

community

The New Apostolic Church around the world

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Annual motto 2022

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Together in Christ

Dear brothers and sisters,

No matter what the coming months may hold in store for us, let us focus on the day of the Lord in faith!

We firmly believe that the Lord will come in order to take us to Himself. Our motto for this year is: “Together in Christ”.

Let us examine this togetherness a little more closely. I see four levels:

- our fellowship with the triune God
- our fellowship in the divine service
- living together in fellowship
- the fellowship of the living and the dead.

What does it mean to have fellowship with the triune God? Divine life is a life in fellowship. The triune God is a God of fellowship between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. And this God calls human beings into fellowship with Himself. Those who carry divine life within them will long for fellowship with God and His people.

This fellowship we experience in divine service. In the divine service, Jesus grants us His word, His grace, His body, and His blood. We have fellowship with those who share the same priorities, the same goal, and the same path with us.

Living together in fellowship prepares us for the return of the Lord, because we grow together here as a bridal congregation. Being together in Christ means: agreeing to give to others and to also receive from them.



NAC International

There is still the fellowship of the living and the dead. Fellowship in Christ is stronger than death. The living and the dead are prepared together for the return of Christ through word and sacrament. And then the living and the dead will be together with Him forever.

That is our goal, which we work toward collectively! Please be assured: God is with His own. And the Apostles pray for you.

I wish you all a blessed year 2022, which will lead us closer to our goal: together in Christ.

With heartfelt greetings

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'J' and 'L' followed by a horizontal line and a vertical line crossing it.

Jean-Luc Schneider

| How God inquires about us



The first divine service which Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider held outside of Europe since the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020 took place on 15 August 2021 in Dodoma in Tanzania

Huyomimi, NAC Tanzania

Genesis 3: 9

“Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, ‘Where are you?’”

My dear brothers and sisters, my heart is full of joy and gratitude. It is the first time since March 2020 that I have been able to travel outside of Europe. It is the first time since then that I can once again experience a divine service in such a large circle and enjoy such a large choir and orchestra. That is a great joy and great grace.

All over the world people have been experiencing a difficult time. And even though the virus may have caused you less problems here in Tanzania than in other countries, I know that you are facing many other problems and hardships. And every time we face such difficult times and

circumstances, the same spirit comes with the same question: “Where is your God? Why doesn’t He help you? Why doesn’t He prevent these terrible things from happening to you?” (Psalm 42: 3). We know the answer: God is here!

God the Father, the Creator, is still active. He looks after His creation, He cares for us, and provides us with what we need for our daily lives. He is the one who gives us the air we breathe and the food we eat. He grants us everything we need for our daily lives.

God the Son is here! He gave His life for us on the cross and ascended to His Father to prepare a place for us. And now He is with His Father as our advocate and intercedes for us (1 John 2: 1).

God the Holy Spirit is at work. He is at work within the Church and gives us comfort and strength and grace. He is at work in our hearts to guide and comfort us. Indeed, God is here and He is at work on our behalf.

But now God comes to us and asks us the following question: “Now you know where I am, but where are you?” You know the story. Adam and Eve committed a grave sin and then realised that they had done something very serious; and they were ashamed. So they hid from God. They did not want to be seen by Him. But God called them and asked them, “Where are you?” With this question, God wanted to make it clear: “I do not reject you. I will continue to take care of you in the future too. You were disobedient and now you must bear the consequences, but I still love you and want to help you.”

Now God comes and asks us the same question: “Where are you?” Of course God knows where we are. He knows everything. He does not need an answer. However, by asking this question He wants to help us assess where we stand. He wants to help us assess the state of our soul so that we can change what needs to be changed.

Perhaps some feel as Adam and Eve did and are ashamed when they realise: “Oh, we are such great sinners.” They think they might not reach the goal, that they are not worthy to be a child of God. But then God comes and says, “Where are you? Don’t be ashamed, don’t be afraid; come, I won’t reject you, I want to give you My grace. Don’t be

afraid, don’t hesitate, come to Me! I love you.” That is the first question.

Another question God asks is: “Hey, where are you? Suddenly you are so far away from Me. Please examine your soul, your heart. Do you realise that you are slowly drifting away from Me?” Maybe we are disappointed because God has not answered our prayers. Maybe He has not fulfilled our wishes, and now we are gradually leaving God. Then He calls out to us: “Hey, where are you? You are drifting away from Me. Don’t forget what I have done for you.” The

Son of God did not come to earth to do miracles. He did not die on the cross to heal the sick. He came to save your soul. He wants to deliver you from evil once and for all; His goal is to lead you into His kingdom, where there will be no more evil. Therefore He

asks us: “What are you doing? Come back, I want to deliver you from evil and lead you into My glory.”

In the Bible we find a number of questions. For example, God spoke through the prophet Elijah to ask His people: “How long will you falter between two opinions?” (1 Kings 18: 21). God asks us the same question: “Why do you hesitate? If you believe in Me, if you believe in Jesus Christ, then trust Me. Jesus said, ‘No one can serve two masters,’” (Matthew 6: 24). You have to make a decision. And yes, it happens that God has to ask us these questions because we are in actual fact a little hesitant.

Brothers and sisters, we decided once that we want to follow Christ and renounce evil, and we should stick to this decision. Let us renounce sin and evil, let us follow the path of God and His commandments. Let us follow the way of obedience even if the way of sin may seem easier and shorter to get what we want. Sometimes we find ourselves in such a situation and God wants to find out which side we are on. Follow the way of obedience. I know, and I am fully aware of this, that the way of sin often seems easier and shorter to get what we want, but we must be clear about one thing: we cannot serve two masters. Our Lord and Master is Jesus Christ and we must definitely walk the path paved by Him.

Another time God asked the prophet Elijah a question (1 Kings 19: 9–18). Elijah had gone into a cave and God came and asked him: “What are you doing here, Elijah?” Elijah

*Now God comes and asks
us the same question:
“Where are you?”*

More than 3,800 brothers and sisters were able to participate live in the divine service in Dodoma



Even if we absolutely do not understand what is going on, let us trust in God and follow Him.

explained: “I have been very zealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life” (1 Kings 19: 9–10). Then God told him that He needed him to work for Him. Go back to work. Fulfil your mission! “Don’t fear, I’m with you; fulfil your mission and you will see I’m with you, I will bless you.”

Dear brothers and sisters, this does not only apply to the ministers but to all of us. We want to serve the Lord, but sometimes it seems that we are not successful, that everything is in vain. We want to serve the Lord, but cannot see the results of our work. Sometimes it even seems that we are the only ones who are doing anything at all, that

everyone else has given up. We are tempted to stop and give up too. Today God comes and asks us: “Hey, what are you doing here? Come out of your cave! I need you, I want you to serve Me.”

Maybe we even withdraw into a cave because we are so disappointed by other people, by our brothers and sisters. We might want to be alone and have nothing more to do with these people. Then God calls out to us, “Come out of your cave! What are you doing there? Get involved in the community of God’s children! I am with you, I am in the midst of the congregation. Come and join the fellowship!”

Jesus also asked some questions. The disciples were out on the lake with the Lord and there was a fierce storm (Luke



A choir and a string ensemble created a beautiful atmosphere



trust Me? Just commit your spirit into My hands and trust Me. I will guide you.”

I know from my own experience that that is not always easy to do. We would like an explanation. We would like God to show us a solution. But all God tells us is: “Just trust Me.” My dear brothers and sisters, that is our faith. We believe in God the Almighty. We believe in the God of love, in the God of mercy. And even if we absolutely do not understand what is going on and have no idea what will happen in the future or how we will cope, let us trust in God and follow Him simply because we have faith in Him.

8: 22–25). You know the story: Jesus fell asleep. The disciples were terrified and thought they were going to die. So they went and woke Jesus. Jesus asked them, “Where is your faith?” (verse 25). Brothers and sisters, that is a question that the Lord, I guess, asks me quite often. We might be in a difficult situation and just see no solution. We think things over and pray over it, but we receive no answer, no explanation, no solution. We just cannot understand what God is doing. There are two avenues we can follow: we can either give up or trust in God. And that is why God asks us: “Where is your faith? You believe that I am the Almighty; you believe that I am the God of mercy; you believe that I am the God of love. That is your faith, so why don’t you

There was another time when Jesus asked His disciples a question. One day His disciples were travelling and they were discussing something. And when they arrived at the village, Capernaum, Jesus asked them: “What was it you disputed among yourselves on the road?” (Mark 9: 33). The disciples were embarrassed because they had been arguing about who was the greatest among them. Sure, Jesus would not have needed to ask the question because He knew the answer anyway. However, Jesus wanted them to be aware that this was not good.

This is also a question of Jesus to His bride, to His church: “What are you talking about on the way to Heavenly



District Apostle Helper Robert M. Nsamba was called to assist (left)
The Chief Apostle dispenses Holy Communion to the Apostles (above)

Jerusalem?" This is a question we should consider seriously. Brothers and sisters, what do we talk about? With our spouse, with our family, or in the congregation we can talk about everything, but how do we talk about the Church? How do we talk about the ministers? How do we talk about our brothers and sisters? Do we talk about God? How do we talk about Him? What we talk about and how we talk about it determine the atmosphere in our life as a couple, in our family, in the congregation. So you see how important it is to be aware of what we talk about. You know, our children listen to what we talk about and they understand and take it in. Let us be careful and focus on the right things. Let us occupy ourselves with this question on the road to Heavenly Jerusalem: "What do we talk about?"

Let me refer to one last question of the Lord Jesus. Jesus came to Paul and asked him: "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" (Acts 9: 4). That was a special question. Jesus wanted to make clear: what you are doing to My brothers and sisters, you are doing to Me. Our heavenly Father asks us the same question: "Why are you persecuting Me?" Of course it is not our intention to persecute our brothers and sisters; that is not what God wants to tell us. When He asks us this question, He wants us to realise that the things we do to our neighbour, to our brother, to our sister, to His children, we do to Him.

Let me explain it in another way. When we decide how we are going to approach our neighbour, when we decide how we are going to treat our sister and our brother, how we want to talk to them, we should not only think about what they have done, but we should first of all think about all that Jesus has done for us and how He treats us. Your neighbour has hurt you and you are angry? Remember, Jesus forgave you. Think of all the things you have done and then remember that Jesus came each time and said, "I forgive you." Think about it for a moment. And then you can decide how you are going to deal with your neighbour. You are disappointed because she promised to help you and did not keep her promise? You are sad because your neighbour said awful things about you? Stop and think before you react. Think about your own behaviour and how many times you have promised the Lord something and did not keep your promise. How many times have we been upset because Jesus did not answer our prayers? How did He respond? Once we are aware of this we can decide how we are going to deal with our neighbour.

You see, dear brothers and sisters, these are just a few questions the Holy Spirit wants to ask us. Let us keep these questions in our hearts. They are important for our salvation. Jesus' answer is always the same: "Whatever happens, wherever you are, come, I love you. I forgive you.



During the celebration of Holy Communion

Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider ordains two Apostles: Daniel Ooko Ochogo and Cosmas Barasa Wanjala (below)

I want to save you. Follow Me until the end. With My help you can do it.”

After the Chief Apostle called on District Apostle Helper Nsamba and District Apostle Kolb he went on to prepare the congregation for Holy Communion. Where is your God? We can experience the presence of God today in the celebration of Holy Communion. We celebrate Holy Communion in remembrance of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Remember He died on the cross for you and me. Where is Jesus today? He is interceding for you and me at the throne of His Father with His grace and kindness. He forgives you your sins and your guilt.

Where is Jesus? He is here in our midst through Holy Communion. Where is Jesus? He is at your sister and brother's side? As we celebrate Holy Communion each of us can see that Jesus grants the same grace and dispenses the same host to our neighbour, to our brother and sister. He tells us, “I have forgiven you. I love you. I give you My blood, I give you My body.” And to our brothers and sisters He says exactly the same and gives them exactly the same.

Now that we know where Jesus is He asks us: “Where are you?” Do not hesitate, come to Jesus, He wants to forgive you. Maybe we have allowed some distance to develop between Jesus and ourselves in our mind and in our hearts. Come back! Let us serve Him. Let us trust in Him no matter what.

Maybe the words we chose were not the best. Let us be careful what we say and how we say it. Maybe we should behave differently when it comes to our brothers and sisters. Come on, we can do it with the strength we receive through Holy Communion. All of us will receive the strength we need to do so.



CORE THOUGHTS

- The Holy Spirit invites us to come to God, to trust Him, and to serve Him.
- Our conduct towards our neighbour is defined by the love which the Lord shows us.
- Our words reflect all the good that God has done and still does for us.



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The Church says yes to life

Family planning as well as contraception are the sole responsibility of the couple. The Church does, however, offer help in the decision-making process. The criterion to be considered is: the unborn life that has come into being must not be killed.

The basis for this article are the positions of the New Apostolic that were stated in *community* 1/2021 and 2/2021 in the articles “The beginning of human life” and “The end of human life”. The following information primarily refers to the way individual methods work. The safety and side effects are not examined in detail and need to be considered separately.

This information is no substitute for a personal consultation with a specialist physician, especially since contraceptive methods can also carry health risks in certain cases.

Diverse cultural and societal factors, which influence the choice of contraceptive methods, have also not been taken into consideration here. Moreover, we will be specifically reviewing contraceptive methods in conventional medicine. Methods without a scientific basis will not be discussed.

Hormonal methods of contraception usually work in several different ways and influence the natural, biological menstrual cycle at different points (for example, by preventing ovulation and by inhibiting implantation of the fertilised ovum).

All statements can only be made on the basis of currently available medical and biological knowledge and the results of scientific studies.

Ways in which the methods work

Contraception can be done in different ways. By suppressing ovulation or by way of barrier methods fertilisation of the ovum by the sperm can be prevented (A). Other methods (B) prevent the further development of the fertilised ovum. With some methods (C) the principal mode of action depends on the time of use.

The principal mode of action of a contraceptive method can be discussed with a specialist physician. For instance, the question could be asked, whether fertilisation is prevented. Information on the way a contraceptive predominantly functions can also be found in the product information and the patient information leaflet by the manufacturer.

(A) Preventing fertilisation

Suppressing ovulation

By administering specific sex hormones, the body’s own hormone regulation is changed in such a way that ovulation is not triggered.

So-called combined contraceptives, containing oestrogen and progesterone, as well as some which only contain progesterone work in this way.

Besides primarily suppressing ovulation hormonal contraceptive methods also produce additional secondary effects, like the formation of a mucous plug in the cervix, suppressing the motility of the cilia (tiny hairs) in the fallopian tube and changing the endometrial lining, thus making implantation of the fertilised ovum potentially more difficult.

Important note: Hormonal contraceptive products are very reliable in terms of preventing pregnancy as long as they are used correctly and other disruptive factors, which could reduce or impede efficacy, are excluded, such as interaction with other drugs, gastro-intestinal malabsorption, or accelerated breakdown by the liver.

Note on breastfeeding: Breastfeeding also changes the body’s own hormone regulation in such a way as to reduce ovulation. As this effect is very unreliable, however, it can hardly be considered a method of contraception.

Building up barriers

Precautionary measures, which prevent sperm and ovum to come together are called barrier methods. Worthwhile conventional practices are:

- the condom for men or for women, which also provides excellent protection from sexually transmitted diseases
- the cervical cap or diaphragm (silicone cup covering the cervix)
- sterilisation of the woman (ligation of the fallopian tubes) or
- sterilisation of the man (vasectomy)

Inactivating sperm cells

Vaginal creams, suppositories, or douches whose ingredients are intended to kill sperm in the vagina after ejaculation are commonly used forms of contraception. (Note: A very unreliable method which is at best recommended in combination with condoms!)

Time and space

After ovulation the ovum can only be fertilised within the next 12 (to 24) hours. This phase can be calculated using various methods:

- calendar-based method (also called Knaus-Ogino Method, establishing ovulation by way of a menstrual cycle calculator)
- temperature method (establishing ovulation by measuring body temperature)

- Billings Ovulation Method (establishing ovulation by monitoring vaginal discharge)
- symptothermal method (combination of temperature and Billings method)
- interrupted intercourse (coitus interruptus): the penis is withdrawn from the vagina prior to ejaculation (note: very unreliable!)

This type of contraception is often also called natural contraception. Either the couple remains abstinent during the calculated period of fertility or they use condoms, for example, to prevent conception during this period.

(B) Preventing the further development

Preventing the implantation

Fertilisation, that is, the fusion of sperm and ovum, takes place in the fallopian tube. It takes five days for the early embryo to migrate along the fallopian tube to the uterus. In order to be able to develop further, the embryo needs to implant into the lining of the uterus. This is a highly complex process. It is not unusual for this to naturally result in a loss of the embryo. Some contraceptive methods prevent this implantation. As a result the embryo cannot develop further and dies.

These contraceptive methods include copper or gold intrauterine devices (IUDs), as well as all hormonal methods which are not primarily aimed at the suppression of ovulation.

Removing the embryo

Even after successful implantation the further development of the embryo can be prevented by an abortion. The following methods are generally employed:

- abortion with mifepristone (inducing a miscarriage by anti-hormonal effect)
- surgical abortion (removal of the embryo or foetus from the uterus by curettage)

(C) Methods of contraception that depend on time of use

At the beginning we established that hormonal contraceptives work in different ways. The way the methods listed below work depend on the time and duration of use. We cannot safely assume that the suppression of ovulation is their only effect.

- *Three-monthly contraceptive injection and low dose hormonal IUDs*: in the case of long-term contraceptive products without oestrogen, it cannot be ruled out that the initially essential effect of suppressing ovulation is lost over time because of decreased hormone release.
- *Emergency contraception (also known as morning-after pill)*: if taken prior to ovulation it will effectively delay ovulation by several days so that fertilisation cannot take place. Several medical societies regard this as the sole effect of the commonly used agents levonorgestrel and ulipristal acetate. If taken after ovulation has taken place, however, the morning-after pill seems to be ineffective. Therefore the conclusion can be drawn that the implantation or further development of the fertilised ovum is not being influenced. The data volume which medical societies base these findings on is admittedly very small.

Evaluation

In line with the basic principle that no fertilised ovum should be killed, all methods which are primarily aimed at preventing fertilisation of the ovum by the sperm can be used.

Methods which are primarily aimed at preventing the embryo's implantation in the uterus or such methods which are similar to an abortion should be rejected.

Methods which essentially prevent (sometimes delay) both the fertilisation of the ovum as well as the further development of the fertilised ovum, must, at the very least, be examined critically. The emergency contraceptive known as the morning-after pill is evaluated very differently: medical societies state that the only effect is a delay in ovulation, which makes its use unproblematic. Critics consider the available research as insufficient, however, and have reservations.

Position of the New Apostolic Church on contraception

Given the variety of cultures and individual situations, the New Apostolic Church cannot provide detailed recommendations on family planning. The following are the general tenets of the Church:

- In principle, family planning (birth control) is at the sole discretion of the married couple.



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- Sexuality in marriage is ordained by God as an expression of the married couple's love for each other. Human beings have an obligation to manage their sexuality in a responsible and sensible manner. This also includes the decision whether the couple would like children and, if so, how many.
- Birth control can be implemented by using contraceptive drugs and devices.
- The Church does not object to contraceptives which are primarily aimed at preventing fertilisation of the ovum. The Church does, however, reject products and methods, which essentially prevent the further development of an already fertilised ovum or which kill it.
- The principal mode of action of a contraceptive method can be discussed with a specialist physician.

Information on the way a contraceptive method predominantly works can also be found in the product information and the patient information leaflet by the manufacturer.

- The use of condoms as a means of birth control provides additional protection against infectious diseases like AIDS.

Summary

The Church says yes to life. Family planning is at the discretion of the married couple; however, the Church rejects contraceptive methods and products that are essentially aimed at killing fertilised ova. The further development of conceived life must not be inhibited.

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JACOB'S DESIRE WINS HIM THE BIRTHRIGHT

ACCORDING TO GENESIS 25: 29–34; 27



Esau and Jacob were twins. Esau, the elder, had red hair and his skin was rough and hairy. He was a skilful hunter and spent most of his time out in the fields hunting. Jacob had smooth skin. He preferred to remain close to home. Isaac, their father, was especially fond of Esau and enjoyed eating the meat that Esau brought home. Jacob was Rebekah's favourite son.

One day Jacob was cooking stew when his brother, Esau, came home after hunting. He was tired. Esau said to Jacob, "Let me have some of that stew. I am tired and hungry."

Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright."

Esau replied, "I am dying of hunger. What use is my birthright to me?" It was not important to Esau. He sold it to Jacob for a meal of lentils. So Jacob gave Esau bread and stew. When Isaac, their father, was old and his eyesight was beginning

to fail him, he called for Esau, his eldest son: "I am ill and do not know when I will die. Take your bow and arrow and go kill a deer. Then cook my favourite meal for me and bring it to me. After I have eaten I will give you a blessing."

Rebekah heard Isaac's words. As soon as Esau had gone out hunting to kill a deer, she took Jacob to one side and told him what she had heard. Then she sent him to the herd to bring her two young goats so she could prepare a meal for Isaac, just as he liked it. "You will take it to your father so that he may eat, and you may receive the blessing."

Jacob said to his mother, "My brother's skin is rough while mine is smooth. If my father touches me and discovers that I am deceiving him then he will not bless me. Instead he will curse me!" His mother replied, "Do as I tell you."

Jacob brought his mother the young goats and she cooked his father's favourite meal. Then

she dressed Jacob in Esau's best clothes and tied the goat skins around his hands and neck. She gave him the meal with some bread.

Jacob took it to his father. Isaac asked him, "Who are you?"

Jacob replied, "I am Esau, your firstborn son. I have done as you asked. Come, sit down and eat the meal I have prepared, and bless me."

Isaac asked his son, "How did you find the deer so quickly?"

He replied, "The Lord, your God, showed me where to find it."

Isaac asked Jacob to come closer so that he could feel him and make sure that he really was Esau.

"The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau," he said. Isaac did not recognise Jacob, because his arms were hairy like Esau's.

Isaac ate and drank. He kissed Jacob. He recognised the smell of Esau's clothes and gave Jacob the blessing: "See, the smell of my son is like the smell of the field, which the Lord has blessed. May God give you of the dew of heaven, of the fat of the earth, and plenty of grain and wine. Let people serve you.

Be master over your brethren and let your mother's sons bow down

before you. Cursed be everyone who curses you. And blessed be those who bless you!"

Isaac finished giving Jacob the blessing. Just after Jacob left the room, Esau returned from hunting. He also cooked a tasty meal and took it to his father.

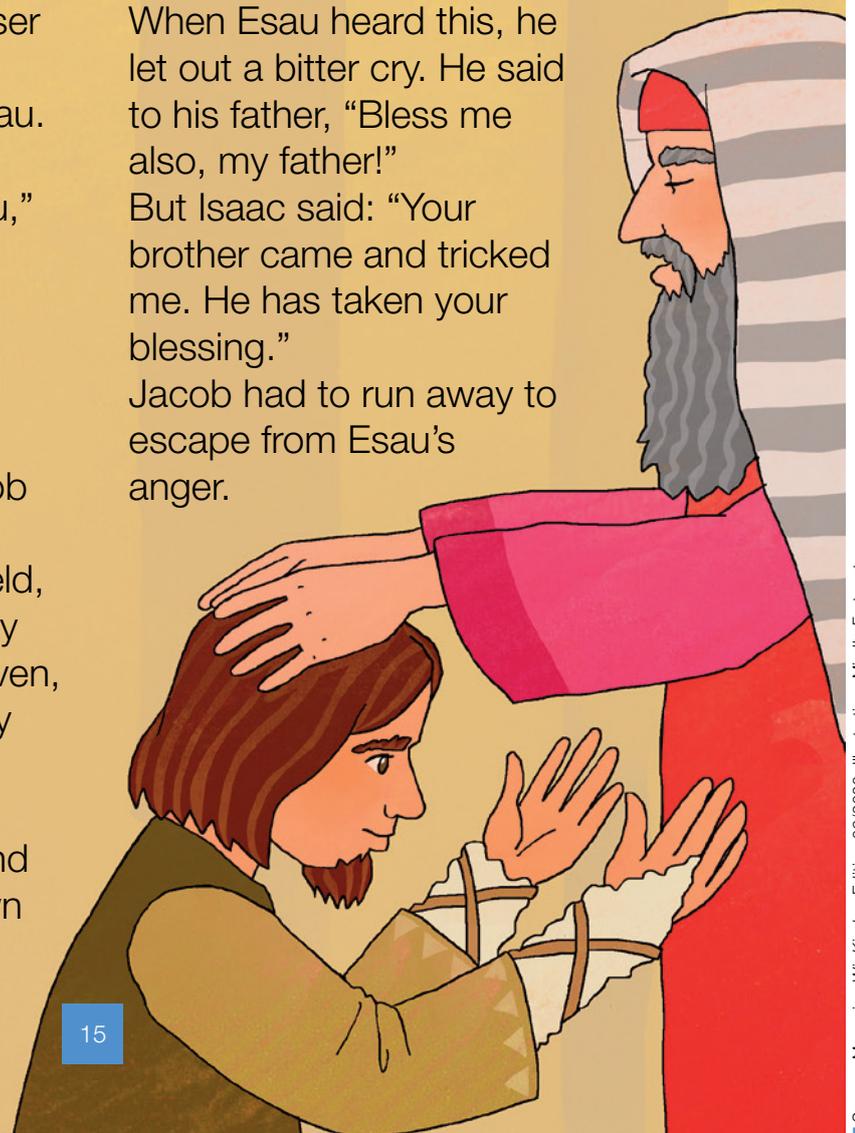
"Who are you?" asked Isaac. He replied, "I am Esau, your firstborn son."

Isaac was shocked and asked him, "Where is the hunter who has just brought me a meal and to whom I gave the blessing? This blessing cannot be undone."

When Esau heard this, he let out a bitter cry. He said to his father, "Bless me also, my father!"

But Isaac said: "Your brother came and tricked me. He has taken your blessing."

Jacob had to run away to escape from Esau's anger.





Oliver Rütten

Fellowship is both the way and the goal

Training in the fellowship of the believers for eternal fellowship with God: this is how the Chief Apostle understands salvation in Christ and our preparation for it. What this means he explained in his annual interview 2021.

District Apostle Meeting, Pentecost service, and an interview: this topic is really important to Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider. How does the New Apostolic Church understand salvation? And what are the implications of this for the attendance of divine service?

And no, this is not about a Church leader who is worried about attendance figures. The Chief Apostle not only made this clear in his most recent sermons, but already shortly before he took office in 2013: “As Apostles and ambassadors in Christ’s stead, we are not fighting for the survival of the New Apostolic Church but for the Lord Jesus Christ.” And the main task he sees in this is preparing the bridal congregation for the return of Christ.

Not an escape, but completion

“Forever and in perfect harmony with God” and “continually discovering new aspects of the glory of God”: this is how the Chief Apostle outlined the concept of ultimate salvation of the soul, as it emerges from the statements of Jesus Christ in the New Testament.

This prospect encompasses some very different aspects: liberation, deliverance, preservation, forgiveness, victory, and even redemption are mentioned in the interview. But focusing on individual aspects only harbours certain risks: believers might be tempted to shut themselves off from the outside world. Or missionary efforts might no longer be motivated solely by love for our neighbour, but as a means to an end to escape this world as quickly as possible.

“New Apostolic Christians,” this is how the Chief Apostle formulates our concept of salvation, “do not necessarily see their earthly existence as a vale of tears which they are condemned to walk. What they want is to live with God eternally. Their life on earth is a time of grace that God grants them in order that they may prepare themselves for eternal fellowship with Him in both joy and suffering.”

Fellowship with God

This preparation happens individually to begin with: “We must believe in Jesus Christ, be born again out of water and the Spirit, and receive the body and blood of Christ.” These prerequisites are necessary, but not sufficient. And this is where our participation in the divine services comes in and plays the central role.

“By participating in the divine services, believers first of all strengthen their personal relationship with God.” Besides, the sermon inspired by the Holy Spirit strengthens their faith in the imminent return of Jesus Christ. When praying the Lord’s Prayer, they express their desire to be in fellowship with God. And finally: “The absolution frees them from the burden of their sins. Partaking worthily in Holy Communion strengthens their hope and nourishes the divine life they have received in the rebirth.”

Fellowship with other people

Participating in the divine services also prepares the believers to live in the community of other people in the kingdom of God. Because also in the congregation believers come together with others whom they have not sought out for their encounter with God. “Their desire to praise and worship God, their need to commune with God and be near Him, is so strong that they find themselves coming together with people with whom they would otherwise never have associated.”

The power of the gospel is evident in the congregation in a special way: “God uses the same message in order to strengthen the believers, all of whom find themselves in completely different situations.” In addition to this: “By praying the words aloud together: ‘Forgive us our debts,’ the believers publicly profess that they are all—without exception—in need of grace.” And finally, since no one is perfect, congregational life enables the believers to learn to forgive one another, reconcile with one another, and learn to overcome their differences.

“I see it as my responsibility to solemnly remind all New Apostolic believers that regular participation in divine service is an essential component of our preparation for the return of Jesus,” Chief Apostle Schneider points out. “For these reasons in and of themselves already, I invite all New Apostolic members to hold fast to the practice of attending the divine services in person—as soon as it becomes possible for us to do so again.”

And he does not forget those who have to stay home for reasons of illness or age. “They can rest assured that God will provide for them. We pray for one another!”

Pastoral care survey: women for women

Is there a need for women in pastoral care? There sure is! This is the conclusion reached by an official work group in the New Apostolic Church Western Germany. And the group has concrete figures to demonstrate the need for a response to this demand in the congregations.

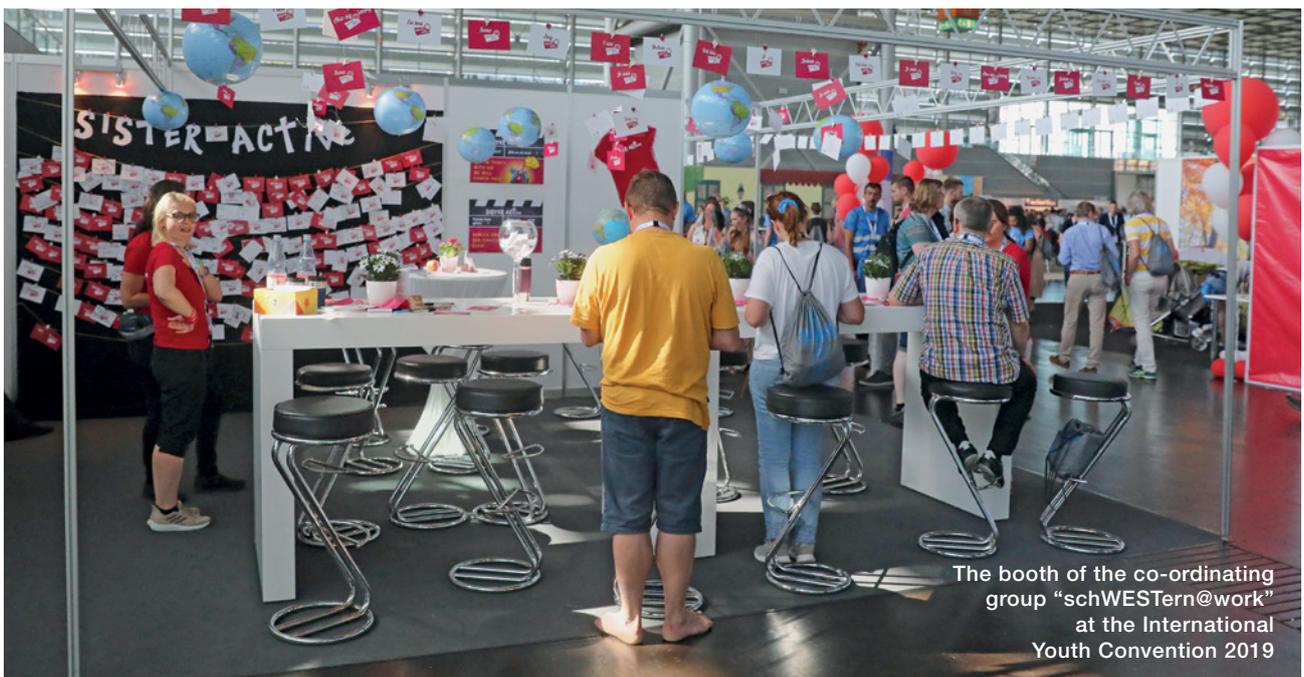
The name of the group engaged by the New Apostolic Church of Western Germany is “schWESTern@work”. The name is a word play combining the terms “West” and “Schwestern” (the German words for “west” and “sisters”, respectively). And the “at work” portion represents their whole agenda: the group is looking to motivate more women and girls to engage their abilities and competencies in the Church.

The first project groups comprised of women from this region were already formed in the then Regional Church of Hesse/Rhineland-Palatinate/Saarland, as well as in Belgium and Luxembourg, following the International Church Convention 2014. When the Regional Church

of North Rhine-Westphalia merged with other districts to form the new Regional Church of Western Germany, District Apostle Rainer Storck advocated that the group be expanded to include the entire area. Today there is thus a representative from each Apostle area in the core team.

Pastoral care—what and how?

This coordinating group is not only the point of contact for all topics relating to women and girls. It also provides information on tasks and services that women perform in the New Apostolic Church. This includes, for example, an extensive survey that was conducted during the International Youth Convention 2019.



The booth of the co-ordinating group “schWESTern@work” at the International Youth Convention 2019

Thomas Brunschede, Oliver Rütten



The sisters at the booth discovered that 93 per cent of the members would like sisters appointed to pastoral care in their congregation

This opinion poll was part of the concept behind a 900-square-metre exhibition and discussion area focused on the matter of pastoral care. The offer was organised by a project group comprised of New Apostolic women from all the Regional Churches of Germany, Switzerland, and France. The team members were appointed by their respective Apostles. The survey was intended to explore what pastoral care means to young people and which communication channels they would prefer for pastoral care discussions.

Not only women are asking for women

The central result of the two-day study was that a whopping 93 per cent of those surveyed responded that they would like an officially appointed sister to provide pastoral care in their congregation. This main question received 1,233 responses on the first day. Some 54 per cent of the yes votes came from women while 46 per cent of them came from men. The small minority of no-votes were 72 per cent comprised of women.

A solid 90 per cent of participants would like to see pastoral care offers tailored specifically to women. This question from the second day received 1,502 responses. Fifty-eight per cent of the yes-votes were female, as were 56 per cent of the no-votes. This information was taken from the documentation of the final survey results, which are available to the editors.

A question of understanding

The reasons for this clear demand are shown by the question inquiring into the issues that might be associated with female pastoral care. By a considerable margin, many respondents—namely 43 per cent—would prefer to speak to a female caregiver about issues specific to women. Some of the specific issues mentioned were:

- problems in marriage, partnership, or family
- loss of a child
- unwanted pregnancies
- abuse and rape
- domestic abuse
- and separation of parents.

In this context the participants made it abundantly clear: women feel better understood by other women than by men.

Other important issues of pastoral care for women that were mentioned included: everyday worries and problems at work—with a share of 29 per cent—and questions of faith and congregational issues—at 11 per cent. The topics of raising children and being married to a minister were ranked at the bottom end of the scale.

Initial work results submitted

Under the theme “Pastoral care—yesterday, today, and tomorrow”, the survey collected insights about the what and how of pastoral care in general. The results in a nutshell: one quarter of those surveyed viewed the formal pastoral care visit familiar from past years as predominantly positive, while the rest viewed it as rather negative. Two thirds of those surveyed were satisfied with the current situation and one third were dissatisfied. And for the future, nearly 60 per cent would prefer more informal, spontaneous, and open pastoral care.

The preferred communication channel is clear: 77 per cent of those surveyed preferred face-to-face conversations and ongoing contact. By contrast, some 20 per cent were able to envision pastoral care via social media, messenger, or video call. The respondents were between 13 and 75 years old, and more than half were under 30. Most of them came from the four German districts and Switzerland.

Thanksgiving Day

Barkley West congregation



Moorreesburg congregation



Block B congregation



Bloemfontein congregation



Evaton congregation



Brandwacht congregation



Kagiso congregation



La Ferme congregation



Phiva congregation



Westbank central congregation



Nobuhle North congregation



Orange Farm congregation



Welkom congregation



Connaught congregation



| Let us widen our hearts

On Sunday 28 November 2021, Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider conducted an AVT divine service from Dinwiddie congregation. The divine service commenced at 09:00, was broadcast to the entire District Apostle Area and translated into French and Portuguese.

During the divine service, the Chief Apostle placed Apostles Marc Diedricks (Cape Winelands AP Area) & Harold Swartbooi (Kimberley AP Area) into retirement and 5 Apostles were ordained for Southern Africa.

My dear brothers and sisters, first allow me to express my joy and my gratitude to be here with you and with all those who are connected with us. For sure, it has always been a special joy for me to come to South Africa. But this time, it's a little bit more. I realize that it's not just a joy. It's really a grace. It's a grace that I can be together with all the Apostles and Bishops and that I could enjoy the fellowship with them. That's not granted. And in this difficult period, we realize that everything we've got from our heavenly Father, we do not deserve it. We cannot deserve it. It's grace. And we thank our heavenly Father for this grace. It could have been totally different, but God has granted us this grace and we can experience this Sunday here in South Africa together. Thank you, heavenly Father. I know that we are going through very difficult days worldwide. The situation is difficult and each time we think oh now it's over, it becomes worse. And there are many many many questions. This question why? Makes us suffer. Why does God permit this? Why didn't He help? Why doesn't He change the situation? I must be honest. I don't know. I have no idea why. The only thing I'm sure about, the only thing I want to share with you is that I'm absolutely convinced that God loves you. I'm absolutely convinced that Jesus shares your concerns, your sufferings, your pain. I'm absolutely convinced that Jesus is working hard for your and for my salvation. I am absolutely convinced that no virus and no man and no hardship and nothing can hinder Him to fulfil His work of salvation. And it's my wish that you can have also this conviction in your heart. Jesus loves me. He's at work for my salvation. He will come quickly.

Celebrating today, the first Sunday of Advent. And that's why we have this Bible word.

The Psalm is about the entry of a glorious King into the city of Jerusalem. There are many explanations for this text. As usual, they do not agree what it means. Many say yeah, it refers to the day when David came with the Ark of the Covenant and brought it to Jerusalem. You know, the Ark of the Covenant, they took it with them. And one day David decided this Ark of the Covenant had to stay in Jerusalem. Then he brought it to Jerusalem. And here it's described in poetic manner. I want to say the glory of God is so big. It's so great that even the doors of the city of Jerusalem are not large enough. They are not large enough for the glory of God to enter, so they have to be widened so that the glory of God can enter. That's one of the explanations. From a Christian point of view, we consider and we see this Bible word as a prophecy announcing the coming of the Messiah. The Son of God coming on earth with His glory, with His power, to deliver us from sin and from evil, to overcome evil and death and to save us. And so that's a traditional word for Advent. We prepare ourselves to celebrate Christmas, but we celebrate the fact that the Son of God came on earth to save man and to bring us salvation. But to save us, Jesus needs also to enter our heart. He needs to work in us. He needs to sanctify us. He needs to reign and to rule in our heart. That's His wish. But He won't force us. So, this word





applies also for us. Jesus wants to enter your heart. He wants to enter your soul. He wants to save you. But you have to decide - open your heart. He won't force you. That's up to you to let Him in. That's one step. We have to open our heart to Jesus in order for Him to be able to save us, to sanctify us. And when Jesus wants to enter, He comes with all His glory. And then the point is that we have to widen our hearts and our mind if you want to get full salvation and the full blessing. Because our human heart, our human frame of mind, is too narrow for the glory of God. So, widen your heart, widen your mind and your frame of mind.



That was the problem of the Jews when the Son of God came on earth. They had their own idea and conception what the Messiah should do. You know that. They expected Him to deliver them from the Romans, to restore the Kingdom of Israel and to deliver them from all the difficulties they have to deal with. And that was the expectation for the Messiah. But then Jesus came and He did something totally different. He didn't change the Romans. He didn't restore the Kingdom of Israel. And He told them I came to bring you eternal life. And they were disappointed. My dear brothers and sisters, we know that God loves us. We know that Jesus loves us. We know that He is the almighty One and He can do everything. Nothing is impossible for Him. But many people they have a narrow conception of

the work of Jesus. They believe in Jesus and they expect Him to solve all their problems on earth. He should change the situation. He should deliver them from sickness, from financial problems, from all the problems they have to deal with. For sure, Jesus can do it. For sure, Jesus wants to help us. And do not hesitate to tell Him what you are suffering from. Do not hesitate to tell Him your wish. What you want from Him... What would you like Him to do. But don't be focused on the earthly life. Widen your mind and think about Jesus who wants to do much more. He wants to deliver us definitely from the power of evil. He wants to sanctify us. He wants to lead us into His Kingdom where there's no more suffering, no more death, no more injustice. That's



the fact. And it's a pity when people are just focused on earthly concerns and want to address Jesus just to solve their problems. Jesus didn't come for this. He didn't need to die on the cross to solve the earthly problems. The almighty God could do it without the sacrifice. But He came to bring definitely salvation. He came to bring eternal life. So let us open our mind and not just consider Jesus as the helper who can solve all our problems on earth. Let us be aware Jesus wants to deliver me definitely. If He solves this problem tomorrow, I will have to deal with another problem. And that will go on until the end. We experience that. One problem is solved and there are two others coming. It's a never-ending story. Jesus wants to deliver us definitely from the power of evil. Jesus wants to help us to overcome the evil right now and to deal in the proper manner with our problems of the daily life. So, open your mind and think about salvation and eternal life. Widen your mind. When Jesus came, He told the Jews and that was not a nice saying, they didn't like it. He told them you know, you cannot put new wine in old wineskins because they will burst and the wine will be wasted. Oh, they got exactly what He meant. And they were not happy about it. He just wanted to tell them, you have to change your mind because here too they had quite a narrow conception. You know, the faithful Jews, they considered that you have to be obedient to the law of Moses. And if you obey the commandments, and if you do good deeds, then you deserve a blessing. And that then God will bless you because you are a faithful one, you are obedient and you do the right things. And then you will be blessed. Earthly vision of the relationship with God. And Jesus came and said, no, that doesn't work that way. You know, the people of Israel have been the elected ones, have been elected by God. He has delivered them from the Egyptians, and He has already blessed you so you should be obedient not to receive something. But be-



cause you have received so much. You have to be obedient to the law because God has elected you and has blessed you. So be obedient out of gratitude and not out of interest. And that was a big change. That was against all the understanding. The typical, faithful Jew, he said I have to be obedient. If I am obedient, I will get my blessing. And everything will be nice for me. As Jesus said, no, no, it's quite the contrary. Be obedient out of gratitude to God. A totally new frame of mind.

Dear brothers and sisters, what about us? We have to widen also our frame of mind. We know that we have been elected. We know that the Son of God came on earth and died to deliver us. He has done a wonderful work for us. So everything we do should be out of gratitude for Jesus Christ and not out of interest. All of us we know that. But brothers and sisters, sorry I insist a little bit on this point, because how many times this thought comes up in our heart? Yeah, but if I do that, what will I get? If I do more than others, what will I get more? What will be the salary? What will be the rewards? I follow Jesus but what's the result? See, this old wineskin is still there. And we should just be obedient and follow Jesus out of gratitude. Because He died for us. Because He has elected us. Because He allows us to enter the Kingdom of God as firstlings, we've got so much. That's why we follow Jesus. A totally new frame of mind. Widen your mind. Let it open your hearts. And be grateful for God



for all the things, all the grace that is granted you.

Let enter the King of glory. The poet he says the glory of God is so great that it cannot enter the city you have to widen the doors. Are we aware how great the glory of God is? Remember the story of the young rich ruler, the young rich man. He came to Jesus and he said, Jesus, what should I do to have eternal life? Jesus said to him, you know the story, respect the commandments and he said, Oh, I've done it. And actually, he was a faithful Jew because he was obedient. He got the blessing because he became very rich. And for him that was just normal. He deserved it because he was so brilliant, he was blessed. And Jesus answered, sell what you have, give it to the poor and follow Me. Urh. Jesus wanted to tell him to abandon his idea of the reward and the salary. You know, you have been faithful. And you consider that your blessing. That's your reward. Give it up. That's the first thing. The second thing. Don't rely on your money. Rely on Me. Follow Me. Trust Me. Rely on me, not on your money. Give it back and follow Me and trust Me. I will care for you. And the third point. The fellowship with Jesus Christ is much more than your money and your earthly wealth. The one who has Jesus Christ has got everything. The one who has fellowship with Jesus Christ is the richest man on earth. That's the meaning. Be aware of the glory of God. If you have fellowship with Jesus Christ. If you have Jesus, you've got everything. That's much more important, much more precious than all the money, all the glory you can get on earth. Widen your hearts for the glory of God. If you have Jesus Christ, you've got everything.

Jesus had also another request for the Jews because they had also a narrow conception of their neighbour. You know



that? Yeah, they loved those who were like they were. But the Samaritans, that was a problem. The Romans, oh, enemies. And the sinners, they have to be punished. And the women and the children they just count for nothing because they cannot really respect the law of Moses. Oh yeah they are second class. And Jesus said no, don't just love those who are your friends. Don't just love those who love you. Love your enemies. Love all those who are totally different from what you are. Widen your hearts. Don't just love your friends. Love those who do not love you. Love those who are totally different from what you are. Same applies for us brothers and sisters. Let us widen our heart and learn to love as Jesus loves all men. Even those who are not like we are. Even those who think in a different way. Let us love them.

And the last point, I go back to the first one, we have to deal with hardship. We have to deal with difficult times and sometimes you do not understand why Jesus doesn't help and doesn't change the situation. But He wants to sanctify us in this special time too. And He tells us too, hey, it's not just about you. You always think about you and you and you and you. But I've called you. You've got a mission to fulfil. It's understandable that you want to get some help and to be delivered from this situation. But don't forget, you've got a mission. I want you to be a blessing in your situation for all those who are in the same situation. I want you to be a blessing in your sufferings for those who suffer for the same reason. And I can help you. Widen your vision. It's not just about you. Jesus wants you in your situ-





ation, my situation, your situation. Now, I would like you to be a blessing for all those who have to deal with exactly the same things. And if you remain faithful, if you remain obedient, if you love them, if you pray for them, if you give them the good example, you will be a blessing for all those who are in the same situation. Open your eyes, widen your heart, even in difficult situations. Think about your neighbour. You can be a blessing for him. And we've got help. You can do it. That's the way we should widen our heart and our mind to allow Jesus and His glory to enter in our hearts.

I spoke about the Advent for sure we have also our spiritual reasons. We are waiting for the return of Jesus Christ. That will be the great coming of the King of glory. And here too, we cannot grasp it with our human mind, with our human understanding. Dear brothers and sisters, often children ask me Chief Apostle how will it happen? How does it work when Jesus will come back to take His own unto Him? How will it work? I have no idea. And the more I think about the less answer I've got because it's just impossible to imagine. It's beyond our understanding. So here too, we have to widen our understanding and say okay, I cannot understand it. But I believe it. It's possible because for God, nothing is impossible. I have no idea how it will work, but it will happen. The bride of Christ will be much greater than everything we can imagine. I tell you the bride of Christ will be absolutely different from what we are thinking about. Many will be part of the bride as we couldn't imagine that they could be of the bride of Christ. Others we are convinced they will be part of it. They won't be there because yeah we think all the Chief Apostle is such a good man. I hope you think so. He will be part of the bride. And all the Apostles. And all the ministers and all the... that's not granted. Remember the story. The disciples they saw the offerings of the Pharisee and the poor widow who gave just a piece of money. And He said this one no. This one yes. Because He saw what the disciples couldn't see. He didn't look at the amount of money. He saw the heart. He tells the story that people will come to Him and tell Him hey, we've done miracles in Your name. We chased away demons and done incredible things

in Your name. And He will say I don't know you. So, we cannot know. The criminal on the cross. I don't know what he has done but he must have done something awful. He was sentenced to death. He could enter the kingdom of God. Here too, the composition of the bride will be beyond our imagination. Beyond our understanding. We know that to be part of it, we have to be reborn out of water and spirit. We know that we have to be faithful. But that's it. Who belongs to we cannot know. And then imagine the number will be much greater than everything we can imagine. Think about all those in the yonder world. Think about the Christians of the early church. Think about the Christians with the English Apostles. Think about all those who have followed Christ and the Apostles. Think about all those who have been baptized and sealed in the yonder world. Here too, sometimes we have a narrow idea of the bride of Christ. And Jesus said no, no, you have to widen your idea. The bride of Christ will be much greater than everything you can imagine. And then we will see the glory of God. The full glory of God. Dear brothers and sisters, that's definitely beyond everything we can imagine. Just think about I often think about this thing when you see people who are suffering a lot. We have even in our midst, brothers and sisters. They have such an awful life. One dramatic situation after another. Here a death case then a sickness and then and that's absolutely dramatic. And we say God, how can you permit this? And then you think when they arrive in the kingdom of God, the glory of God will be so great that they won't even remember their sufferings on earth. That gives us a small idea, a very small idea of the glory of God. Brothers and sisters, each time we've got tired, each time we think is it worth doing it. Just remember, the glory of God is beyond everything I can imagine. It's worth remaining faithful. It's worth following Christ. Jesus is at work for our salvation. He will come quickly and then the faithful one will see the glory of God and that will be definitely greater than everything we can imagine. Let us remain faithful until the end. Amen.

Thoughts from Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider

More than a thousand congregations visited in Mozambique

Two years ago, Bishop Witten and his wife, Jean, were given the task to visit all congregations in Mozambique.

The Bishop clearly remembers the discussion with District Apostle J Kriel after he conducted a divine service in Nam-pula, Mozambique. At this time, Bishop Witten and Jean were living in Mozambique for more than a year.

Despite implementation of new systems, they still weren't getting tangible information about the congregations in Mozambique. That was when the District Apostle suggested that the only way that they would know exactly what they have is if he and Jean would undertake to visit every congregation in the country.

Having lived in the country for just over a year and understanding how bad the roads are and the inaccessibility of travel, the Bishop wondered whether this task was even possible, and if it was possible, how they could achieve this? By this time, they had already travelled to many parts of the country, and he knew that many of the villages are so remote that it is impossible to travel there by car. There are just no roads. Travelling is mostly done on foot, bicycle and or motorcycle. But he said, "Yes, they'll undertake this challenge".

And so they started.

PLAN OF ACTION

Firstly, the Bishop had to load an application on his phone that would give them the GPS coordinates of each congregation they visited. By visiting each congregation, they



would also have access to the Rector who is key to all of the operations.

They quickly devised a plan of action when visiting a congregation. They would:

- Take the GPS coordinates to pinpoint the exact location of the congregation.
- Gather the Rector's details as well as that of other ministers in the congregation. (This information would be captured on the OASYS System.)
- Ensure that each Rector knew how to send the required SMS of all congregational activities, offering, attendance and such.
- Take photographs of the inside and outside of the church buildings.
- Check on the property registration.

At that time, the lead Apostle Semba (now deceased) and Apostle Worship, met with the local Apostles to discuss

their plans. The local Apostles would accompany them into their areas so that they could undertake the work together.

It soon became apparent that the Apostles did not know where some of these congregations were, and the team needed to rely on the local leaders to accompany them. For this reason, Bishop Witten, his wife, together with the local Apostle, would travel to a point in his area where they would meet the local leader. The local leader would take them to find the congregations that they planned to visit for the day. This plan had its complications, but they soon learnt that this was the only way they would find the congregations. This project started on 27 September 2019.

CHALLENGES

One of the greatest challenges was getting to the congregations. They are far-flung and so remote that it makes driving to the destination difficult. They often had to leave the vehicle and continue on foot. Many of the bridges, especially near the villages, have been washed away. This meant that they often had to search for a place where they could drive across the river. Some bridges have been mended by the locals, using logs, sticks and stones. This is quite dangerous. They thank God that they have had no accidents and could get across the rivers safely.

Roads have been neglected over the years and are so badly eroded as to become pathways, exposing rocks and deep ruts as the water from years of rain cut into the softer areas. Mountain passes have no rails. Therefore, during the rainy season, it is not possible to travel to most parts of the country. For this reason, the team had a limited period of time to do the work that they needed to do.

The condition of the roads also makes travelling very slow. They often travelled at ten or twenty kilometres per hour. So, if a congregation is twenty kilometres away, it could take them more than an hour to get there. Roads are also not interconnected. This meant that they had to turn back from where they started before they could move on to the next



congregation. Lots of time was wasted and this led to feelings of frustration. Driving like that was not pleasant at all.

Another challenge was the heat. It is always hot in Mozambique. Temperatures can reach 50 degrees and above, and it is humid. Even in winter, you can find temperatures of 30 degrees plus. The heat added to the difficulties of their travels and added certain dangers

There are very few places offering accommodation outside





of the cities. Accommodation in the smaller towns lack the facilities to provide comfortable rest. In most outlying areas, there is just no accommodation. Given the heat and mosquitoes, sleeping in your vehicle is not an option. Therefore, when working in an area, the couple had to drive back to their accommodation and then start early the next morning to start work in the same area they were the day before.

SEARCHING FOR EASTER EGGS...

Every day that they started, they only knew the general direction that they would be driving in. They did not know where they would be going, how long it would take them, or what the road conditions would be. It was really like searching for Easter eggs. Sometimes, even the local Apostle was surprised by what they found.

During their travels, they discovered that some congregations no longer exist and found ones that were not registered. These congregations could be pointed out to them by the local district leader or members whom they came across. On two occasions, a local chief informed them of congregations in the area. Their visits to an area, especial-



ly where cars never came, drew great attention, prompting the village leaders to investigate what was happening. It was during these interactions that they might have learnt of more congregations in the Apostle area. To date, they have discovered 62 congregations that no longer exist and 45 un-registered ones.

Their experiences have been very humbling.



A DIFFERENT WORLD

Some of these areas have no electricity, no shops and no library. People live off the earth. Often, the sound of their car drew attention, breaking through the silence that is customary in the villages. Children scatter from them and hide in the fields out of fear.

Many of the district leaders and Rectors have never been in a car before. When they met the district leader in a village somewhere, they learnt that they had to show him how to open the car door and how to close it. Then, how to open it again from the inside. They observed his discomfort sitting in a “capsule” that he had never been in before.

Some experiences were quite funny. For example, the brother may have seen someone outside of the vehicle and proceeded to speak to the person without rolling down the car window. Yet, he would expect the person outside to hear him. Then they would have to show the person how to roll down the window, and up again. Simple things like these that they take for granted in so many areas around the world.

The members are always excited to see the Bishop and his wife and are often bewildered by their presence. They stare curiously at the car, at their attire and what they are doing. They follow them around wherever they go and run after the car when they leave.



A REWARDING TASK

They are so thankful for their many experiences, thankful for God's grace at allowing them to progress to what they could achieve thus far. The task has not been easy, yet, at the same time, it has been so rewarding.

They hope to finish the project by the end of this year when all congregations in Mozambique are registered and ministers' details are captured. In the words of our District Apostle, "We can only offer support once we know what we have".



The house of the Lord



becomes a sanctuary of joy and blessing to many.

In his address, the District Apostle spoke of the temple being the residence of God and that this is where one goes to experience His blessing. He urged the congregation to use this building for the purpose of becoming worthy to inhabit the eternal home that God has prepared for His people.

Apostle G Mintoor was also called to serve along.

After 18 years of waiting patiently and praying continually, the church building for the Kabega Park congregation in Gqeberha could be dedicated on 12 December 2021 in a divine service conducted by District Apostle J Kriel.

Due to the current Covid restrictions, the numbers inside the church hall were limited, but members of the congregation could join via AVT in the school hall that was used for divine services for many years.

The Bible word for the divine service was taken out of Psalm 27:4, 'One thing I have desired of the Lord, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the Lord All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the Lord, And to inquire in His temple.'

Bishop F Flores read the history of Kabega Park congregation which dated back to 1991. The District Apostle dedicated the building in a prayer in which he referred to it as the "Temple of the most High God" and prayed that it

At the conclusion of the divine service, the key was symbolically handed over to the Rector of the congregation, Priest Lester Peters.





Coming up

- | | |
|--------------|--------------------------------|
| 2 Jan. 2022 | Gifhorn (Germany) |
| 9 Jan. 2022 | Calgary (Canada) |
| 16 Jan. 2022 | Ostermundigen (Switzerland) |
| 21 Jan. 2022 | still to be specified (Angola) |
| 22 Jan. 2022 | still to be specified (Angola) |
| 23 Jan. 2022 | still to be specified (Angola) |
| 6 Feb. 2022 | Copenhagen (Denmark) |
| 24 Feb. 2022 | Ebuyangu (Kenya) |
| 25 Feb. 2022 | Meru (Kenya) |
| 27 Feb. 2022 | Nairobi (Kenya) |
| 5 Mar. 2022 | Prague (Czech Republic) |
| 6 Mar. 2022 | Linz (Austria) |
| 11 Mar. 2022 | Colombo (Sri Lanka) |
| 13 Mar. 2022 | Colombo (Sri Lanka) |
| 20 Mar. 2022 | Söllingen (Germany) |
| 27 Mar. 2022 | still to be specified (Ghana) |

New Apostolic Church
International

