faithful until the end. That is important. Don’t let these thoughts dampen our joy in Christ.

In Africa and some other countries some are sad because they have to live their faith in very difficult conditions. Because of the great number of children of God, for instance, they cannot afford to have well-fitted church buildings. Sometimes they have no buildings at all and lack the most basic material in the church. And when they look at Europe or at South Africa, they could think, “They have such wonderful churches, and we have to live in such difficult conditions.” I can understand these thoughts too. But, brothers and sisters, don’t forget that the material conditions are not important; they are not decisive for salvation. What is decisive is that those who are called answer this call, and believe

and follow Jesus and remain faithful until the end. We do not want all of these considerations to dampen our joy in Christ.

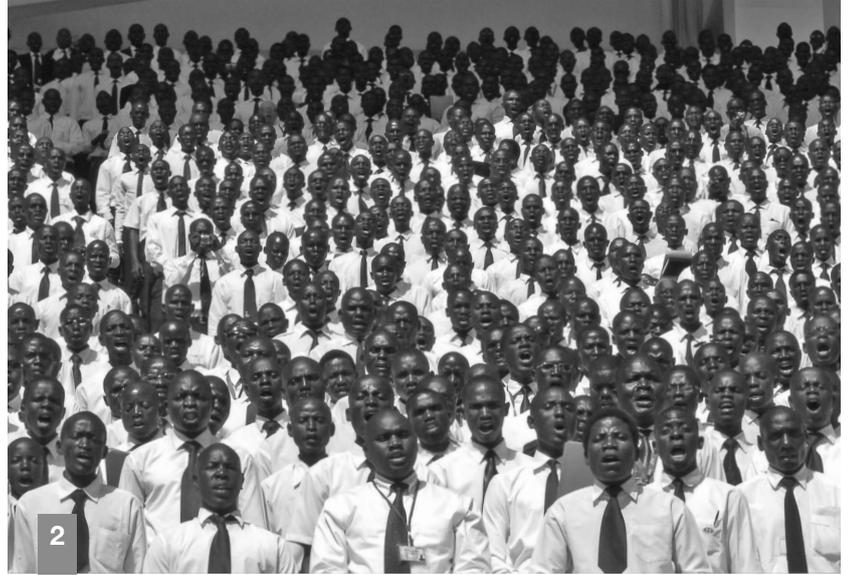
Our joy in Christ is based on our trust in God. And the stronger our trust in God is the bigger our joy in Christ is. Apostle Paul once wrote the following to the Corinthians. “God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it” (1 Corinthians 10: 13). That is a wonderful description of the trust in God. We trust in the faithfulness of God. “Temptation” here means all the tribulations we have to go through. And God is faithful and promises us in all the tribulations we have to go through, “I will make you a way of escape.” What is this way of escape? That is some spectacular miracle.

This way of escape is the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in the church. That is the way of escape God prepares for us. Pentecost is the feast of joy of the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in the church.

My dear brothers and sisters, let us trust in the power of the Holy Spirit. That is the basis of our joy in Christ. The Holy Spirit is present and active in the church of Christ. Wherever the gospel is proclaimed, the Holy Spirit is at work. Wherever in the church of Christ the gospel is proclaimed, the Holy Spirit is present and active. And we trust the power of the Holy Spirit also in this respect: the gospel will

*Those belonging to the bride of Christ  
are filled with the Holy Spirit.  
So they say to everybody as well,  
“Come as you are. God loves you  
and so do I! Whoever you are,  
God wants you to be saved.”*





1| The Bible reading at the beginning of the service from the book of Joel and the letter to the Ephesians was done by a sister and a brother  
2-4| The music delighted and inspired everyone: the choir, the members of the orchestra, the Chief Apostle, and the listeners

be proclaimed until the end. By the end of the kingdom of peace, all of mankind will have heard the good news, the gospel.

The Holy Spirit is active in the church of Christ through Holy Baptism with water. The Holy Spirit calls man to, "Come to God!", and those who believe in Jesus Christ can be baptized with water. The Holy Spirit calls through Holy Baptism with water, "Come, enter the church of Christ and become a member on the body of Christ." Through the activity of the Holy Spirit in Holy Baptism, God provides the strength we need to fight the battle against sin.

That is the power of the Holy Spirit in baptism. He provides the Christian with the strength he needs to fight the battle against sin. We do not need to obey the evil one. We have the strength needed to fight the battle against him. We are no longer slaves of the evil one. We have the power to resist and say, "No, I don't need to become a tool of the evil one." In James it says, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you" (James 4: 7). And that is a joy in Christ that every Christian, every faithful Christian, can experience, because through baptism with water he has received the strength he needs to fight this battle and to resist the Devil.

The power of the Holy Spirit comes to its full expression through the Apostle ministry. Jesus has sent His Apostles to call the souls who are elected to become part of the bride of Christ. Together the people who are elected are to become part of the royal priesthood. And once again, let us trust the power of the Holy Spirit. All those who are elected by God to become part of the bride of Christ will be called by the Apostle ministry. They will be sealed by the Apostles and this is how the bride will be prepared. There is absolutely no doubt about it. Let us trust in the Holy Spirit and His power. Then we can feel the full joy in Christ knowing that whatever happens the bride will be prepared by the Apostles.

We can experience the power of the Holy Spirit in Holy Communion. The Holy Spirit calls us through Holy Communion, "Come and enter the fellowship of the Risen One!" When the congregation celebrates Holy Communion, the power of the Holy Spirit makes it possible that Jesus Christ is truly present in the elements of Holy Communion. This power is not dependent on where Holy Communion is celebrated or under which circumstances. We can experience the presence of Christ in Holy Communion in a congregation in a refugee camp as well as in one of our beautiful churches. One can experience the presence of Christ

in Holy Communion in a small congregation in Australia and in a big one in Zambia or Cape Town. The power of the Holy Spirit is not dependent on the number of people gathering. Whenever children of God celebrate Holy Communion, Jesus is present through the Holy Spirit. That is the foundation of our joy in Christ.

"And the Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!'" The bridal congregation is characterized by her love for Christ. The faithful long for the fellowship with Christ. Their first wish is to be with Jesus. That is why they pray and plead, "Please come!"

**Right: The Chief Apostle called District Apostles Barnes, Tshisekedi, and Ehrich to assist. Pictured here is Tshitshi Tshisekedi (left) with an interpreter**  
**Bottom: Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider during the closing prayer at the end of the service**



**Above: District Apostles Michael Deppner, Michael Ehrich, Joseph Ekhuya, Markus Fehlbaum, and Urs Hebeisen (left to right)**



A day before the service, on Saturday, the African Apostles, the District Apostles and District Apostle Helpers gathered for this group photo

But it says here, “The Spirit and the bride ...” That is another characteristic of the bridal congregation: the souls belonging to the congregation of the bride are filled with the Holy Spirit. Their thoughts, words, and their actions are guided by the Holy Spirit. Hence they say the same thing as the Holy Spirit.

We have heard that the Holy Spirit tells everybody, “Come, God loves you!” And those belonging to the bride of Christ are filled with the Holy Spirit. So they say to everybody as well, “Come, God loves you. Come as you are. God loves you and so do I! Whoever you are, God wants you to be saved.”

Filled with the Holy Spirit the bridal congregation calls everybody, “Come, God has forgiven you and so have we.” Can this call be heard in our congregations?

Where the souls are filled with the Holy Spirit, one can hear and see that on account of the power of the Holy Spirit they are able to tell their neighbour, “Come, I have forgiven you.” The bride is longing for unity and reconciliation, and because the bride wants to become like Jesus Christ, she looks

for those who have left the fold—as Jesus did. The bride calls those who have left the flock, “Please come back! Maybe you have been disappointed by one of us. We are sorry, please forgive us. But come back to Jesus!”

Dear brothers and sisters, these are a few thoughts for this Pentecost feast. We do not want sad thoughts to dampen our joy in Christ. We can experience the power of the Holy Spirit, and we trust this power because it will be proclaimed until the end.

## CORE THOUGHTS

The presence of the Holy Spirit can be experienced there where the gospel is proclaimed, where the sacraments are administered, and where the bride of Christ is being prepared through the Apostles.

# | Being credible witnesses

On Sunday, 17 June 2015, Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider joined 3,300 young New Apostolic Christians in Erfurt (Central Germany) for their Day of the Youth. Responsible for the 48,000 brothers and sisters in this part of Germany is District Apostle Wilfried Klingler. He is assisted by five Apostles and 2,800 ministers.



“Maybe this has contributed to my becoming a little younger,” the Chief Apostle said at the end of the service with a smile, as he thanked the youth

God has specifically chosen us. Similar to Saul, our election became a reality when we encountered the Lord. Divine election is an expression of grace. We do not deserve it nor can it be explained by reason. It is a mystery that can only be grasped in faith (*Catechism* 4.5.3) and it is a conscious choice by God. He has deliberately and specifically chosen us because we are who we are.

God has elected us so that we know His will. He has chosen us to “be conformed to the image of His Son” (Romans 8: 29). He wants us to follow the way paved by Jesus Christ: faith, the rebirth out of water and Spirit, partaking of Holy Communion, and following. He



wants us to be His witnesses. He expects that we, like every Christian, work along in His plan of salvation by spreading the gospel (*Catechism* 4.5.3). On top of that He wants to make us the royal priesthood in order to proclaim the gospel to all human beings who have ever lived, in all time periods. That is the purpose of our election.

■ NAC Central Germany



District Apostle Leonard R. Kolb  
(USA)



District Apostle Rüdiger Krause  
(Northern Germany)



District Apostle Wilfried Klingler  
(Central Germany)

He wants the elected to learn to recognize the love of Jesus Christ in His sacrifice, His saving will, the help of Jesus Christ in their everyday lives, and His saving activity in order to save the neighbour. The Holy Spirit instructs us in such a way that in every person we see a soul that God wants to save.

The Holy Spirit enables us to hear the voice of the Lord. We can recognize it in the sermon and in the counsel given to us by our parents and the ministers. We also hear His voice in our hearts.

Thanks to the Holy Spirit we can encounter the Lord in the celebration of Holy Communion and in the fellowship of our brothers and sisters. In His light we see Jesus in those who need our help (Matthew 25: 36).

A witness gives an account of what she or he has seen and heard. Witnesses of Christ do not need encyclopaedic knowledge nor do they need to convince others or prove something by way of a theological discourse. God expects of us that we share what we have seen and heard and experienced, and so confirm the truthfulness of the gospel of Christ.

That is why it is important that we live our faith. It can happen that there is a discrepancy between the theory and the practice, between what is preached from the altar and what we actually experience. We receive neither strength, nor peace, nor the joy that has been promised us. Let us not get used to such a situation, thinking that it is normal that the theory deviates from the reality. This would call our election in question. How could we be credible witnesses if we did not see and hear the Lord? How could we confirm

the truth of the Apostles' doctrine if it were just one theory among many for us?

Let us secure our election. Let us show God that we want to receive what He has promised us. Let us humbly ask Him for help. Let us plead with Him like a beggar and be as persistent as the widow in the parable of the Lord (Luke 18: 3). Let us not hesitate to ask our ministers to intercede for us. God will hear these prayers!

## CORE THOUGHTS

*Acts 22: 14–15*

**“Then he said, ‘The God of our fathers has chosen you that you should know His will, and see the Just One, and hear the voice of His mouth. For you will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard.’”**

God has chosen us to be conformed to the image of His Son and to be His witnesses. Witnesses of Christ confirm what they see, hear, and experience with Christ. Our prayers testify of our earnest desire to receive what God has promised us.



NAC USA

# Growing faith and increasing love

On 14 June 2015 Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider conducted a divine service in Woodbury, New York. He was accompanied by District Apostles Klingler and Kolb, and the Apostles Buehner, Diaz, Fendt, Flores, Hecht, Hoffmann, Lara, Marin, Orlofski, T. Schmidt, and Yopez.

About an hour's drive from Manhattan, in the more affluent suburbs of New York, is Woodbury, a hamlet with a population of about 10,000. The sleepy little town, located in Orange County on Long Island, was raised from its slumber a few years ago when one of the largest American outlet centres opened here. There are daily bus trips from Manhattan to the outlet centre in Woodbury. The central location and access to highways was also the key why Woodbury was chosen as the location for a new and large New Apostolic flagship congregation in 2013. The new church, located in an office park, became the new home for the congregations of Bayside, Uniondale, and Dix Hills. Since a portion of the St. James congregation also joined the newly established

congregation in Woodbury on account of the good access, Woodbury now has a membership of approximately 250. On his first visit to Woodbury, Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider placed Apostle Wilbert K. Hoffmann into retirement. He was retiring prematurely because of his failing health. Wilbert Hoffmann had been active as an Apostle for 16 years.

## Three steps in our life of faith

Apostle Paul saw it as his task to prepare the bride of Christ. In the second letter to the Thessalonians we can read how God blessed his endeavours. The blessing of God was not

Right: District Apostle Wilfried Klingler  
 Below right: Chief Apostle Schneider  
 places Apostle Wilbert Karl Hoffmann  
 into retirement (left)



reflected in the size of the congregation or in an absence of problems. The sign of God's blessing was a growing faith and an increase in the love among the believers in the congregation. The following are three touchstones that indicate how strong our faith is

- in the word of God. God reveals Himself through His word. Most of the Christians who were baptized through Paul did not witness any miracles. In fact, for many of them the problems only started when they became Christians. Their faith in Jesus Christ rested solely on the Apostle's preaching. Our faith in the Lord does not rest solely on signs, but on the word of God.
- in the love of God. The love of God wants to save us and lead us into eternal fellowship with God. It comes to expression in His blessing (see *Catechism* 4.6).
- in the promise of God. God has promised us that we will be with God in heaven and have eternal joy there. In order to reach this goal we have to follow the commandments, receive the sacraments, and remain faithful.



### Three steps towards Christian love

To become like Jesus, we have to learn to love as He loves. Where do we stand with regard to our development in this respect?

- Love for our neighbour begins with forgiveness. Have we learned to forgive more, faster, and more often?
- God demands that we love our neighbour as ourselves. Jesus' advice was very concrete, "Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them" (Matthew 7: 12).
- Love for one's neighbour also includes the wish for his salvation. Some see this as an invitation to tell him what all he still has to change. Jesus, however, chooses a different way. He loves us as we are. He has proven His love for us through His sacrifice, and still proves it. This unconditional love urges us to respond and to change out of love for Him. It is our task to let the neighbour experience the love of Jesus Christ. Once he succumbs to the love of Jesus Christ, he will change out of love for Jesus.

## CORE THOUGHTS

*2 Thessalonians 1: 3*

**"We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other."**

To prepare for the return of Christ means that our faith in God's word, His love, and in His promise grows. It also means that we love our neighbour, something we demonstrate by forgiving him, by treating him as we ourselves want to be treated, and by letting him experience the love of Christ.

# Called to be a blessing for all people

Nearly 10,700 brothers and sisters participated in the divine service in Gombong in Indonesia on 28 June 2015. It was transmitted to 88 locations in the country. Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider celebrated the divine service in English, which was interpreted into Bahasa and Mandarin.

Despite a densely packed agenda during his four-day visit to Asia—divine services in Gendeng, Gombong, and Singapore, a concert in Yogyakarta, a visit to the administrative offices, and a tour of the oldest New Apostolic Church in Indonesia—District Apostle Urs Hebeisen had set aside enough time for personal encounters with the Chief Apostle in a smaller circle. For instance on the train journey from Yogyakarta to Gombong in a colonial-style Pullman carriage, which the Chief Apostle, the District Apostles, and their wives enjoyed, or at the home of Apostle Isnugroho. District Apostle Hebeisen had also scheduled a visit to the Church administrative offices and a drive to Bandung, where the Chief Apostle visited the retired District Apostle Alfons Tanshtikno, who can no

longer attend the divine services because of his failing health.

## Called to be a blessing

The Lord has called us in order to bless us: He wants to give us eternal life. He bestows many blessings on us today which help us to prepare for His return.

Every single one of us is also called to be a blessing, and all of us *can* be a blessing! This does not require special gifts or skills. We have all received the gift of the Holy Spirit, so let us give the Holy Spirit room to develop in us, and to guide and inspire us.

Welcoming ceremony at our church in Gombong in Central Java



MAC South-East Asia



The divine service in Gombong served as preparation for the divine service for the departed on 5 July. Pictured (clockwise from the top) is Apostle Zeng Fan Wei surrounded by the two interpreters, Chief Apostle Schneider at the altar (on the left) and with members after the service



Compassion is a strong feeling of tenderness and concern for someone who is suffering, and the desire to help and relieve this person's distress.

- Jesus saw the suffering of the blind beggar who cried out to the Lord to have mercy on him (Mark 10: 48). The Lord helped Bartimaeus. The people around him thought he was a nuisance and told him to be quiet. Let us learn to see the suffering of others and to share it.
- The Roman centurion came to Jesus to ask Him to help his dying servant. His faith in the power of the Lord's word, and his confession of it, was essential so that his servant could be healed (Luke 7: 7). Let us be a blessing for those who suffer here on earth as well as in yonder world by interceding for them and proving our faith in God's word to them.

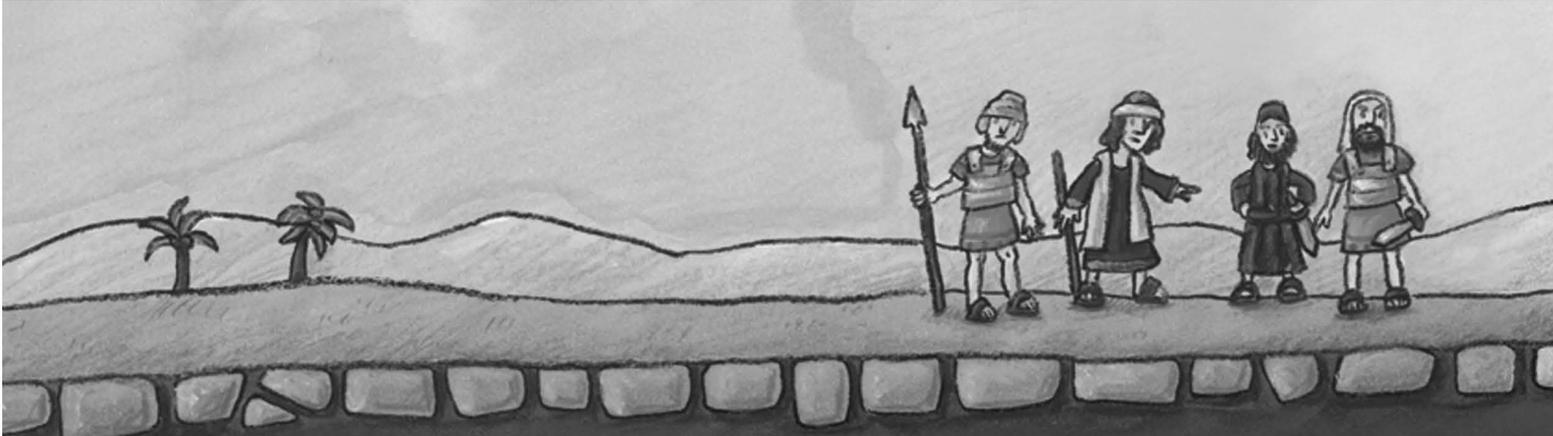
Our brother, first of all, is the one who shares our faith. But let us not forget that all human beings are united in a spirit of brotherhood: we all have the same Creator, our Father, who cares for us. Moses proved to be very generous towards his brothers, his people. God wanted to consume the people for worshipping the golden calf, and only make a great nation of Moses (Exodus 32: 10). But Moses interceded for the people and reminded God that He had promised to save the whole nation, thus bringing his solidarity to expression with his brothers. The Lord gave His life for all sinners. We are not better than others; no one deserves salvation. Let us pray for all sinners and thereby show God that we want everyone to be saved!

## CORE THOUGHTS

*1 Peter 3: 8–9*

**“Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.”**

God has chosen us in order to bless us and to give us eternal life. We have been called to be a blessing for those who are suffering, for the sinners, and even for our adversaries.



## DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN

(DANIEL 6)

*When Darius became king he appointed 120 new governors. He also appointed three princes to supervise the governors and look after the king's interests. One of them was Daniel. He was very wise—much wiser than all the other governors and princes. The king wanted to put him in charge of the whole empire. The other officials were jealous and conspired against Daniel.*

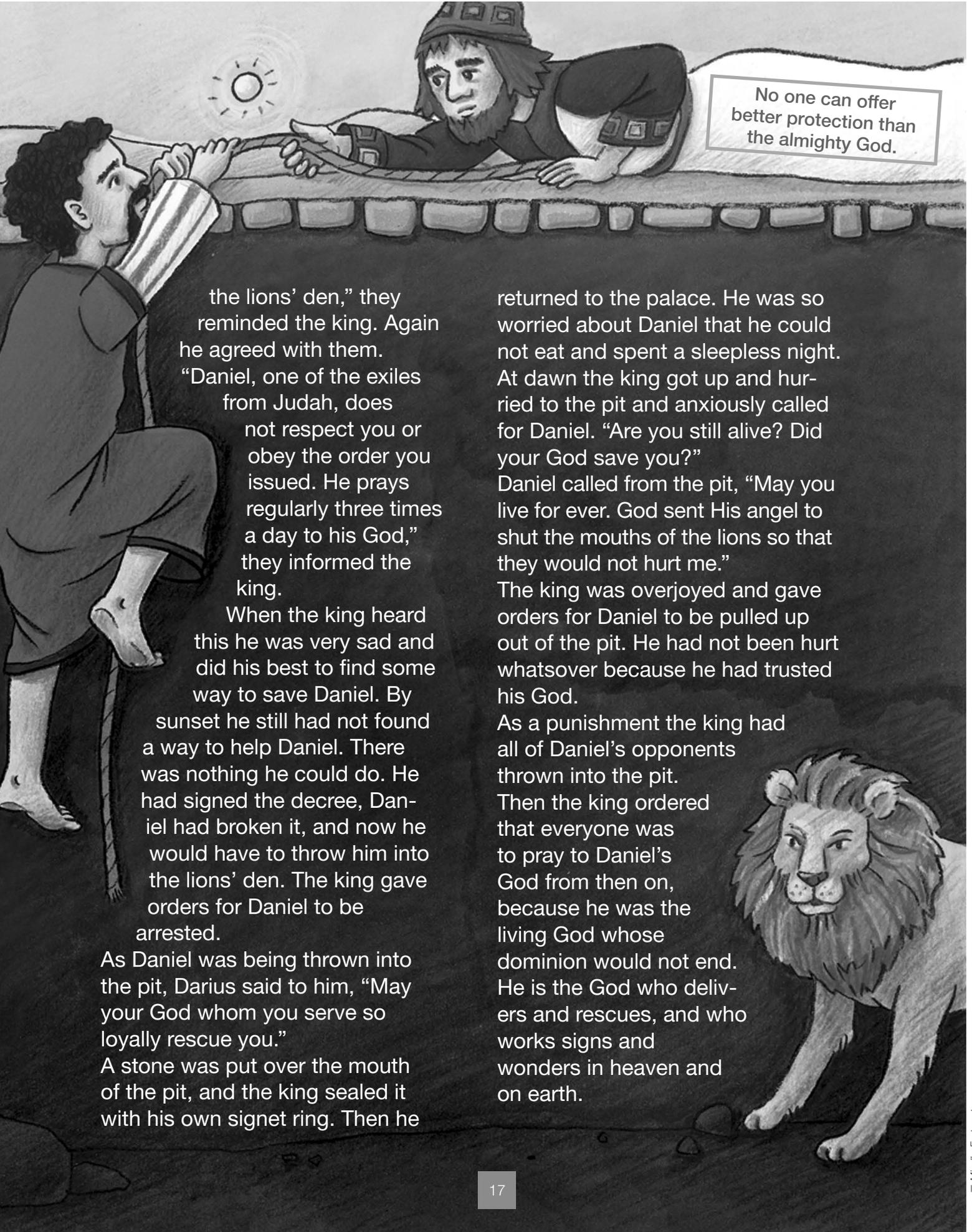
No matter how hard they tried, they just could not find anything wrong or dishonest with Daniel. "We are not going to find anything of which to accuse Daniel unless it is something in con-

nection with his religion," they finally concluded.

Then the officials had an idea. They went to see the king and said, "Give orders that for thirty days no one be permitted to request anything from any god or from any man except from you. Anyone who violates this order is to be thrown into the lions' den." King Darius signed this written decree. When Daniel learned that the decree had been signed he went home. But not even this written order could stop him from praying and giving thanks to his God. He continued to pray to his God as was his custom since early days.

When Daniel's enemies observed him praying they went to the king to accuse Daniel. "Your Majesty, you have signed a decree that no one is to request anything from any god or from any man except you for the next thirty days."

"Yes," said Darius, "I signed that." "And any one who does not keep to this decree is to be thrown into



No one can offer better protection than the almighty God.

the lions' den," they reminded the king. Again he agreed with them.

"Daniel, one of the exiles from Judah, does not respect you or obey the order you issued. He prays regularly three times a day to his God," they informed the king.

When the king heard this he was very sad and did his best to find some way to save Daniel. By sunset he still had not found a way to help Daniel. There was nothing he could do. He had signed the decree, Daniel had broken it, and now he would have to throw him into the lions' den. The king gave orders for Daniel to be arrested.

As Daniel was being thrown into the pit, Darius said to him, "May your God whom you serve so loyally rescue you."

A stone was put over the mouth of the pit, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring. Then he

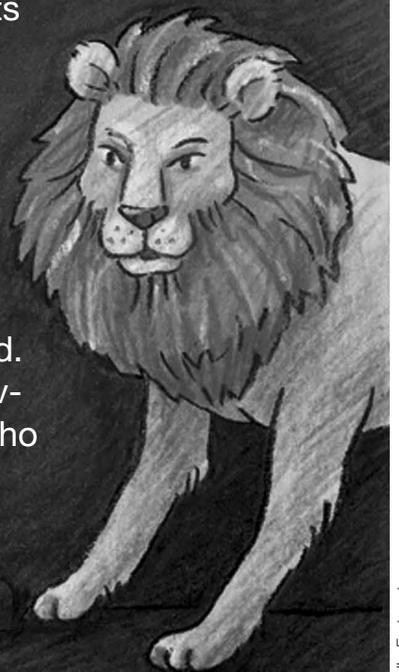
returned to the palace. He was so worried about Daniel that he could not eat and spent a sleepless night. At dawn the king got up and hurried to the pit and anxiously called for Daniel. "Are you still alive? Did your God save you?"

Daniel called from the pit, "May you live for ever. God sent His angel to shut the mouths of the lions so that they would not hurt me."

The king was overjoyed and gave orders for Daniel to be pulled up out of the pit. He had not been hurt whatsoever because he had trusted his God.

As a punishment the king had all of Daniel's opponents thrown into the pit.

Then the king ordered that everyone was to pray to Daniel's God from then on, because he was the living God whose dominion would not end. He is the God who delivers and rescues, and who works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth.



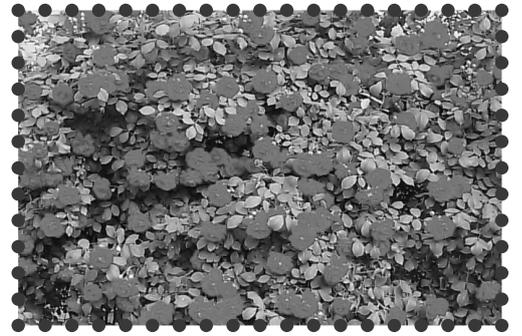


## AT NADESHDA'S IN DUSHANBE IN TAJIKISTAN



Hello, my name is **Nadeshda**, I am happy to be able to tell you a little bit about myself. I was born on 16 February 2008 and I am seven years old. I started school this year. I live in Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan.

This is my family: **Papa Sergey**, **Mama Katya**, my **sisters Sasha and Liora**, and me. My father is an Evangelist in our congregation. In December 2013 **District Apostle Wolfgang Nadolny** from Germany came to our congregation and sealed my little sister. She is a child of God just like me now.



In Tajikistan there are four New Apostolic congregations, one of them here in Dushanbe. In the summer there are a lot of flowers and shrubs around our church: lilac trees, jasmine bushes, lilies, irises, and a **big rose bush**. There is also a vineyard, and the members of the congregation often share the delicious grapes.



In this photo you can see our **extended family**: my grandfather, my two grandmothers, my three aunts and three uncles, my cousin, my dad, Sasha, and me. At holiday time and special occasions we all get together.



I like to come here. Not just for service but also during the week when I help keep the **grounds around the church** clean or water the flowers. In winter I help clear the snow. I also like the Christian holidays at church.

These pictures of me were taken at our main square in Dushanbe. This is our **flag pole**. It is 165 metres tall. It is the tallest flag-pole in the world, and you can see the Tajik flag flying from everywhere in Dushanbe because it towers over all the buildings.



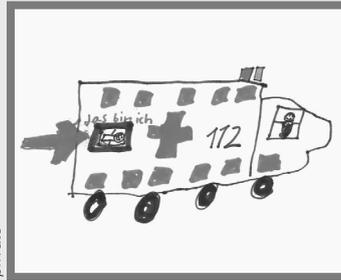
Ninety-three per cent our country consists of **mountains**. In the summer we often spend our holidays there. We also have congregational outings in the mountains. The air is cleaner in the mountains, the water cool, and everything is very green. I love to go there. You can find lots of different shaped stones there. We don't have any pets, but I dream of having a dog. Also I would love to go on a plane one day ...



# Letter-box

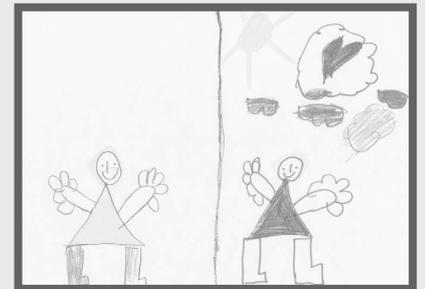


**GOD OFTEN ANSWERS OUR PRAYERS, BUT NOT ALWAYS. TELL US ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES!**



"I had an accident and a knock on my head. For a short while I was unconscious. In hospital I prayed that I wouldn't have a scar and that I would soon be better. The Lord helped me."  
**Noa, 9**

"I prayed that I would soon be better. And I was."  
**Sarah, 7**



"I prayed that I wouldn't have an accident with my new bike. And I didn't."  
**Elia, 10**



"I prayed with my dad that I wouldn't have any nightmares. It worked."  
**Diva, 8**



# Man in need of redemption

In September this year, the *Catechism of the New Apostolic Church in Questions and Answers* will be published in book form. *community* presents excerpts of some of the 750 questions and answers. In this issue we will look at man’s need of redemption and God’s commandments.

## **Why are human beings in need of redemption?**

Since the fall into sin, all human beings have been sinners: they have been tempted to sin by the evil one. No human being can live without sin. Each one is mired in sin. It is from this condition that God desires to liberate—in other words, redeem—mankind.

## **What does “redemption” mean?**

The original meaning of “redemption” had to do with the act of untying ropes and shackles. In the context of the sacrifice of Jesus, “redemption” refers to the liberation of human beings bound by the shackles of the evil one.

## **What is related in Holy Scripture concerning the fall into sin?**

God had commanded Adam and Eve not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which stood in the middle of the garden of Eden. God also made them aware of the consequences of breaking this commandment, “For in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die” (Genesis 2: 17). The Devil influenced the first human beings and awakened doubt in God’s word, “You will not surely die.

For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil” (Genesis 3: 4, 5). Adam and Eve gave in to temptation. They rebelled against God, transgressed His commandment, and ate of the fruit of the tree. This disobedience toward God is described as the fall into sin.

## **What were the consequences for mankind of the fall into sin?**

The fall into sin brought about changes in the lives of human beings, which they could not reverse. They began to be afraid of God and hid themselves from Him. The relationship of human beings toward one another also suffered, as did their relationship with the creation. Since then, the life of man has been filled with toil—and has been limited. “For dust you are, and to dust you shall return” (Genesis 3: 19). Another consequence of the fall into sin was the separation between mankind and God: God drove the first two human beings from the garden of Eden (cf. Genesis 3: 23–24).

*“Therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. So He drove out the*

*man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life” (Genesis 3: 23–24).*

#### **What is the distinction between sin and guilt?**

Sin is absolute. It can therefore not be relativized. It separates from God. By contrast we may assume that God, in His righteousness and mercy, assesses the degree of guilt an individual incurs with Him through sin differently in each case.

#### **What is the task of the believer?**

Human beings are called upon to accept God’s word, trust in it, and act in accordance with it. Jesus Christ demanded, “You believe in God, believe also in Me” (John 14: 1). He promised that “whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3: 16). He also emphasized the consequence of unbelief in all its implications, “For if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins” (John 8: 24).

*“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10: 17).*

#### **What is the foundation for salvation?**

Jesus Christ is the author of eternal salvation, “And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him” (Hebrews 5: 9). He is the only Mediator between God and man (cf. 1 Timothy 2: 5). Acts 4: 12 attests, “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” Jesus Christ is the Saviour sent by God. He is the Redeemer who has conquered sin. In Him human beings find salvation from the harm caused by sin: the sacrifice that Jesus brought on the cross makes liberation from sin—and the undoing of permanent separation from God—possible.

*Mediator: On the one hand Jesus Christ is a Mediator in the sense that He mediates between God and mankind. This means that He represents mankind before God, and God before mankind. He is the Advocate of mankind before God, and acquaints human beings with the divine will. On the other hand, as Mediator He is also the way of salvation that leads back into fellowship with God.*

*“For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all” (1 Timothy 2: 5, 6).*

#### **How can salvation be attained today?**

No one can attain salvation on his own. Human beings attain salvation by believing in Jesus Christ and availing themselves of the sacraments and the word of God, which Jesus Christ has made available for the salvation of the world.

#### **What form of salvation will the bridal congregation experience at the return of Christ?**

The bridal congregation will already enter into eternal fellowship with God at the return of Christ in the marriage feast in heaven.

#### **When will God’s plan of salvation be fulfilled?**

According to Holy Scripture, the plan of salvation will be fulfilled in the new creation.

#### **What does election signify from the perspective of the gospel?**

From the perspective of the gospel, election is a gift of God’s love. Human beings have the freedom to decide whether to accept or reject this gift. Election by God does not mean that the actions of human beings are predetermined.

#### **What is the result of accepting this election?**

God elects human beings for their own salvation as well as the salvation of others. Whenever God elects anyone, there is a certain task or responsibility associated with it. Acceptance of one’s election in faith means following Jesus Christ, the author of salvation, conscientiously. This involves arranging one’s life in accordance with the gospel. This attracts the blessing of God. Election also has effects for the future: when Jesus Christ establishes His kingdom of peace, the royal priesthood will proclaim the glad tidings of salvation in Christ to all human beings. Those who partake in the first resurrection are elected to this task.



# | God's commandments

## What is the function of God's commandments?

God has given commandments to mankind. In them He proclaims His will for the benefit of mankind. The commandments bring to expression how human beings should structure their relationship with God. In addition, the commandments are the foundation for positive relationships between human beings.

## With what attitude should human beings obey the commandments of God?

Those who recognize God in faith as the Almighty, Omniscient, and Loving One will inquire into His will, and will endeavour to align their thoughts and actions with the will of God, that is, in accordance with His commandments. In the knowledge that God gave the commandments out of love for mankind, the commandments are not fulfilled out of fear of punishment, but out of love for God.

## What is the greatest commandment?

When asked which was the "greatest commandment in the law", Jesus responded with two quotations from the Mosaic Law, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets" (Matthew 22: 36–40). The commandment to love God and one's neighbour is also known as the "dual commandment of love".

## What does the commandment to love one's neighbour demand?

The commandment requires human beings to treat all other human beings with love. It sets clear limits to egoism.

In the parable of the Good Samaritan (cf. Luke 10: 25–37), Jesus illustrated that loving one's neighbour involves being merciful and acting accordingly. Just how seriously Jesus meant these words can be inferred from His exhortation to even love one's enemies.

*"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5: 43–45).*

## Who is this "neighbour"?

On the one hand, the example of the Good Samaritan demonstrates that this neighbour is anyone who is in need. On the other hand, the neighbour can also be the one who helps. Our neighbour can be anyone with whom we come into contact.

## How is the love for one's neighbour to be revealed in the congregation?

That which Jesus taught His Apostles also applies to the congregation, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another as I have loved you ... By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13: 34–35). This instruction to His disciples thus even transcends the "golden rule". The commandment to love one's neighbour, to support one's fellow human being and help in situations of need, should be especially evident in the congregation, "Let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith" (Galatians 6: 10). All who belong to the congregation have a duty to treat one another with sincere compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.

**What is the text of the Ten Commandments?**

The First Commandment: "I am the Lord your God. You shall have no other gods before Me."

The Second Commandment: "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain."

The Third Commandment: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."

The Fourth Commandment: "Honour your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you."

The Fifth Commandment: "You shall not murder."

The Sixth Commandment: "You shall not commit adultery."

The Seventh Commandment: "You shall not steal."

The Eighth Commandment: "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour."

The Ninth Commandment: "You shall not covet your neighbour's house."

The Tenth Commandment: "You shall not covet your neighbour's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbour's."

*The designation "Ten Commandments" or "Decalogue" is derived from the biblical formulation "ten words" (deka logoi) in Exodus 34: 28 and Deuteronomy 10: 4. The Bible firmly establishes the count of the commandments at ten, but does not number them. This has led to differing ways of counting them. The counting method in use in the New Apostolic Church dates back to a tradition from the fourth century AD.*

**How are God's commandments to be seen in relationship to the laws of the state?**

God's commandments stand above the laws of the state. The sole deciding factor in deciding whether God's commandments have been violated is the will of God, and not that of any legislator.

**What does it mean to violate the commandments of God?**

Every violation of God's commandments is a sin. Sin causes human beings to incur guilt before God. The measure of the guilt arising from this sin can vary. God alone determines the magnitude of guilt. In individual cases it might even be that hardly any guilt is incurred before God as a result of a particular sin.

**How can the whole law be fulfilled?**

The whole law could be fulfilled by loving God and one's neighbour in perfect fashion (cf. Romans 13: 8, 10). This was only possible for Jesus Christ.

**What is the First Commandment?**

"I am the Lord your God. You shall have no other gods before Me."

**What does the First Commandment mean for us today?**

The First Commandment calls upon us to honour God out of love. We worship God in adoration, obedience, and the fear of God. The fear of God develops from our love for God. It is not an expression of fear, but of humbleness, love, and trust in God. It is important to accept God as He has appeared to the world: in Jesus Christ (cf. John 14: 9). It is a violation of this commandment to make a god, as it were, of power, honour, money, idols, or even one's own person, to which all other things are subordinate. Likewise, it is a violation of the First Commandment to develop conceptions of God based on our own wishes or views. It is also a violation against this commandment to see gods in statues, trees, natural phenomena, etc. Beyond that, other acts that contradict the First Commandment include Satanism, fortune telling, magic, witchcraft, spiritualism, and necromancy.

*The term "magic" is derived from the Greek and translates to mean "sorcery", or "illusion". Magic also incorporates the notion that one can influence or control people, animals, and even events and objects by way of specific actions (rituals) and/or words (magical formulas). Magic is often associated with the evil one.*

*Fortune-tellers are people who are convinced that they can see into the future or foretell future events. They make their predictions on the basis of mysterious signs which they interpret accordingly. At the time of the old covenant, fortune telling was common practice in the royal courts, however, it was strictly forbidden to the people of Israel.*

*Necromancy is a special form of fortune telling: those who practise it try to contact the dead in order to ask them about future events; cf. 1 Samuel 28: 3 et seq.*

*"Ascribe greatness to our God" (Deuteronomy 32: 3).*

**What is the Second Commandment?**

"You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain."

**What does the Second Commandment mean for us today?**

We are to keep all things that have to do with God and His name holy. This applies to our thoughts, speech, and conduct of life. As Christians we are especially committed to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. As children of God, who bear the name of the Father and the Son, we have a great responsibility to keep the name of God holy.



NAC Zambia

# Zambia and Pentecost: a marriage made in heaven

Pentecost this year was an amazing celebration: the more than one million-member strong church in Zambia showed itself from its best side: joyful, convinced, and committed. Come and join us as we take you through the Pentecost weekend—also outside the official programme.

The joy of the people to see their Chief Apostle, the District Apostles from around the world, and the Apostles from Africa was indescribable. Everywhere you looked and went people were out lining the edge of the roads while busses took the Apostles to the concert or to the divine service. There was a great deal of joyful waving, rapt expectation, and thousands of delighted faces. The bus with the guest of honour from France was given a special police escort. If the bus had been caught in a traffic jam, it would have thrown the tightly planned schedule right off.

## A household name

The host, District Apostle Charles Ndandula, directed his teams discreetly but firmly. Again and again he succeeds in making the New Apostolic Church in the country practically a household name. On the most prominent corners of the city huge posters were displayed, showing a

smiling Chief Apostle with an invitation to the divine service underneath. The service took place in the National Heroes Stadium. All the seats, nearly 71,000, were occupied on Pentecost morning. The area around the stadium was populated by thousands of brothers and sisters. Just about everybody was on their feet.

## Proud and committed

The people are proud to be members of the Church, something that is very conspicuous. The women wore scarves or T-shirts or hats with the Church emblem. Many of the men were wearing black suits. And then there was the music: a nod to the country's tradition, huge numbers, excellent musicians. The strongest feeling came across when the choirs sang in Bemba, Lozi, or Swahili. It was amazing to experience with how much commitment the children, women, and men, the soloists and the instrumentalists did

their thing. They sang everything by heart. Providing music folders for a choir with 3,000 voices would have been far too costly. At lunch, following the divine service, a female choir of 300 sang for the Chief Apostle and his guests in Bemba.

### Powerful and convincing

The country's president, Mr Edgar Lungu, had intended to come, but something came up so that he had to cancel. District Apostle Ndandula had invited him and other prominent politicians to the concert on Saturday afternoon. Many guests were there, and they all experienced Zambia at its best: not only powerful and convincing, but also a very high standard of music. Chief Apostle Schneider was unstinting in his praise and thanked the performers with these words, "It was a concert typical of Zambia: full of joy and the Holy Spirit! What can I say? Great!"

### The Chief Apostle's vision for Africa

The Apostles' conference on Saturday morning was serious, jam-packed, and visionary. The Chief Apostle published his agenda for Africa: more instruction in the Church, better knowledge of the Bible in the circle of the ministers, and Sunday School for the children in every congregation. He argued with emotion and a great deal of support—in perfect English, with numerous interpretations going on in booths at the back of the conference hall. The Apostles will have grasped how important these objectives are to the Chief Apostle, and will have taken this back home with them. Already over lunch that day there were numerous discussions. And the District Apostles were right in the middle of it all. They of course were overjoyed that they could be together with the Apostles from their working areas, and meet for talks and conferences over this Pentecost weekend. Nearly all Apostles from Africa were there. Only seven could not travel to Zambia.

### The highlight: divine service

And then Pentecost Sunday dawned: thousands and thousands of people the world over were connected. The Chief Apostle conducted the divine service in English and spoke about the coming of the Lord. At the end of the divine service he thanked the choir and orchestra effusively, clambered on the conductor's stand, and gave him a hug. There were waving hands everywhere. The joy was indescribable. As he walked back, everybody wanted to see and hug and speak to him. The stadium was boiling over with excitement.

### Mishap threatens Pentecost transmission



■ NAC Zambia

While the broadcasting trucks were on their way from South Africa to Lusaka in Zambia a few days before Pentecost, an important piece of equipment was damaged. The trailer carrying the generator had come loose near the border with Zambia, rolled into the bush, and tipped over. The generator was not just any old piece of equipment, but a 40-kilovolt-amperes generator that was supposed to provide power not only for the outside broadcast trucks, but also for the uplink. "We will not be able to use it as the main power unit for the OB trucks," it said in an email to District Apostle Ndandula. Hectic activity began in the administrative offices in Lusaka. And before long a replacement unit was found.

### Joy is contagious



■ NAC Zambia

Together the choir and orchestra were comprised of some 3,000 members and rounded the Pentecost service off with mostly well-known pieces from our New Apostolic repertoire. The finale was a medley comprised of four pieces. Particular attention was given to one of the musicians:

the man with the crash cymbals, who could be seen in close-ups the world over, striking his cymbals during the final piece. He not only sang along, but struck his cymbals with such verve and enthusiasm that his whole body reverberated. In the congregations watching the broadcast, this created some delightful amusement, but what is more, a great deal of admiration. In the social networks he was nominated a hero. "I am humbled," says Timothy Chirwa.

# Holy Communion is celebrated everywhere

They have lost everything: their possessions, their homes, and many of them loved ones. More than 50 million people worldwide have been forced from their homes. *community* takes a look at some of the refugee camps in East Africa and finds people who live their faith despite all the misery they experience.



Brendan Bannon/ICMI/UNHCR, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/acnurltasamericas/6883520220>

Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya, the largest of its kind in the world. Some 350,000 displaced people live here

They look like huge sprawling cities of tents and shacks and stretch over an area of 50 square kilometres in the plains of Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. According to estimates by the United Nations, some 1.5 million displaced people live in this part of East Africa. They come from countries like Ethiopia, Djibouti, Eritrea, Rwanda, Somalia, Congo, and Sudan. Political and ethnic conflicts, terrorism, and famine have driven them from their home countries.

## Not even 70 grams of cornmeal a day

Daadab, Kakuma, Katumba, Kyaka, Kyangwali, Nakivale, or Nyarugusu. These are the names of some of the refugee camps. Daadab is considered the world's largest camp. Even

though numerous humanitarian aid organizations work in these camps, the condition of the people is desperate. This is what New Apostolic members report. Apostle David Mwaniki spoke with the local people. "Hunger" is the word he heard the most often. There is never enough to eat. In some areas, up to five people have to live on ten kilograms of posho (cornmeal) for a month. This does not even amount to 70 grams per person a day.

The camps are hopelessly overcrowded. There are far too few sanitation facilities, resulting in the spread of disease. People have to cope with malnutrition, malaria, anaemia, and respiratory infections. Many people are traumatized and suffer from anxiety, depression, grief, and loss—all



1



2



3

NAC South-East Africa

1-2| Members from Kyaka II in the process of building their own church  
3| The children from Kyaka II. “Pray for the orphans, widows, and widowers. There are so many of them here,” is the urgent appeal from Kyaka.

scars on account of horrible experiences in their home countries: torture, murder, rape. And on top of all this there is a lack of medical care in the camps: far too few doctors, not enough medication, and not enough medical centres.

### Divine service under a tree

But even under such squalid conditions there is a living faith. There are 15 congregations in the refugee camps that fall within the area cared for by District Apostle Joseph Opemba Ekhuya from Kenya. Alone in Nyarugusu Refugee Camp in north-western Tanzania there are six congregations. There are regular divine services—in some places not only on Sundays, but also on Wednesdays. And Holy Communion is celebrated everywhere.

The equipment is far from what people in many other parts of the world are accustomed to and consider a minimum for a divine service. A Bible? Sometimes there is not even a decent Bible. Hymnals? There are hardly any. An altar? The best the brothers can come up with is a table. A church? In Nakivale the members gather for service under a tree, with the congregation receiving some shade from an improvised shelter. In Kyaka the people managed to organize some beams and were then given a corrugated iron roof from the Church administrative offices. In Nyarugusu Refugee Camp there are even brick buildings with a thatched roof.

### Pastoral care not only for Church members

Most of the brothers and sisters living in refugee camps can speak about their faith openly. Only in Daadab—the

world’s largest refugee camp—this is not all that easy. The majority of the occupants of the camp are Muslims from Somalia, many of whom are intolerant of and hostile towards Christians. Divine services are not held in the camp, but in a security area outside. The people who attend divine services there are employees from the camp’s administrative offices as well as business people.

In other camps, the ministers—Shepherds, Evangelists, Priests, and Deacons—can move about freely and do family visits in the tents and huts of members. In Nyarugusu they are sometimes even asked to conduct divine services for people who are not New Apostolic.

### Gratitude and joy despite misery

Faith gives strength. “Despite being traumatized, the brothers and sisters are thankful to God and experience joy in Christ,” we are told by someone from this camp in north-western Tanzania. Congolese refugees have found shelter there. They have organized choirs and bring their joy in Christ to expression in song.

Apart from hoping to escape the chronic misery, the refugees have a few other wishes which they would like to voice to the brothers and sisters around the world. “Pray for the orphans, widows, and widowers. There are so many of them here,” is the urgent appeal from Kyaka. The people in the refugee camp in Kakuma have expressed the following wish, “Pray fervently for peace so that the refugees can return home.”

# When divine service pictures began to move

Not only were millions of New Apostolic Christians around the globe united once again for this year's Pentecost service, but this year also marked an anniversary: for the last 25 years, the gospel has also been sent out to all the nations by satellite.

It seems like such a commonplace affair—you simply take your seat in the congregation and enjoy the Chief Apostle service on the screen along with everyone else. However, the technical effort behind the scenes is quite enormous: eleven satellites, ten ground stations, fibre optic cables, internet, and—in parts of Africa—broadcast television, comprised the signal path leading from the cameras in Zambia to those attending the divine service in some 100 countries on five continents.

## The history: from sound to picture

Things used to be quite different, however. Many today can still picture the honeycomb braiding that covered the loudspeakers from which the audio feed from telephone transmissions used to emanate. This was a regular feature since 1949—until 1983, when Chief Apostle Hans Urwyler came back from North America and enthusiastically related his experience of the first video transmissions there.

This was just the nudge that was needed for the Church-owned Bischoff Publishers to begin teaching the divine

service pictures—which they had previously only published in print-format in the *Our Family* magazine—to move. The earliest recordings by a small transmission system at first only managed to cover short distances—for example, at the premier in December 1983 in Saarbrücken, in which the signal was sent from the Saarland Hall into some adjacent rooms. The new technology began making its rounds, especially in south-western Germany.

## The next step: from the local town to the entire region

Since everything was working well and interest was growing, the technology soon had to become more portable. This is how the first outside broadcast vehicle—which was mostly a do-it-yourself project—came into being. The electronic field production unit was first put to work in 1985 in Waldshut, and from then on found itself travelling constantly throughout all of Western Europe. But the scope of the transmissions was soon to increase beyond the original area of application. This was the goal that Chief Apostle Urwyler set two years later.



1| The fourth generation OB unit at the premises of Bischoff Publishers in Frankfurt in Germany  
2| Second generation OB units on their way back from Vienna in Austria in 1990

The first small step was made at the Pentecost service in Fellbach, when his successor, Richard Fehr assumed the Chief Apostle ministry in 1988. In addition to some 800 congregations linked by audio transmission, at least a few locations in the area were also connected by video.

### Accomplished: the big leap

The big leap to international transmissions, such as those with which the Church is familiar today, was made in 1990—at the express request of the new Church leader: more than 270,000 members in 17 countries throughout Europe were able to see the video transmission from Vienna in Austria. A veritable feat of engineering and effort was required to achieve this goal, however.

This was more than a matter of merely upgrading the OB vehicle. It was also necessary to build a completely new receiving network from scratch—in little more than a year. This involved testing, looking for, and acquiring suitable devices, installing antennas, cables, and receivers, and training volunteer helpers—all in a total of 830 congregations. But the premier was a success.

### An intermission with choral music

But things did not always run so smoothly—for example, in 1996, during the Pentecost service in Nairobi in Kenya when another transmitter butted into a satellite channel that had actually been reserved for the service, and disrupted the transmission during Holy Communion.

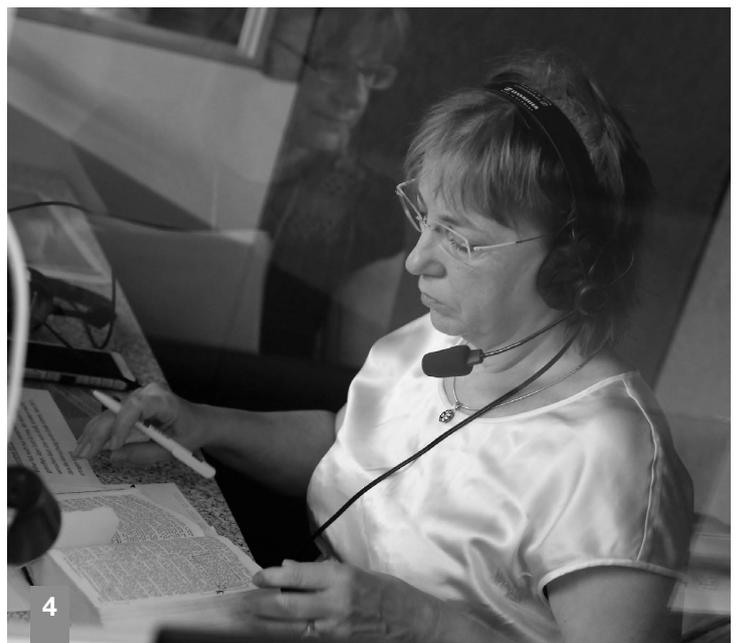
Or when the link was temporarily lost during a transmission from Zofingen in Switzerland, and the choir had to do some extra singing before the satellite could be reached again in the course of the third verse of their hymn.

Since then there have been many developments in technology, such as the transition to digital transmitting and receiving devices (in 1997), the start of supplementary transmission by Internet (2007), and the transition to full HD cameras (2014). And with larger events, new areas of application have also come into being, for example, the European Youth Day in 2009, which required live transmission of ongoing events as well as a television programme, and the International Church Convention 2014, which required large image projection and DVD recordings.

### Continuous efforts by volunteer helpers

But it is not only technology that has brought the global congregation closer together. This has primarily become possible thanks to the involvement of many people—not least of all the many volunteers who have dedicated countless hours of their time to the service of the Church right from the start. These include camera people, assistants, technicians, and interpreters—both on location and at the Frankfurt transmission headquarters—as well as those who have built up and upgraded the receiving network and the OB vehicle, those who have guarded the valuable vehicle overnight, and those who operate the receivers and imaging devices in the local congregations.

- 3| Interview with Chief Apostle Leber at the TV studio of the European Youth Day in 2009
- 4| One of the interpreters of the 2015 Pentecost service. The service was interpreted into 25 languages



# Their business is to serve the Church

The New Apostolic Church may not have a whole army of officials at its disposal, but it does have a dedicated service division. *community* looked at its tasks and divisions.



Oliver Rürten

Top left: Erich Senn, the head of administration of six service groups  
Top right: Staff from the Finance and Reporting Services as well as Secretarial Services

Why is such an instrument even necessary? The answer is clear: to support the Chief Apostle. After all, in addition to his task as spiritual leader, he is also responsible for the organizational needs of the international Church.

To this end, the Chief Apostle works closely with the District Apostles and Apostles around the world. And he also depends on a total of six service divisions located in Zurich (Switzerland) and Frankfurt (Germany). The daily business of coordination lies with the Administrator, the leader of these service groups. As a member of an advisory body, he is also jointly responsible for the direction of the Church-owned Bischoff Publishers.

The Secretarial staff works directly with the Chief Apostle. They take care of correspondence—for example with the District Apostles and Apostles—mostly in German, English, and French. Beyond that they also organize his divine

service trips and are responsible for the preparation and follow-up of the District Apostle Meetings.

The Theological Division assists the Church leadership in deepening the New Apostolic doctrine on the basis of the Bible. To this end, its consultants provide advice in scientific matters and bring their knowledge to bear in various committees of the Church. They monitor and support the production of foundational texts such as the Catechism or teaching material for children, youth, and adults. The main emphasis of this work is on the *Divine Service Guide*, a monthly publication of the New Apostolic Church for ministers, which provides the foundation for divine services around the world.

The Project and Product Division plays a very similar role, although less in terms of content than organization. It is here that the threads between the Church leadership and

the committees intersect. This department documents the work of the various groups and prepares the results for decisions by leadership boards.

The Finance and Reporting Division takes care of financial and legal matters. This includes coordinating the flow of funds between the District Churches from around the world: financially strong regions support those regions that cannot sustain themselves. With a view to the laws in effect in the various nations, as well as the Church's own prescriptions, the team helps to create the necessary legal foundations for the District Churches.

The Audio-visual Service Group is often on the air: its main function is to organize audio-visual transmissions, mostly of divine services. To this end, the group organizes the necessary satellite or internet capacities, operates a broadcast vehicle, coordinates the use of interpreters, and manages a network of around 1,600 transmission stations in Europe.

Last but not least is the Communications Division. Under the direction of the Church spokesman, New Apostolic news from around the world is gathered, evaluated, and disseminated. The results of this work include the many internet offers of the New Apostolic Church—such as *nac.today*, for example, and this magazine.

The team currently numbers some 20 positions. Half of these work in Zurich while the other half work in the Church-owned publishers in Frankfurt—but it is not seldom for them to find themselves at work in constantly changing locations. However, Church service is not their only business. They also bring their gifts to bear for all members in a voluntary capacity as ministers, functionaries, or helpers in other areas.

**Below:** The head office of the New Apostolic Church International in Zurich in Switzerland. The four-storey building includes a conference centre in an extra wing (front right)



## A friendly challenge over two continents



A sporty outfit, grim faces, dramatic music. The District Apostles of Australia and Canada made a video clip advertising the 2015 Move-A-Thon. This friendly competition is all about raising as much money as possible for charity by covering as many kilometres as possible; and preferably more kilometres than the competing District Church.

At their first Move-A-Thon in 2013, a purely Canadian event then, the NAC Canada managed to raise over 214,000 dollars and covered a total of 10,000 kilometres either by walking, jogging, cycling, or paddling. The proceeds from the 2015 Move-A-Thon will go to homeless people. Some 230,000 Canadians lose their homes and end up on the streets every year. The New Apostolic Church Canada also supports other causes such as soup kitchens, emergency shelters, and medical initiatives which help these people. The New Apostolic Church Australia plans to use the proceeds from the Move-A-Thon to launch its own charity, something that does not exist in Australia yet. "Many brothers and sisters have expressed the desire to help people affected by natural disasters, and they would prefer to do this through the Church," District Apostle Andersen says.

The Move-A-Thon in Australia will start on 24 October. The Canadians have already completed their Move-A-Thon. How much money was raised and how many kilometres were covered will only be announced once Australia has finished its Move-A-Thon.

Go, go, go! Who the winner will be, whether the Northern or Southern Hemisphere, will only be seen in early November. What the defeated District Apostle will have to do, however, has already been decided. The "loser" will have to wear the winner's T-shirt for a whole week-end. So before long, we may well see a kangaroo in Canada or a maple leaf in Australia.

## Seminars in West Africa

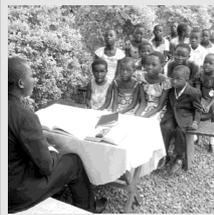
In all African countries, which are supported by the New Apostolic Church South Germany, we offer different seminars for the education of our Ministers and members:



**Basic Seminars**  
for new ordained Ministers and brothers / sisters in an appointment  
Subjects are the Christian doctrine and the New Apostolic understanding.



**Ministers Seminars**  
for new ordained Priests, Rectors  
Here we teach how to serve in a given ministry.



**Sunday School and Confirmation Class Seminars**  
for the teachers.  
We give instructions how to conduct the lessons.



A children choir in Lagos, Nigeria



Bishop Koch with a young singer



Bishop Koch in the seminar work



The choir at the concert in Lagos

## Nigeria and Cameroon:



## Thanks and farewell to a loving teacher

In the first week of July Bishop Eberhard Koch accompanied Ap Volker Kühnle on his pastoral visit in Lagos (Nigeria) and Yaoundé (Cameroon).

Bishop Koch works on the side of Apostle Kühnle for more than 20 years in the spiritual education of the Church ministers as well as in the musical instruction in the countries Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Nigeria. During this years a strong team of African tutors could be established, who care for the education of our brothers and sisters in the various activities in our Church, e.g. as Church ministers, as teachers in Sunday School and Confirmation class or as choir masters.

According to the message of our chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider in the recent African Apostles meeting in Lusaka/Zambia on Pentecost 2015: "I ask you, my dear Apostles, to prioritize your tasks, and to deal with the most important first: Preparing the leaders which the Church needs for the future, and implementing Sunday school in the remote congregations" the main focus of our seminar work was and shall be even more in the forthcoming years, to implement Sunday school and Confirmation classes in each congregation.

As Bishop Koch celebrated this year his 65th birthday, he – commissioned by our District Apostle Michael Ehrich – handed over the planning and organizing of the seminar work as well as the teaching of the senior tutors to District Elder Wolfgang Oehler, who is involved in seminar work in Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia and Ivory Coast for many years already.

During a preparation concert for the Divine service for the departed the next day, the combined Lagos choir gave also special expressions of thankfulness to Bishop Koch on Saturday, 4th July. The choristers, conducted by the chief choir master District Evangelist Leki Kabanga, presented in an overwhelming way various hymns of our new Hymnal, gospels and spirituals. A children choir showed an impressive performance of that what had been learned before. At the end Bishop Koch was asked to conduct the final hymn: "Lord, Lord we thank Thee now". The concert was a wonderful attunement to the Divine service for the departed, which was conducted the next day in Ikeja-Central Church by Apostle Volker Kühnle in presence of all Apostles and Bishops from Nigeria.

OE

## Ghana:



## Seminar for Apostles and Bishops

Continuing his itinerary on Saturday the 4th of July 2015, District Apostle Ehrich had a seminar with all Apostles and Bishops of Ghana and their counterparts from Benin and Togo. The venue was Kockdam Hotel in Accra where the Apostles and Bishops resided.

The theme for the seminar was "Thoughts on forgiveness of Sins". Among other things the District Apostle explained that forgiveness of sins (absolution) is not a sacrament, but it is of great significance. First of all, it affects the forgiveness of current sins – thus the absolution is not a unique act, but is rather offered to sinful human being again and again. Beyond that forgiveness of sins is important because it allows human beings to partake worthily of Holy Communion and thus also prepare for the return of Christ.

OB

## Catechism of the New Apostolic Church in Questions and Answers



The Catechism of the New Apostolic Church in Questions and Answers (CNAC QA) now is available.

It reflects the text of the long version of the Catechism (CNAC) in 750 questions and answers. When preparing the CNAC QA, an essential objective was to ensure that it was as understandable and intelligible as possible:

- The reader is guided through the contents by means of questions and answers that build upon each other.
- In order to facilitate the reader's understanding of the subject matter, which is, in part, complex, the topics are presented in the form of a great number of individual questions and answers, thus allowing interrelated sections to be short.
- The text is worded as clearly as possible and without the use of many technical terms.
- Explanations are provided for certain terms, or their explanations, as given in the Catechism, expanded.

The text contains many complete biblical quotations. This offers the reader the advantage of consulting these passages, even without having a Bible at hand.

Our Chief Apostle addresses the readers in the foreword to the book: "Like the CNAC, this version of the Catechism is an appeal to all New Apostolic Christians to occupy themselves intensively with the content of their faith. .... May the use of this reference work serve for blessing!"

## Nigeria: Visit to Apostle Rotimi working area

The journey of the Lead Apostle Geoffrey Nwogu started from Jos, the northern part of Nigeria to Akure the south western in Apostle Augustine Rotimi working area on the 5th of June, 2015. On the same day, he held a meeting with 18 District Ministers, the Bishop and the Apostle, where he used the opportunity to share some key words of our District Apostle Michael Erich meetings with Apostles in Lusaka during this year Pentecost. This immediately followed with a Divine Service at Stadium Congregation in Akure with the retirement of two Ministers, District Elder Olorundare Babatunde Michael of Akoko District and Community Evangelist Adegboyega Abraham, the Rector of Stadium Congregation in the District Akure. Priest Ogbor Idowu was commissioned as new Rector for the Congregation to replace the retired one.



Retirement of a District elder and a Community Evangelist



Apostle and the newly appointed Rector

On the second day, the journey continues from Akure to Ilorin District, the northern part of the working area where a Divine Service was held for Ilorin Congregation. There after another Divine Service for Kajola Congregation in Omuaran District. The last activities of the journey continue on Sunday the 7th of June, in Yagba District whereby Children of God were served in Egbe Congregation.

The visit was concluded with another Divine Service in Isanlu District at Ijowa Congregation and the Lead Apostle finally returned to Jos via Abuja.

GN



A warm welcome for Apostles and Bishop at Ilorin Congregation

# District Apostle in Ghana



Children welcoming the District Apostle

District Apostle Michael Ehrich of South Germany whose jurisdiction Ghana falls paid a four day working visit to Ghana from Thursday 2nd July to Sunday 5th July 2015. The visit took the District Apostle to three cities in Ghana namely Accra, Cape Coast and Koforidua.

Accompanying District Apostle Ehrich from Germany was District Evangelist Heim of Stuttgart Administration Office who now has oversight responsibilities over the Administrative set up in West Africa with the head office situated in Accra, Ghana. District Apostle Ehrich also invited Apostles Abalou, Anika, Olou and Yedenou from Togo and Benin to accompany him on his visit to Ghana. Locally all the active Apostles and Bishops also retired as well as their wives were at the side of District Apostle Michael Ehrich during the four day visit to Ghana.

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## Ghana: Divine Service for ministers at Cape Coast

On Friday the 3rd of July 2015, the itinerary of District Apostle Michael Ehrich took him to Cape Coast, where he conducted divine service for all ministers at Cape Coast and Takoradi Apostle Areas. These working areas are cared for by Apostles Ashie Kotei and George Sam respectively.

The text word for the ministers' divine service was 1Timothy 4:12 (extract) *"but be an example to the believers in word, conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity"*.

During the divine service District Apostle Ehrich carried out some ministerial acts. District Elder Awotwe Nelson of Takoradi District who has been in the ministry for over thirty years was deservingly retired. Ten District Elders and fourteen District Evangelists were ordained for the various Elder Districts in the country.

Accompanying District Apostle Ehrich to the ministers' divine service were all Apostles and Bishops of Ghana as well

as the four invited Apostles from Togo and Benin.

In attendance were 458 ministers.

OB



▲ District Apostle with Apostles and Bishops

Retirement of District Elder Awotwe ►



Some members during the divine service

## Ghana: Divine Service for the departed at Koforidua

The climax of the visit of District Ehrich to Ghana was divine service for the departed on Sunday 5th of July 2015 at Koforidua in the Eastern Region of Ghana. Considering the calamity that befell the country on the 3rd of June 2015, in which over one hundred and fifty people perished as a result of torrential rains and a fire outbreak at a fuel station in Accra, it was a great consolation for the visit of the District Apostle to Ghana.

The text word was Colosians 1:21-23. For the first time the divine service for the departed was transmitted throughout the country via the national television network the Ghana TV.

Positive responds from far and near about the need for intercession for the beyond was received after the divine service. Over three thousand members and guest attended the divine service with countless viewing the television.

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◀ Transmission throughout the country via the national television network the Ghana TV





The District Apostle and the Apostles are welcomed in Addis Ababa

## East Africa: District Apostle visited Ethiopia and Djibouti

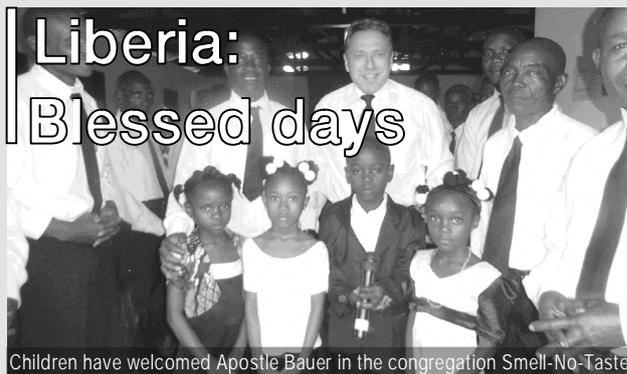
On the third weekend of June 2015, District Apostle Michael Ehrich made a brief visit to East Africa. On Saturday, 20 June, he served our brothers and sisters in Djibouti. 5 souls received the gift of the Holy Spirit. On Sunday, 21 June, he held a divine service in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia's capital. 543 brothers and sisters attended the service, 22 souls were sealed, 3 Priests and 3 Deacons ordained. District Apostle Ehrich served with the Bible text from 2 Thessalonians 1, 3: *"We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth."* Apostle Bauer, the responsible Apostle for Ethiopia, travelled a few days earlier to Ethiopia and conducted a divine service with Holy Sealing in Gambela. 32 souls received the gift of the Holy Spirit there. After the service a fountain was inaugurated, which was financed by the missionary work of Southern Germany. People in this arid and hot region could previously only draw the water from dirty ponds and other contaminated sources.

HJB



▲ District Apostle held a divine service in Djibouti

In Gambela a fountain was inaugurated ►



Children have welcomed Apostle Bauer in the congregation Smell-No-Taste

On 12 September 2015, Apostle Hans-Jürgen Bauer arrived in Monrovia.

This was his first visit to Liberia since the outbreak of Ebola in 2014. He had also invited the Apostles from Guinea and Sierra Leone who could not attend the Pentecost service 2015 in Zambia - due to the Ebola crisis in their countries.

On the evening of the first day of his visit, he attended a concert at the Monrovia Central Church where he opened the activities with a prayer. There were interesting performances by various choirs including the childrens' choir.

The next morning - 13 September 2015 - Apostle Bauer conducted a divine service with a Bible text from The Acts 22: 14-15. In attendance were 350 members, including 32 guests. 5 Shepherds and 5 Community Evangelists were ordained.

In the afternoon, the Apostle held a divine service for the District Ministers of the country. The Bible text was taken from Psalm 40: 8. The service and the following meeting were attended by 70 Ministers.

There was a seminar with the Apostles on Monday, 14 September. Apostle Bauer presented our Chief Apostle's and District Apostle's thoughts to the gathered Ministers, and he also gave information about the growth of the Church in the respective countries. The next day was a day of meetings with the Apostles in the various working areas.

On Wednesday, 16 September, the Apostle travelled to the congregation of Smell-No-Taste in Margibi district where he conducted a divine service. The Bible text was from 1 Corinthians 2: 14-15 and in attendance were 285 brothers and sisters. One brother was ordained as a Community Evangelist.

HJB

▼ After the divine service for ministers in Monrovia





September 6, 2015:  
**Chief Apostle**  
in Rottweil / South Germany

**Bible text:** "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 2:5)

- Core thoughts:**
- We bring spiritual sacrifices if we:
  - Avoid sin and battle against the evil one
  - Devote our whole life to serving God. In every situation we want to be a good example and an instrument in God's hand
  - Bring thanksgiving to God (Psalm 50: 14)
  - Pray – for our Brothers and Sisters, for our fellow human beings
  - Do good and share with others (Hebrews 13: 16)

