

Filled with the Spirit



Feast of Pentecost 1981-2013

New Apostolic Church



Acknowledgement:

Special thanks to Shepherd Alfred Krempf who gathered materials from past Pentecost celebrations to make this retrospective publication possible.

© Copyright by

New Apostolic Church Canada

319 Bridgeport Road East

Waterloo, Ontario, N2T 2K9

Canada

Printed with permission of

New Apostolic Church Nordrhein - Westfalen

Printed in Canada

GD/1,500/2013

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It has become a very special New Apostolic tradition to receive a word of greeting from our Chief Apostle on Pentecost. These Pentecost text words gave wonderful direction to our life of faith and provided a focus throughout the year. We are thankful to the District Apostle Brinkmann and the district church of North-Rhine Westfalen for compiling this historic retrospective of over 30 years of Pentecost celebrations which was published in German and released in 2012. We have now taken the opportunity to translate this book into English and add the Pentecost messages of 2012 and 2013.

Pentecost 2013 holds special significance in that we celebrate our 150th Anniversary as the New Apostolic Church. In addition we witnessed the ordination of our new Chief Apostle Schneider and the retirement of our beloved Chief Apostle Leber.

It is my pleasure to present to you this compilation of Pentecost celebrations. It is my earnest hope that this may serve to strengthen you and bring you much joy.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Woll', written in a cursive style.

Mark Woll



Foreword	3
I. General information about Pentecost	6
The first Pentecost	6
The meaning and origin of the feast of Pentecost	8
History of Pentecost transmission services	14
Pentecost 2012—a huge media event	15
Pentecost 2012 in Cologne	16
II. Past Pentecost greetings	26
III. The seventh Pentecost service of each Chief Apostle	28
IV. “Round” anniversaries of Pentecost services	29
V. Pentecost services in review (2013-1981)	30
Pentecost 2013	30
Pentecost 2012	34
Pentecost 2011	38
Pentecost 2010	40
Pentecost 2009	44
Pentecost 2008	48
Pentecost 2007	52
Pentecost 2006	56
Pentecost 2005	60
Pentecost 2004	62
Pentecost 2003	66
Pentecost 2002	70
Pentecost 2001	74
Pentecost 2000	78
Pentecost 1999	82
Pentecost 1998	84
Pentecost 1997	88
Pentecost 1996	92
Pentecost 1995	96
Pentecost 1994	100
Pentecost 1993	102
Pentecost 1992	106
Pentecost 1991	108
Pentecost 1990	112
Pentecost 1989	114
Pentecost 1988	116
Pentecost 1987	118
Pentecost 1986	120
Pentecost 1985	122
Pentecost 1984	124
Pentecost 1983	128
Pentecost 1982	130
Pentecost 1981	134

The first Pentecost

1 When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

5 And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. 6 And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language.

7 Then they were all amazed and marvelled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? 8 And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? 9 Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, 11 Cretans and Arabs—we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God."

12 So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "Whatever could this mean?" 13 Others mocking said, "They are full of new wine."

Peter's Sermon

14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. 15 For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. 16 But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel [Joel 3: 1-5]:

17 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. 18 And on My menservants and My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy. 19 I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath: blood and fire and vapour of smoke. 20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord. 21 And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'



Depiction of Pentecost by Giotto di Bondone (around 1305)

22 “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know—23 Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; 24 “whom God raised up, having loosened the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it. 25 For David says concerning Him [Psalm 16: 8-11]: ‘I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. 26 Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; moreover my flesh also will rest in hope. 27 For You will not leave my soul in Hades, nor will you allow Your Holy One to see corruption. 28 You have made known to me the ways of life; you will make me full of joy in Your presence.’

29 “Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30 Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, 31 he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. 32 This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. 33 Therefore being exalted to the

right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear. 34 For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself [Psalm 110: 1]: ‘The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, 35 till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”’ 36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

The first congregation

37 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the Apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” 38 Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”

40 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.” 41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptised; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43 Then fear came upon every soul, and many won-

ders and signs were done through the Apostles. 44 Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, 45 and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. 46 So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, 47 praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

(Acts, chapter 2)



Pentecost as portrayed in the book of prayers “Les Très Riches Heures” belonging to the Duke de Berry (fifteenth century)

The meaning and origin of the feast of Pentecost

The word “Pentecost” is only mentioned in the New Testament and in the Apocrypha (e.g. Tobit 2: 1). The name comes from the Greek term for the “Feast of Weeks”, a Jewish feast of thanksgiving. The Greek words *haemera pentaekostae* mean “the 50th day”. In Judaism this term was used to describe the “Feast of Weeks”. According to Mosaic Law, the date for this yearly festivity was, therefore, set to be seven weeks and one day (so altogether 50 days) after Passover: “...seven Sabbaths shall be completed. Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath...” (Leviticus 23: 15-16).

Pentecost was one of three feasts when all male Israelites were required to appear before the Lord God (Exodus 23: 14-17). Special offerings were brought on that day as an expression of thanksgiving for the harvest, among them two loaves of bread made from the first grain that was harvested, the firstfruits of the harvest, which explains the second name for this feast: “Day of the Firstfruits” (Leviticus 23: 10-20, Numbers 28: 26). Over the course of time, this feast of the Jews acquired two additional meanings: it was both the day that marked the yearly renewal of the covenant between God and the Israelites, and the day to commemorate the events when Moses received the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. After Christ’s as-

cension God assigned a new meaning to this day, which is of the utmost importance in the history of salvation.

In His last sermons Jesus promises to send the Holy Spirit

Before we contemplate the events that transpired at Pentecost as described in Acts 2, let us first look at what the Son of God said when He promised to send the Holy Spirit. The evening before His death, Christ spoke to the Apostles and told them that the Holy Spirit would come once He had gone to the Father. We read as follows

in the gospel of John: “And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. But you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you” (John 14: 16-17).

Jesus’ words show that there is a considerable difference between the activity of the Holy Spirit at the time of the Old Testament and that of the New Testament. In the old covenant, the Holy Spirit worked through people whom He filled for a short time and used as vessels. But now Christ promised His



*Illustration of the feast of Pentecost from
“Bible or books of New Testament and
Old Testament” (1875)*

The meaning and origin of the feast of Pentecost

Portrait of the resurrected Jesus, Mary, and the Apostles. Stained glass window in the church of Alsemberg, Belgium (1895)

Apostles that the Holy Spirit would be with them and in them forever. The word “Comforter” is meant in the sense of a Helper, someone who can be called upon in time of need. Then Jesus showed them important signs and works of the Holy Spirit:

The Holy Spirit is the Comforter who ensures that the teaching of Jesus, the gospel, is kept alive even after His ascension to the Father (John 14: 6). The Holy Spirit testifies of Christ (John 15: 26).

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth who leads more and more deeply into the truth, and reveals things that Christ had not yet explained to His Apostles: “For He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak. And He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you” (John 16: 12-14).

From Good Friday to Pentecost

The same night that the Lord had made these promises, the troops and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees arrested Him in the garden of Gethsemane. He was interrogated and made to suffer on Good Friday, and ultimately brought His sacrifice on Golgotha through His death on the cross. On the third day, Easter, Christ



resurrected from the dead. In the 40 days that followed, He showed Himself many times to the Apostles and spoke with them about the kingdom of God. He told them: “For John truly baptised with water, but you shall be baptised with the Holy Spirit not many days from now” (Acts 1: 2-5).

Before He ascended to heaven, He told the Apostles: “Behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you. But tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high” (Luke 24: 49). Of this power of God we can read in Acts 1: 8: “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you. And you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

It was only after Christ had left their midst that the promises He had made were fulfilled: “It is to your advantage that I go away. For if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I depart,

I will send Him to you” (John 16: 7). Over the next ten days, the Apostles remained together with Jesus’ brothers, His mother Mary, and other women, and they prayed and pleaded. After some 120 believers had gathered in Jerusalem, Apostle Peter declared that someone should be ordained into the Apostle ministry to replace Judas Iscariot. They prayed to God to show them whom He had elected. The lot fell on Matthias.

The miracle of Pentecost

In Acts 2 Luke describes what happened on Pentecost, which was the tenth day after Christ ascended into heaven and the fiftieth day after He resurrected: “When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each

The meaning and origin of the feast of Pentecost



Depiction of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the Rabbula-Gospels (AD 586)

of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance” (Acts 2: 1-4). Now the promises were fulfilled: the other Comforter, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, had come from heaven and had filled those who were waiting and believing. Led by the Holy Spirit they started to speak in other tongues (the technical term for this is ‘glossolalia’).

The sound or rushing noise from heaven was quite audible. A great multitude gathered at the house where this sound was heard. The-

re were Jews of many different origins: those who had lived there all their lives, and some who had come from other corners of the world to settle in Jerusalem. This feast was also the reason that quite a few Jews from foreign lands, and other believers in God, had come to visit this temple city. They were filled with fear and surprise by what they heard: everyone heard the words in their own mother tongue even though all those who spoke were from Galilee. Luke also tells us what those who were filled with the Spirit talked about, namely the wonderful works of God. The listeners had differing

opinions. Some were perplexed and wondered: “Whatever could this mean?” Others mocked and said that the believers were drunk. In salvation history, the miracle of Pentecost is often understood as an opposing event to the construction of the Tower of Babel. At that time, the Lord God confused the languages, so that the people, who until then had all been speaking the same language, were no longer able to understand each other, and scattered abroad over the face of all the earth (Genesis 11: 9). But now, people of many different tongues had come together from many different countries, and God made it possible for all of them to understand what the Spirit of God revealed. The events of Pentecost are, therefore, an indication that the glad tidings, the gospel of Jesus Christ, is meant for all people, speaking all kinds of different languages, and that it can be understood and believed by anyone, regardless of origin, education, or culture.

The sermon at Pentecost

When we look back to the day when the Holy Spirit was poured out, we notice that another promise was also fulfilled. The Lord Jesus had said to Peter: “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church and the gates of Hades shall not

The meaning and origin of the feast of Pentecost

prevail against it” (Matthew 16: 18). With the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the gathering of the followers of Christ became the church of Christ (Acts 1:13-15). And it was Apostle Peter, whom Christ had called the rock, who addressed the multitude at that crucial moment.

The Apostle gave a powerful sermon. He began by refuting the claim that the believers were drunk. He stated that the predictions made by the prophet Joel—namely that God would pour out His Spirit—had been fulfilled in the miracle they had all just experienced. Peter testified that Jesus Christ is the Messiah promised by God, of which King David had already spoken in his psalms. He quoted verses 8 to 11 from Psalm 16 as a reference that Jesus would resurrect. And he interpreted the first verse from Psalm 110 as a prediction for Christ’s ascension to heaven.

Jesus Christ, delivered by the Israelites (verse 22) and put to death on the cross by the heathens (verse 23), was the focal point of this first recorded apostolic sermon: “This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear... There-

fore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ” (verses 32-33, 36). His words touched the hearts of those who heard them, and they asked the Apostles what they should do. As the spokesperson for all the Apostles, Peter answered: “Repent, and let every one of you be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call” (verses 38-39). About 3,000 people gladly accepted the word and were baptised, thereby becoming part of the congregation. The events of Pentecost therefore constitute an example of the great power of a sermon filled with the Holy Spirit, and the growth of the congregation through the activity of the Apostles.

Luke writes the following concerning this first congregation, the seed for the church of Christ: “And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers” (verse 42). These four pillars are still the basis of the church of Christ.

Pentecost—various meanings

Apart from Acts 2: 1, Pentecost is only mentioned twice more in the New Testament: in Acts 20: 16 it is written that Apostle Paul was hurrying back from a trip because he wanted to be in Jerusalem for Pentecost. And in 1 Corinthians 16: 8 we read that, in another year, he wanted to stay with the faithful in Ephesus until Pentecost because his labours there had brought forth much fruit.

We know that in the first 300 years after Christ, the full 50 days after



*Engraving by Julius Schnorr von
Carolsfeld (26 March 1794-
24 May 1872)*

The meaning and origin of the feast of Pentecost

Easter were known as 'Pentecoste'. Over these 50 days, the faithful commemorated the resurrection of Christ. In time, the 40th day became more prominent as the day for commemorating Christ's ascension to heaven, while the 50th day became known as the day for commemorating the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. A document from the Council of Elvira, dating back to the year 305, is the oldest record in which the Day of Pentecost is mentioned as an independent religious feast. Over the ensuing years, Pentecost became more and more important. Pentecost is celebrated as the feast of the Holy Spirit and is on a par with Easter and Christmas. This has actually had a lasting effect into our time. In some countries, these three religious holidays are followed by an additional statutory holiday. In medieval times, Pentecost was a day for games and tournaments between knights. Many customs developed that, in many places, are still observed today. One of them is to adorn the churches and altars with budding, green, and flowering branches. In the 50 days between Easter and Pentecost, members of the Orthodox Church pray standing up. Only in the evening of the Day of Pentecost do they kneel down again for their prayers. Standing up for the prayer is meant as an expression of the joy felt over the resurrection of Christ. Orthodox Christians see the actual Day of Pentecost as the birthday of the church, "because the church is only what it is thanks to the outpouring of the Holy Spi-

rit on the Apostles" (Sergius Heitz, "Christus in euch: Hoffnung auf Herrlichkeit" [Christ in you: the hope of glory], Göttingen 1994).

The Catholic and the Orthodox Churches regard the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as the complete revelation of the trinity of God. This is why Pentecost is also called the feast of the "Holy Trinity". Members of the Protestant Churches celebrate Pentecost as a day to remember that the disciples were equipped with the Holy Spirit to fulfil their mission, and also as the birthday of the church. In the past

the Holy Spirit to speak in tongues, sing ecstatically, and perform other such acts..

Pentecost and its meaning for us

We celebrate Pentecost in commemoration of the day when the Holy Spirit from God was poured out upon the believers. We also consider Pentecost to be "the birthday of the church of Christ", in remembrance of the events at Jerusalem. It is a feast of rejoicing that the Holy Spirit is still active in the church today.

Depiction of the miracle of Pentecost, dating back to the thirteenth century



decades, Pentecostalism has gained many followers. This movement is a conglomerate of many Christian followings. What binds them together is that they emphasise a "personal Pentecost" for each and every member. Adherents of Pentecostalism believe that faithful followers are moved by

On that historic Day of Pentecost, human beings were, for the first time ever, enduringly filled with the Holy Spirit. We remember with gratitude the day when we ourselves, were sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit "to the day of redemption" (Ephesians 4: 30) through the laying on of hands of an Apostle.

The meaning and origin of the feast of Pentecost

Through this holy act we received the promise of our inheritance and became the property of God and of Christ (Ephesians 1: 13-14), not to be servants, but to be God's children. Through this holy act we have the right to be Christ's heirs, and we have been given the hope that on the day of Christ we will be caught up into His glory (Romans 8: 14-17).

Source:

New Apostolic Church International (www.nak.org)

Over the past years, our Church has placed special emphasis on the significance of Pentecost: since 1981, the Chief Apostle has issued an annual Pentecost greeting to all the Church's members. And since 1990, we have had Apostle Meetings every 3 years, to which all the active Apostles around the globe are invited.

In a 1978 article for Pentecost, Chief Apostle Streckeisen wrote: "But this is our joy at Pentecost: love is ablaze in our hearts, and every day we find ourselves waiting anew in the living hope that our Lord and bridegroom of our soul will return" (excerpt from "Word of Life", 1 May 1978). This hope is nourished and kept alive by the Holy Spirit, and it is reflected in all the Pentecost greetings from our Chief Apostle. Pentecost makes us thankful that the Holy Spirit is still active today to prepare Christ's own for the glorious future in everlasting fellowship with the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit prompts the bride to cry out: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"

History of Pentecost transmission services

For almost 30 years now, the Chief Apostle has greeted believers of the New Apostolic Church with a special Bible passage on Pentecost. Chief Apostle Hans Urwyler started this custom in the early 1980s. He also changed the annual transmission service from the beginning of the year to Pentecost.

New Year's Day, 1 January 1981 marked the first occasion on which there was no transmission of a divine service conducted by the Chief Apostle. Instead, the Chief Apostle issued a Bible text for use in the year-end service and another for use in the New Year's Day divine service in all congregations around the world. As another first, the Chief Apostle issued a written greeting for the New Year to the congregations around the world. His greeting to the brothers and sisters for the year 1981 was taken from Psalm 26: 6 where it says: "So I will go about Your altar, O Lord."

In 1982, Chief Apostle Urwyler conveyed the first Pentecost gree-

ting as we know it today: "Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5: 48).

In the first few years thereafter, a letter of greeting from the Chief Apostle was read to the congregations, in which he gave the members around the world a Bible text as a guideline for the year ahead, which was to serve them until the next celebration of Pentecost.

Since 1990 we have had satellite

transmission services, and the New Apostolic world has come closer together. Since then, a growing number of believers have been able to experience the service, either live or tape-delayed, and thus also hear the Pentecost greeting from the Chief Apostle directly.



Pentecost 1981 in Berne



Pentecost 1990 in Vienna (Austria)

Pentecost 2012—A huge media event

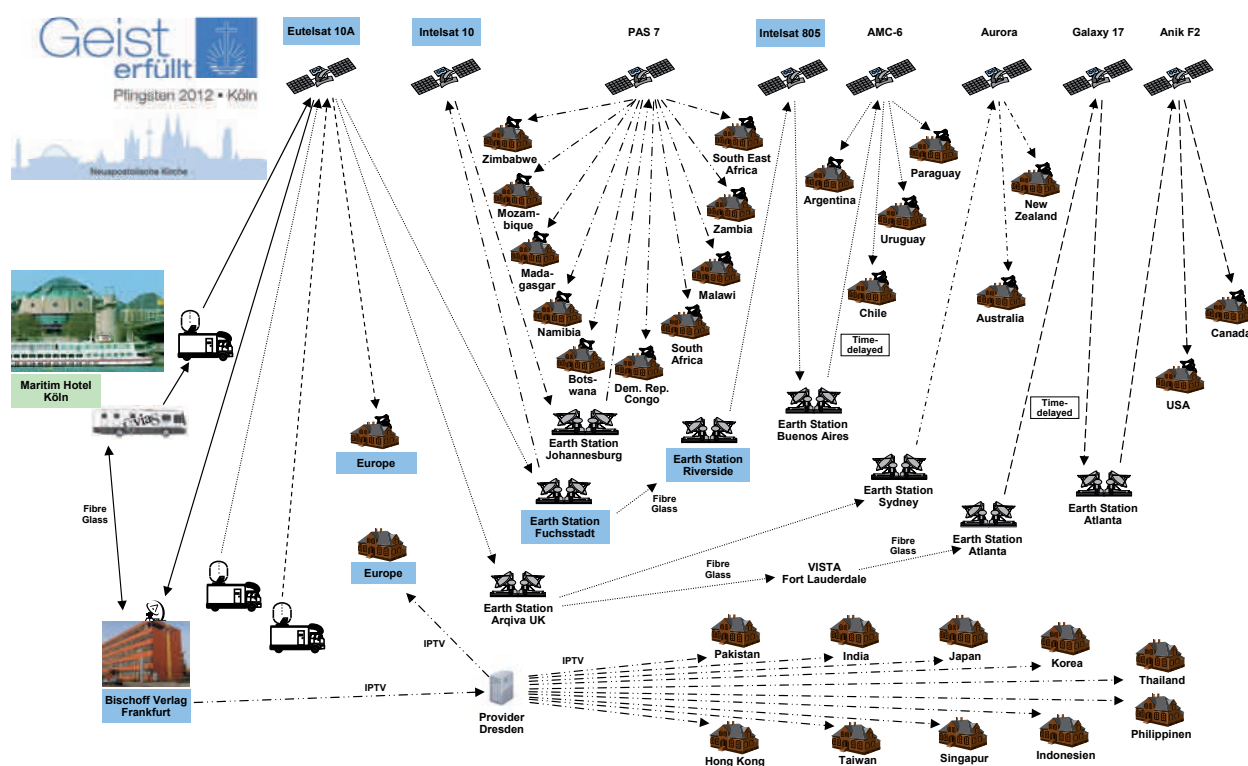
The festive days surrounding Pentecost 2012 comprised a huge Christian event for the New Apostolic Church and its highest minister, Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber. The Bischoff publishers were once again given the task of ensuring that over 1.5 million believers in nearly 100 countries around the world would be able to hear the word of God in more than 25 different languages.

The original service signal, together with the various translation signals, were beamed from Frankfurt to a Eutelsat satellite which,

in turn, transmitted the signal to Europe, North Africa and parts of Asia. With the help of 1,600 local parabolic antennas, the divine service was transmitted live from Cologne to the audio-visual equipment in our churches.

Another uplink beamed the information to receiving stations in Fuchsstadt and London from where it was transmitted to other parts of the world via satellite and fibre optic cable, and made available to the believers there by satellite and broadcast media.

Other congregations, for example, those in Asia, received the Pentecost divine service via the internet. To that end, the Bischoff publishers streamed it in various bandwidths and quality levels. Owing to the various time differences, our congregations in North and South America received a tape-delayed transmission of the recorded divine service.



Pentecost 2012—Global transmission from Cologne
© Verlag Friedrich Bischoff GmbH

Cologne—the Rhine metropolis with heart

Cologne Cathedral is the major landmark of Cologne, the oldest metropolis of Germany, and its towers can be seen from miles away. The city of Cologne is known all over the world for its countless cultural and historical treasures, its world-renowned museums, and vibrant art scene. Be it street music in the Hohe Straße, a gala in the modern opera house, pavement paintings on the Domplatte, old masters in the Wallraf-Richartz Museum, street festivals in the Rings, or the city-wide carnival, everything combines to a grand and vibrant work of art in this metropolis that has managed to preserve a family-like atmosphere despite its size.

People feel at home in Cologne. They meet for a “Kölsch”, a chat, or simply to have a good laugh together. Life in Cologne is uncomplicated and vibrant—the friendliness and warmth of the people of Cologne is proverbial.

The letter K on the automobile license plates not only stands for Köln (German for ‘Cologne’). In this cathedral city it also stands for Kirche (church), Karneval (carnival), Kunst (art), and Klüngel (cliques). For the people of Cologne, the cathedral—and the feeling of homesickness they feel for their beloved city—is



like the ocean is to the people of Northern Germany, and like the mountains are to the people of Bavaria. The cathedral is undeniably the most significant landmark of the city and for most visitors quite simply what Cologne is all about, even though for hundreds of years, the cathedral was only a ruin and a reminder of times past. The people of Cologne become melancholic when they do not see their beloved cathedral towers.



The history of Cologne is more than 2,000 years old, and it begins with the Romans. As protection against the Eburones, they settled the Ubii on the left bank of the Rhine, and in ad 38 founded with them the Oppidum Ubiorum (the city of the Ubii). In the year ad 48, Agrippa, who was born in this city, married Claudius who later became the emperor. In ad 50, she saw to it that her “Colonia” received Roman city rights and was

Pentecost 2012 in Cologne



another for supremacy. In the end, the townspeople won in the battle of Worringen. Cologne attained the status of a Free Imperial City, and as a member of the Hanseatic League, the city became very wealthy and was highly regarded.

In 1794 Napoleon conquered Cologne. Even this influence brought something good. There were no street signs or house numbers in medieval Cologne. The French com-

mander wanted to make it easier to find his way around and ordered the houses to be numbered in sequence. The house of the perfume manufacturer Farina in the Glockenstraße was assigned the number 4711. Later this became the world-renowned trademark “4711—Echt kölnisch Wasser (Eau de Cologne)”. The dialect of the people of Cologne has many words that are borrowed from the French language.

allowed to call herself Colonia Claudia Ara Agrippensis. Later the city became the capital of the Roman province of Lower Germany

The merchants and soldiers who came from all over the world brought Christianity to Roman Cologne. The martyr's deaths of Sainte Ursula and Saint Gereon of the legion of Thebes are the earliest documentation of Christian life, and date back to the fourth century ad. However, much older Christian tombs have been found under the church of St. Severin. Christian tombs in an east-west orientation were found in a large cemetery that also contained the remains of pagan funeral pyres and tombs. The oldest date back to the end of the second century, a time that we usually ascribe to early Christianity.

Even after the Roman Empire collapsed, Cologne did not lose any of its importance. For a long time, the clerics and townspeople fought one



Pentecost 2012 in Cologne

The people of Cologne owe their world-famous Cologne Carnival to the Prussians.

At the Congress of Vienna in 1814, the Rhine Province became part of Prussia. Soon the rigid Prussians arrived, much to the chagrin of the people of Cologne. They had a very hard time dealing with the discipline and stuffiness of the Prussians. On the other hand, the Prussians felt that the people of Cologne would not perform well in the field of city administration, and over the next few years, they transferred a large number of civil servants from Berlin to the Rhine to implement Prussian law and order.

The Cologne Carnival served to express precisely what the people thought of the military discipline and stuffiness of the Prussians. The first carnival parade was held in 1823. Many people dressed up in the red and white uniforms of the city soldiers of that time and marched in a very un-military fashion through the

town, which is to say that they were strolling along looking very bored. Instead of moving in a tight parade, they lined up back to back shaking their behinds, or swayed arm in arm to music. When they saw how the people made fun of the soldiers, the Prussians were almost beside themselves with anger, but they had to endure this mockery of the Prussian military-style discipline.

Ruins of destroyed buildings with Cologne Cathedral in the background. December 1943

(German federal archive, picture 101/484-2999-20)

In 1880, still under the reign of the Prussians, construction on the Cologne Cathedral was finally completed. Construction had begun in 1245 when Master Gerhard had laid the corner stone. But only 100 years later, construction stopped and the unfinished building was used for many other purposes. The French used it as a stable for horses.



In 1840, with money from Prussia and the newly-founded Dombauverein (Central Cathedral Building Society), construction recommenced and was finally finished in 1880, to the great joy of all.

During the Second World War, Cologne was very heavily bombed and almost completely destroyed. But the Cathedral, the landmark of Cologne, was only slightly damaged. After the War, many parts of the city were completely rebuilt and modernised. The city's economy changed as well. Today, Cologne is the media metropolis of Germany, and many successful service-sector businesses are located there. Many banks and insurance companies have their head offices in Cologne

The Cologne Cathedral, April 24, 1945.

(Source of photo: <http://www.archives.govresearch/arc/>; U.S. Defence Visual Information Center, photo HD-SN-99-02996

New Apostolic congregations in the Cologne area For over 100 years:

During his travels as a journeyman, seventeen-year-old Erich Albrecht from Dresden came to Cologne. A surgeon's son had been transferred there briefly at the same time, and the first New Apostolic prayer services in Cologne were held in his room. The guests sat on simple furnishings—a cot, a suitcase, and a chair. Fritz Gericke, a retired switchman, and his family were soon won over to the work of the Lord. From then on, divine services were held in their apartment at 230 Kalk-Mühlheimer-Straße every two weeks. On the other Sundays, the brothers and sisters and their guests drove to Düsseldorf.

Starting in the summer of 1900, evangelisation seminars were conducted in the Händelstraße, not far from the former opera house. Unfortunately, the Church was unable to gain a foothold in the city of Cologne on the left bank of the Rhine, and by the end of the year, the efforts were suspended. In the spring of 1901, Elder Dacht from the main congregation of the Düsseldorf district sent Deacon Heinrich Achenbach to the metropolis on the Rhine to strengthen the handful of discouraged brothers and sisters in Cologne and give them a strong leader.

Poor in worldly possessions, but

Renovation of the meeting hall (1921)



Chief Apostle Niehaus in Cologne (1913)

endowed with unshakeable faith and a great deal of enthusiasm, Deacon Achenbach helped establish the New Apostolic Church in the Cathedral city.

He rented a public community hall

in Vietorstraße, in the suburb of Cologne-Kalk. Only a year later, the congregation moved to a larger hall in Eithstraße. The first divine service conducted by an Apostle in Cologne took place at that location.



Pentecost 2012 in Cologne

*Chief Apostle Bischoff in Cologne
(1948)*

On 1 March 1904, the congregation moved to a big and beautiful meeting hall located in the southern part of Cologne, in a street called “Am Weidenbach”

The congregation kept on growing. Church statistics from 1905 show that the congregation in Cologne had 305 members and was already considered one of the larger congregations at the time. In the spring of 1921, the number of New Apostolic Christians in the city of Cologne on the left bank of the Rhine had increased to such an extent that a former restaurant, located in the Dürener Straße in Cologne-Lindenthal, was purchased and renovated by the brothers and sisters themselves over the ensuing months. Many New Apostolic Christians donated their jewellery and emergency funds to purchase this building. On



9 November 9 1921, Chief Apostle Hermann Niehaus officially opened this “community house”, which became the central meeting place for all the brothers and sisters from the left bank of the Rhine.

The congregation of Cologne-Lindenthal (today Cologne-South) is the mother congregation of all the congregations in Cologne. On 1 March 1904, the congregation moved into the first “church hall”, located in a street called “Am Weidenbach”. The hall was on the first

floor of an apartment building. The congregation became known by the name of the street. Already in 1906, the first sister congregation was established in Cologne-Mülheim on the right bank of the Rhine. The Weimar Republic granted political and religious freedoms, which made it possible to intensify missionary efforts at the beginning of the 1920s and establish sister congregations in many places. As a result of this development, Chief Apostle Niehaus established the district of Cologne on 10 Novem-



Divine service in the Messehalle (1935)

Pentecost 2012 in Cologne

ber 1923, and entrusted it into the care of District Elder Achenbach. The district of Cologne had nine congregations: Cologne, Cologne-Mülheim, Bonn, Treusdorf, Koblenz, Neuwied, Traben-Trarbach, Aachen, and Alsdorf.

The present structure of the Cologne district dates back to 1994. In that year, District Apostle Ehlebracht divided the huge district of Cologne into the district of Cologne-West on the left bank of the Rhine, to which the congregation of Cologne South (formerly Lindenthal) belongs, and the district of Cologne-East on the right bank of the Rhine, which is invited to the Pentecost 2012 divine service in the ballroom of the Maritim Hotel

Activity days in the Rheinpark (1994)



Cologne-South

*100-year anniversary of Cologne,
Messehalle (2002)*

I. General information about Pentecost



*Chief Apostle Helper Fehr in
Cologne-Central (1987)*



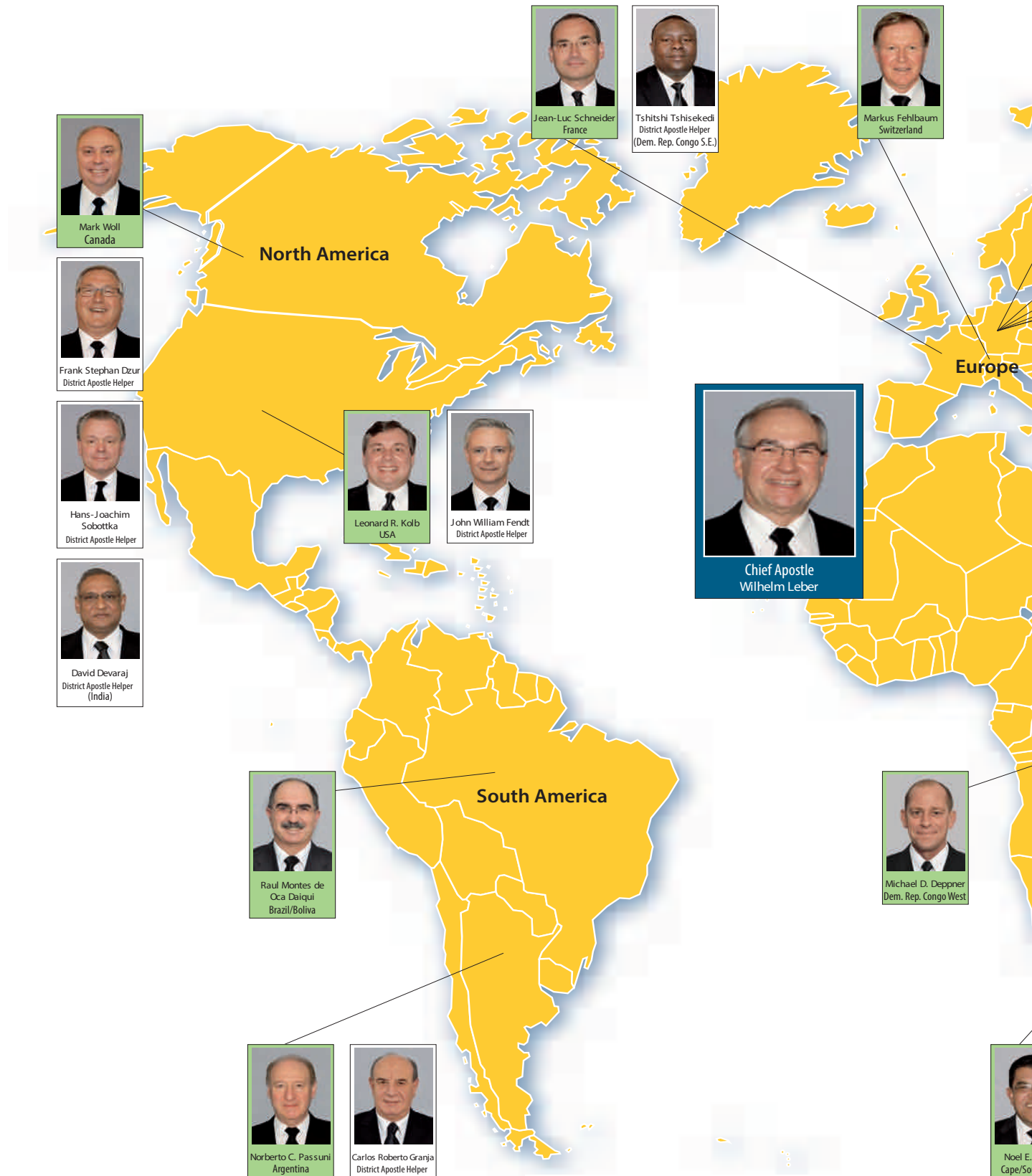
Cologne Central

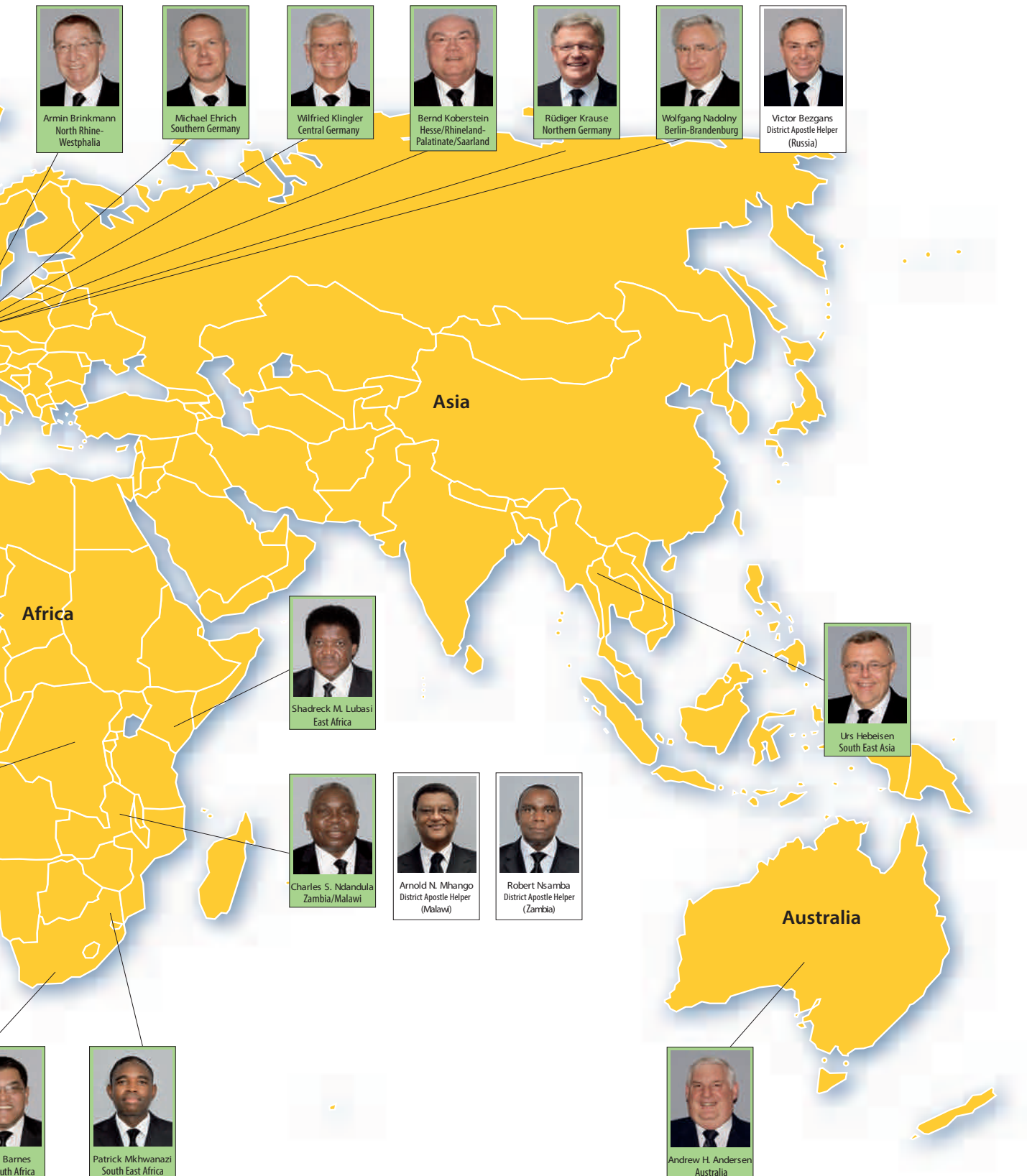


Cologne-Dellbrück

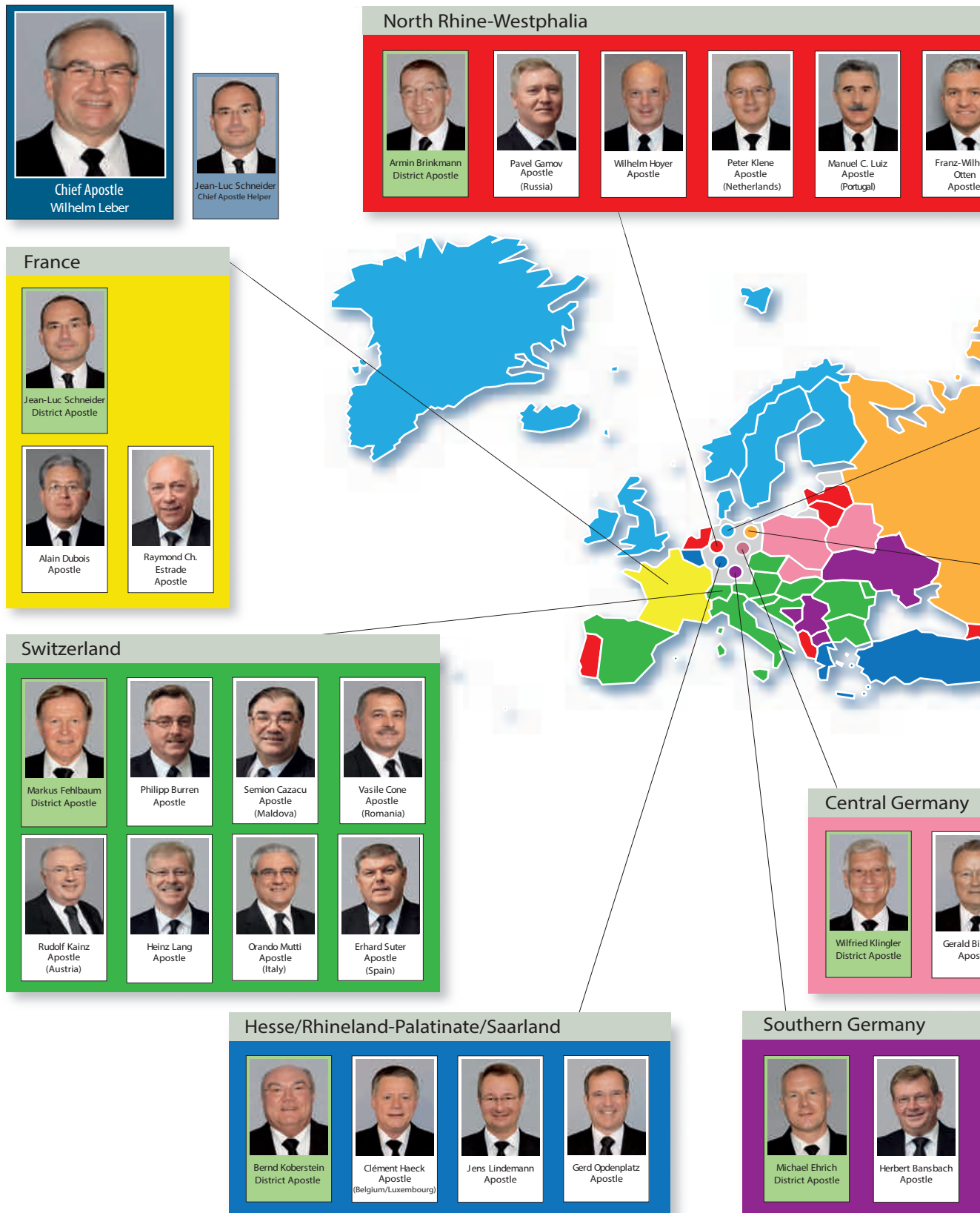


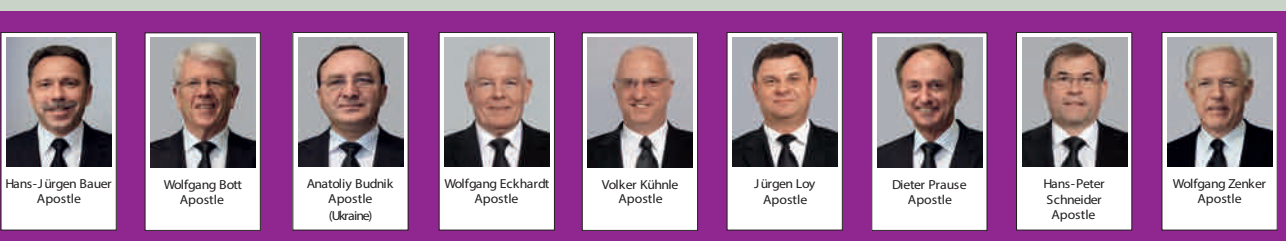
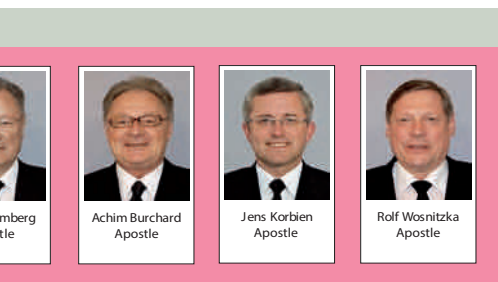
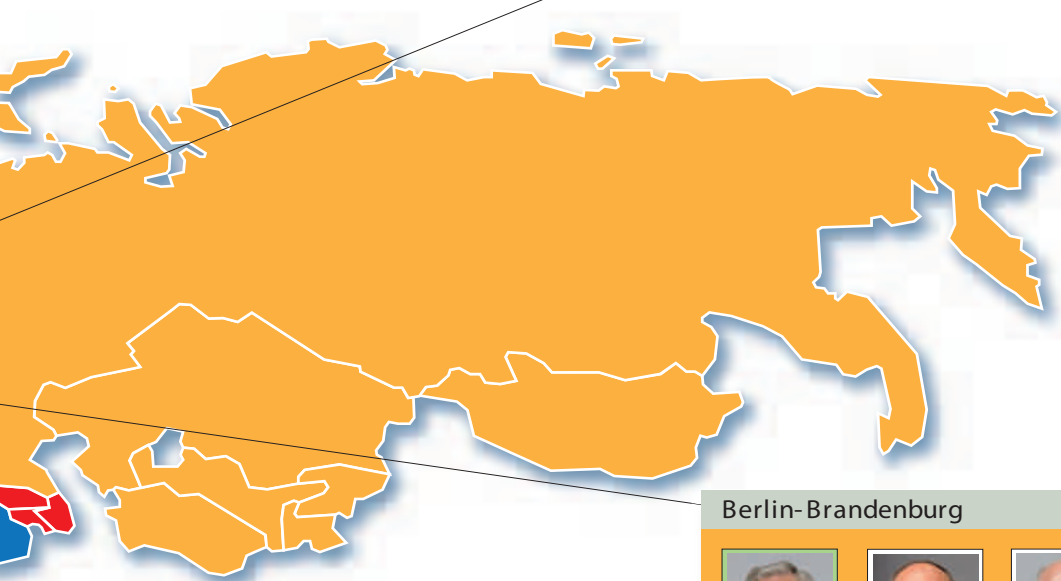
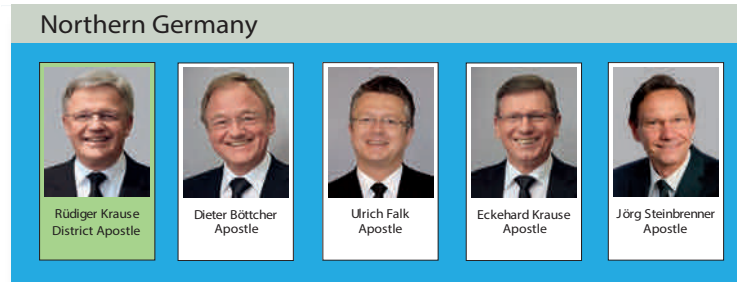
The New Apostolic Church around the world





The New Apostolic Church in Europe





Past Pentecost greetings

2013

Indeed the Lord has proclaimed to the end of the world: "Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Surely your salvation is coming.'
(*Isaiah 62: 11, excerpt*)

2012

The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.
(*Luke 18:27, excerpt*)

2011

"O house of Jacob, come and let us walk in the light of the Lord!"
(*Isaiah 2: 5*)

2010

"Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us."
(*Hebrews 12:1*)

2009

"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (*1 Corinthians 15: 57*)

2008

"Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another."
(*1 John 4: 11*)

2007

"Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in Me." (*John 14: 1*)

2006

"But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul." (*Hebrews 10: 39*)

2005

"Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect." (*Matthew 24: 44*)

2004

"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." (*2 Peter 3: 9*)

2003

"Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him for a thousand years."
(*Revelation 20: 6*)

2002

"Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. [...] You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand." (*James 5: 7-8, excerpt*)

2001

"For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself."
(*Philippians 3: 20-21*)

Past Pentecost greetings

2000

“And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.” (*Revelation 22:12*)

1999

“Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come.” (*Revelation 1: 4*)

1998

“But hold fast what you have till I come.”
(*Revelation 2: 25*)

1997

“Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall allm be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet.” (*1 Corinthians 15: 51-52, excerpt*)

1996

“And shall God not avenge His...earth?”
(*Luke 18:7-8*)

1995

“Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.” (*Matthew 25: 13*)

1994

“Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.” (*Revelation 1: 3*)

1993

“For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened.” (*Matthew 24: 21-22*)

1992

“Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.” (*Revelation 3: 11*)

1991

“You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.” (*James 5: 8*)

1990

“For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him. But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.”
(*Hebrews 10: 37-39*)

1989

“He who testifies of these things says, “Surely I am coming quickly.” Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.” (*Revelation 22: 20-21*)

1988

“O Lord, come!” (*1 Corinthians 16: part of verse 22*)

The seventh Pentecost service of each Chief Apostle

Friedrich Krebs

22 May 1904

Der Herold No. 107 from June 1904

Hermann Niehaus

4 June 1912

Neuapostolische Rundschau,
Issue 22/1912

Johann G. Bischoff

31 May 1937

No divine service report in our
Church magazines, but a Pentecost
greeting was recorded
in *Word of Life*, No. 10/1937

Walter Schmidt

14 May 1967

No divine service report in our
Church magazines.

Hans Urwyler

26 May 1985

See V. Pentecost services in review

Richard Fehr

22 May 1994

See V. Pentecost services in review

Wilhelm Leber

27 May 2012

Divine service in Cologne

“Round” anniversaries of Pentecost services

25 years ago	7 June 1987	Chief Apostle Urwyler served in Frankfurt am Main Source: <i>Our Family</i> , Issue No. 17/1987 See Pentecost services in review
50 years ago	10 June 1962	Chief Apostle Schmidt served in Mannheim Source: <i>Our Family</i> , Issue No. 14/1962 Bible text: 1 Corinthians 6: 17
75 years ago	31 May 1937	No divine service report in our Church magazines, however, Pentecost greeting recorded in <i>Word of Life</i> , No. 10/1937
100 years ago	4 June 1912	Chief Apostle Niehaus served in Bielefeld Source: <i>Neuapostolische Rundschau</i> , No. 22/1912 Bible text: John 4: 6-16
115 years ago	6 June 1897	Chief Apostle Krebs served in Berlin. Friedrich Krebs was the first Chief Apostle in the present sense of the term. Source: <i>Der Herold</i> 40a, July 1897
125 years ago	29 May 1887	No references in any Church literature
140 years ago	19 May 1872	Divine service with Apostle Schwartz in Amsterdam It was in this year that Friedrich Wilhelm Menkhoff was ordained an Apostle for Westphalia and the Rhineland.
149 years ago	24 May 1863	Divine service with Apostle Carl Wilhelm Louis Preuß in Hamburg Bishop Schwartz is called to the Apostle ministry through prophecy and is sent to Amsterdam. From there he spreads the Church throughout Westphalia and the Rhineland by sending Evangelist Friedrich Wilhelm Menkhoff.

Pentecost 2013

Setting

All active District Apostles and District Apostle Helpers from around the world, as well as 41 Apostles from Europe, gathered in Hamburg, Germany for this year's celebration of Pentecost. Several million believers in approximately 100 countries were able to participate in this divine service, which was transmitted from the historic church in Hamburg-Borgfelde, which is considered the birthplace of the New Apostolic Church. It was there that the first New Apostolic congregation came into being 150 years ago. .



Bible text

But tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.
(Luke 24: 49)

Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber /
Chief Apostle Helper Jean-Luc Schneider)

Core thoughts

I chose this Bible text for Pentecost half a year ago. Only later on did I realise that this text had already been used once before, namely in the year 2005 when I received the Chief Apostle ministry. So now we have come full circle.

The Holy Spirit is the “power from on high”. It is my desire that this power of the Holy Spirit may al-

ways be felt, now more than ever before. Regarding this power, I would like to refer to something that Jesus said to Nicodemus in John 3: 8: ‘The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.’ This powerful wind is an impressive image. May it be visible in every congregation that the Holy Spirit blazes a trail and clears away all resistance and opposition, such that only one thing remains: the Lord in His presence!”

Ordinations

Ordination of Jean-Luc Schneider as Chief Apostle, retirement of Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber

Publications

Our Family, Volume 2013, No. 07

Pentecost greeting

Indeed the Lord has proclaimed to the end of the world: “Say to the daughter of Zion, ‘Surely your salvation is coming.’”

(Isaiah 62: 11, excerpt)



19 May 2013—Hamburg (Germany)

Chief Apostle's remarks on the Pentecost greeting for 2013

"At Pentecost today I will read from Isaiah 62, part of verse eleven: 'Indeed the Lord has proclaimed to the end of the world: "Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Surely your salvation is coming.''"

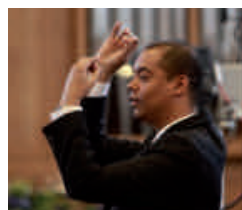
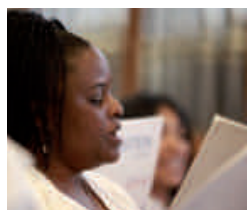
I interpret this text as a divine promise: the Lord will intervene! This will certainly not always happen in the manner we hope or expect, but in such a way that we will reali-

se in the end: everything had to be as it was.

Over the course of time, the Lord has often intervened. When He sent His Son, He intervened in the course of history. And when the Holy Spirit was poured out, this was also divine intervention. When the Apostle ministry was reoccupied over 150 years ago, this was also an intervention of God. The



Lord will continue to intervene in the course of history—and beyond that, He will also intervene in our lives for your and my blessing. He will intervene here and there in order to help us in the various circumstances of our lives. He will also intervene in order to make us worthy for the return of His Son. And for this reason, we must accept certain things which perhaps do not please us, but which will serve to our perfection.



Pentecost 2013

The return of the Son of God will be a powerful intervention of God! Especially in light of the special anniversary we celebrate this year, let us take this as a message for our future: 'Surely your salvation is coming!'"

We are thankful for that which has taken place in the past, but let us also use this occasion to gather special strength for the future. Allow me to caption our future with these words:



came to his house and said to him: 'Today salvation has come to this house' (Luke 19: 9).

'Surely your salvation is coming,' also means: keep your eyes open throughout this time and try to see that which the Lord is preparing for you.

When Jacob blessed his sons, he suddenly stopped and said: 'Lord, I am waiting for your salvation.' He was expecting salvation with every fibre of his being.



'Surely your salvation is coming!' May this also be a message of comfort to all those who find themselves in particularly difficult circumstances, to all those who are sick, and to all those who have special burdens. The Lord will not abandon you, dear brother, dear sister. Let us be open for the salvation of God, and let us wait for it with all our hearts. Let us occupy ourselves with these words, and may they become reality within your and my life! ■

'Surely your salvation is coming!'

We must be awake and see what is happening in order to properly assess the conditions of our time and see the finger of God in them. After all, it is always a question of whether one really recognises salvation when it is offered.

Here I am reminded of Zacchaeus, for example. The Lord once





Impressions 2013



Pentecost 2012

Setting

The celebration of Pentecost 2012 turned out to be a bigger event than originally planned. Not only had all European Apostles been invited to Cologne, Germany, but so had all the District Apostles of the world. It was also one of the most extensive transmissions of the New Apostolic Church to date: over 1.5 million people in nearly 100 countries were connected by satellite or internet to the divine service taking place in the banquet hall of the Hotel Maritim in Cologne. Beyond that, thousands of believers in Africa were also able to follow the divine service over national radio.

The large number of participants around the world was not a surprise, considering that Chief Apostle Leber had announced on May 27 that he would be appointing a Chief Apostle Helper on Pentecost. "I ask you before God and this large Pentecost congregation," said Chief Apostle Leber as he addressed his future deputy, "will you do everything in your power to ensure that the work of God continues to be securely and clearly led, in agreement with the Chief Apostle? Is it

your wish to lead the way to perfection? Will you love the brethren all around the world?" District Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider responded to this with a firm and decided "Yes".

Bible text

The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.
(Romans 8: 16)

Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber / District Apostles Jean-Luc Schneider (France) and Noel E. Barnes (Cape Town)

Core thoughts

"Upon reading today's Bible text, I arrived at the following conclusion: the Holy Spirit inspires us to live as true children of God. The Holy Spirit seeks to distinguish us as God's children. And what distinguishes the children of God? First of all, they keep their faith under all circumstances. Children of God are

also distinguished by the fact that they are always prepared to make peace. Another such characteristic inspired in God's children by the Holy Spirit is that they do not complain about the leadership of God. And there is one final point: the Lord Jesus once described children of God as "sons of the resurrection" (Luke 20: 36). This will one day become visible, namely on the day of the Lord, however, this resurrection life must already be cultivated today. It is in this manner that the Holy Spirit inspires us to be true children of God. May we therefore also always act as true children of God!"

Ordinations

Appointment of District Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider as Chief Apostle Helper

Publications

Our Family, Volume 2012, No. 07

Pentecost greeting

The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.

(Luke 18: 27, excerpt)



Chief Apostle's remarks on the Pentecost greeting for 2012

It has become an established practice to address a special greeting to the congregation on Pentecost. This will also be the case today. It is recorded in Luke 18: 27. I prayed for this greeting and found it while preparing myself for this divine service. Inwardly I gave a little cry of joy because this is such a powerful message: "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God." In other words, where human beings are concerned, we are quick to reach our limits, but with God there are no limits!

The context of this Bible text is quickly explained. The Lord Jesus had warned about wealth and then expressed the familiar

statement: "For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God" (Luke 18: 25). The people were somewhat astonished by this statement, and wondered who could possibly ever be saved. The Lord then answered them with these powerful words: "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God."

Now let us take this passage out of its context. I am convinced that the Son of God understood these words in a much broader scope. Today we discover all too often how quickly we as human beings reach our limits. How wonderful it is to know that with God there are no limits! It says here that with God all



things are possible. If we fully utilise this power of God, we will achieve things which human beings would otherwise never achieve. Here I do not want to draw too much attention to earthly miracles. Let us rather focus on spiritual matters, where this message can become very important indeed. These words can be relevant to us in various respects.

- Perhaps there has been a dispute which has resulted in annoyance and discord, and perhaps reconciliation appears hopeless. Perhaps the matter simply cannot be resolved. But with the help of God, this is indeed possible!
- Another situation: perhaps a family is breaking apart. When you consider all the circumstances, it seems impossible for them to ever find their way back together—but with God it is possible.



Pentecost 2012

- We all have certain characteristics, and at times they are not good. And perhaps we really try to control these negative characteristics but repeatedly find that this is no easy task. We fail again and again. For human beings it appears impossible to control these negative characteristics, but with God it is possible!

be guided by Him—and utilise His power—then we can indeed transcend our human limitations. It is my hope that all children of God may experience the truth of the divine promise contained in our Pentecost greeting: that which is impossible with men is possible with God! ■



- Let us take a look at the present state of Christendom on the global stage: we know that Christianity is on the decline. And if we look a little further into the future, we could certainly become anxious and ask: “How can things carry on like this?” This may indeed appear difficult or even frightening from a human perspective, but God can even change the circumstances in our time. Everything is in His hands, and nothing is impossible for Him



- One last point: we are waiting for the return of the Lord Jesus to take home His bride. At times the question may certainly arise: “How are we to envision this event? What will it be like?” We quickly come to a point where we have to admit: it is difficult to imagine. With man it is impossible, but with God it is possible. Therefore let us trust in the help of God.



I do not want to give the impression that all our difficulties can be eliminated in a second, but if we trust in God and allow ourselves to



Impressions 2012

Pentecost 2011

Setting

All the Apostles of Europe travelled to Dresden that year to experience the Pentecost divine service together with Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber. The divine service was held in the Congress Centre of this city on the banks of the Elbe River and transmitted to all European District Churches, as well as to parts of Africa, Asia, and America. A European Apostle Meeting was held on Saturday. It was translated into French, Spanish, and Russian.

Bible text

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.
(1 Corinthians 2: 12)

Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber, District Apostles Michael Ehrich (Southern Germany), Jean-Luc Schneider (France), Rüdiger Krause (Northern Germany)

Core thoughts

“When we look into the congregations, it does not look rosy everywhere. There are many troubles: on the one hand there are personal concerns, personal hardships, many who suffer greatly, many burdens, many worries. On the other hand there is the concern: how will the congregations go on in the future? The congregations are getting smaller. Perhaps there is not enough new growth. Perhaps there is a shortage of ministers here and there. Perhaps some are asking the question: ‘Why hasn’t the Lord come yet?’ Not even the Chief Apostle knows the answer. This is a dimension that is not revealed to man.



]Ordinations

None

Publications

Our Family, Volume 2011, No. 15

Pentecost greeting

O house of Jacob, come and let us walk in the light of the Lord.

(Isaiah 2: 5)



Chief Apostle's remarks on the Pentecost greeting for 2011

"The Pentecost greeting for this year is taken from Isaiah 2: 5. Permit me to express this in more modern terms: "Come, dear brothers and sisters, let us walk in the light of the Holy Spirit."

This greeting has two messages: one is that we must enter into the light of the Holy Spirit, and the other is that we must act appropriately in this light.

If we want to enter into the light of the Holy Spirit, we have to rid ourselves of negative attitudes. We cannot have a wait-and-see attitude, or in extreme cases be unbelieving. We must believe. The Son of God said to Thomas: 'Do not be unbelieving, but believing (John 20: 27).' We cannot be critical, defensive, hesitant, or passive. Those who are in the light of the Holy Spirit are ready to work. The Holy



Spirit leads us ever deeper into the knowledge that is otherwise hidden from our eyes. We realise the depths of grace, realise that the Lord wants to complete His work, realise that He prepares your and my soul through the many different tribulations that we have to endure, and we also realise the task we have to fulfil." ■

Impressions 2011



Pentecost 2010

Setting

The church building of the New Apostolic congregation of Tafelsig (Cape Town) has 4,000 seats and is the largest New Apostolic Church building anywhere in the world. It is here that Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber conducted the Pentecost divine service for the year 2010. It was transmitted worldwide via satellite to an additional 5,000 New Apostolic congregations. About 1.4 million believers were able to experience it live. A total of 340 Apostles were present. They had also assembled the day before for an International Apostle Meeting.

Bible text

But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

(Acts 1: 8)

Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber, District Apostles Leonard R. Kolb (USA), Shadreck Lubasi (East Africa), District Apostle Helper David Devaraj (India), and Apostle Rudolf Kainz (Austria)

Core thoughts

Today I would like to talk about the power of the Holy Spirit in greater depth. We need strength to keep our faith alive, to be joyful, and to look with hope into the future. Our prayers are to activate the powers

of heaven. Let us pray daily for strength from God. Praying gives us strength, and this brings us experiences of faith. In the end, we can all be witnesses for God and His Son. A witness should stand by his testimony.

Ordinations

None

Publications

Our Family, Volume 2010, No.15
Booklet: Pentecost 2010, One Spirit—One Goal



Pentecost greeting

Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.

(Hebrews 12: 1)

Chief Apostle's remarks on the Pentecost greeting for 2010

As usual on Pentecost, I would like to start with a greeting. I have prayed to our heavenly Father to show me what we need, to give me a message for all God's children, so that we can come to perfection. I finally came across a passage in Hebrews, chapter 12, a part of verse 1, where it says: "... let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us..." This is good advice for today. There is so much that burdens us. And it may not even be anything bad. But there is sorrow and grief, pain, trouble, disappointment, and even frustration. These things rob us of our joy and peace.

Let us lay aside all these things, or we will not find any real joy or peace. I know this isn't easy. These thoughts go with us and we cannot get rid of them so easily. But with prayer and the power from God

and the Holy Spirit it is possible. Let us lay aside the things that burden us.

We can find many examples in Holy Scripture. I am reminded of Joseph. His brothers treated him quite badly. He even ended up in jail. He probably thought: "It is their fault that I am in jail." But he had to lay these thoughts aside. Let us lay aside the things that trouble us, or we will not be able to experience our heavenly Father, His love, or His nearness.

Laying something aside does not make it go away completely, but it no longer weighs heavily on our soul. And that is what is important. When we lay something aside, we can see it from a different point of view. We are no longer emotional about it, we can be more objective, and we can see it in another light. It is interesting that this is the first piece of advice contained in this passage: "... let us lay aside every weight ... that so easily ensnares us". The Bible text mentions right up front the troubles that rob us of our joy and our peace. The third



Pentecost 2010

part shows us that it is not so easy: "... and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us". The English Bible speaks of a race, and the German Bible speaks of a battle. One thing is certain: we will have a battle. To lay aside everything that burdens us is always a battle. That does not always come so easily to us. We will have to battle to be successful. It says here that the battle or race is set before us by God. The Lord does not take that away. I am sure we will have to continue



in prayer. Quite obviously they had peace amongst one another. They didn't disagree or fight with each other. They waited for the fulfilment of the promise of the Son of God. And suddenly, the promise was fulfilled (Acts 2: 1-13).

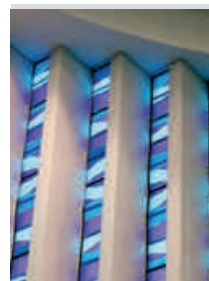
I would like to apply this to our time. We are also waiting for the fulfilment of the promise of God. Let us wait with patience and remain in the fellowship in the house of God. Let us pray and keep peace. If we do that, I can promise you that we will experience God again and again. That is a special message for the children all over the world. ■



our battle until the very day of the Lord. Let us take this to heart and act accordingly.

I also would like to give a special greeting to the children, both here and everywhere else around the world. Let us think back to the first Pentecost. We read that all the Apostles were together and that many others were with them. What did they do there? They were one





Impressions 2010



Pentecost 2009

Setting

The Rosemont Theatre on the outskirts of Chicago (USA), a metropolis of more than two million residents, was the venue for the Pentecost service of 2009. That year, District Apostles Michael Ehrich (Southern Germany), Leslie Latorcai (Canada), Shadreck Lubasi (East Africa) and Guillermo Vilor (Bolivia, Brazil) accompanied Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber to Chicago. District Apostle Leonard Kolb (USA) was the host. The divine service was transmitted via satellite to North and South America and was witnessed live by nearly 27,000 believers. For the first time, it was also streamed live over the internet.

Bible text

Now the Lord is the Spirit. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.
(2 Corinthians 3: 17)



Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber, District Apostles Guillermo Vilor (Bolivia, Brazil), Michael Ehrich (Southern Germany), Shadreck Lubasi (East Africa)

Core thoughts

“Everything begins with thankfulness,” said the Chief Apostle as he explained this year’s greeting. “Everything we do should begin with thankfulness!” The Chief Apostle explained the words “the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” this way: Christ not only gives us victory

over sin and death, He also allows us to be victors in our daily affairs. What kind of victories will we gain? We gain victory over unbelief, selfishness and egoism, despair and vanity.” Chief Apostle Leber gave the following advice in the divine service: “Let us strive to gain a small victory every day! This is how we learn to overcome.”

Ordinations

None

Publications

Our Family Volume 2009, No. 17



Pentecost greeting

But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

(1 Corinthians 15: 57)



Chief Apostle's remarks on the Pentecost greeting for 2009

"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

This passage starts with thanks to God. I conclude from this that gratitude should be at the beginning of everything we do. Let us not look at the unpleasant things, at the sorrows, or the things that burden us, but rather begin everything with thankfulness! "But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!" These words refer to Jesus Christ who gained the victory over death. Christ is the victor over death, and because we are His own and are

one with Him, we share in this great and marvellous victory.

There is yet another aspect to this message: thanks to the victory that Christ achieved, we can be victorious in the small battles of our lives, in our personal circumstances. Brothers and sisters, let us gain a victory every day. Let us gain a victory every day. That is how we will come to perfection. Now one or the other might well ask: what exactly do we have to overcome? First of all, we must overcome unbelief. When a thought comes up that seeks to rob us of our faith, we have to

conquer that thought. When Jesus asked the twelve disciples after many of the other disciples had left Him: "Do you also want to go away?" Peter said: "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (John 6: 68). This was a victory of faith. We must also conquer egoism. It is quite natural to think of oneself first. But let me remind you about the parable of the Good Samaritan. He did not think of himself first. He saw this helpless man lying on the ground. Many had passed by without helping him. Maybe he was tempted too, for a moment, to simply continue on his way. But he acted and he helped without expecting anything in return. Let us conquer egoism!

We all experience situations when we feel sad and despondent. Let us not be despondent, but rather trust in the Lord! In oneness with





the Lord and in prayer we will receive the necessary strength.

I would like to draw attention to the biblical account of Paul and Silas. They worked together and one day they were thrown into jail. You can well imagine that this was not a comfortable situation for them. So what did they do? We can read in Acts that at midnight they were heard praying and singing hymns to God (Acts 16: 25). That was a victory over sadness and despondency. Why should that not be possible for us? We also have the strength out of the Holy Spirit by whom we have been sealed.

At times we must overcome idleness. Apostle Paul is a good example. He was always active, he was never idle. He could have said: "I have worked so much! I have had enough." But he was powered by the Holy Spirit and did not give in to idleness. Why should it not be possible for us to conquer unbelief, egoism, and all the things that might hinder us on the way to our heavenly home? These do not



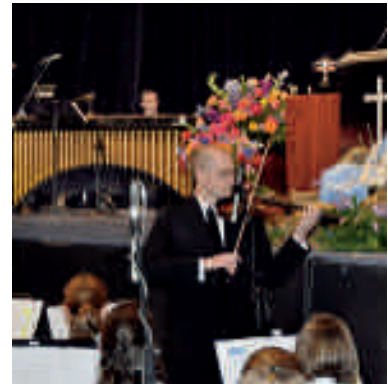
necessarily have to be big things. The small things are often more crucial. Let us conquer the small things like despair and idleness every day. I believe it is hard work to conquer that. In Revelation we can read what is promised to the victor, to the overcomer: "He who overcomes shall inherit all things" (Revelation 21: 7).

Let us gain many small victories with the Lord today, so that on His day we can share the great victory with Him and be accepted in

grace! Dear brothers and sisters, do not forget this greeting. I call on the ministers to keep it alive in the divine services so that it becomes an integral part of our lives. ■



Impressions 2009



Pentecost 2008

Setting

A European Apostle Meeting on the Saturday before Pentecost brought all the European Apostles to Berlin. The divine service on Pentecost Sunday was held in the congregation of Berlin-Lichtenberg. Approximately 1.5 million members and guests in 7,500 congregations around the world were able to participate via satellite in this divine event. Before Holy Communion, the congregation prayed the Lord's Prayer according to the wording recorded in the 1984 Luther translation for the first time.

Bible text

Therefore I ... do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him.
(Ephesians 1: 16-17)

Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber, District Apostles Armin Brinkmann (North Rhine-Westphalia), Hagen Wend (Southwest Germany), Markus Fehlbaum (Switzerland)

Core thoughts

The Bible text starts with words of gratitude and goes on to highlight Apostle Paul's desire that the Lord may give the spirit of wisdom and revelation. Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber pointed out that this also applies to our time, and that it is still important to recognise temptations and to keep peace and

help others. We are to ask the Holy Spirit to let us see with eyes of wisdom. We should strive to understand the magnitude of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, obtain insight into the eternal plan of salvation, and recognise the deeds of God in our time. The Holy Spirit can create this knowledge in our souls.

Ordinations

None

Publications

Our Family, Volume 2008, No. 13



Pentecost greeting

Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

(1 John 4: 11)



Chief Apostle's remarks on the Pentecost greeting for 2008

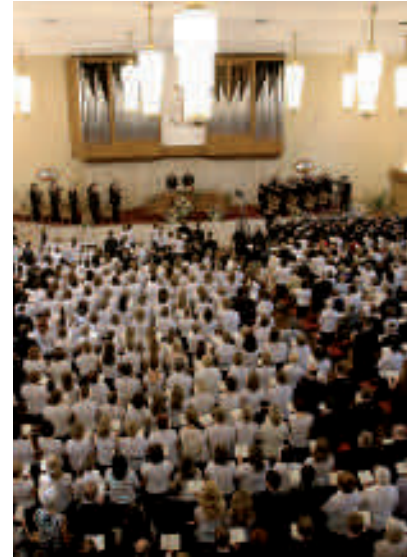
As at every Pentecost, I would like to also give you a greeting for this year. It is recorded in 1 John 4: 11, where we read:

“Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another!”

This is a call to love each other and to have close fellowship with one another. Without fellowship, the work of God cannot be completed. In the next verse it says: “No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us.” In other words, this love also has a heavenly dimension. If we love one another, the Lord will remain in our midst.

This is important. I have heard statements such as: “The important thing is that I have a good relationship with the Lord Jesus in heaven!” Naturally we also want to have a good relationship with the Lord—that is all well and good—but if it is at the expense of our fellowship with one another, then it is not in accordance with the gospel as we New Apostolic Christians understand it. I see yet another danger: in one way or another, we all contribute something to the congregation with our talents. But what if these do not really come to bear? Then we quickly turn away.

Let us not isolate ourselves! Our fellowship must always remain



very valuable to us, even if we have to fight for it once in a while. I call out to all of us to remain in this close fellowship with one another. As it says in our greeting: “If God loved us so”—in other words, on the basis of the love of God, who is so generous toward us and who covers all our weaknesses by His grace—we should also love one another.





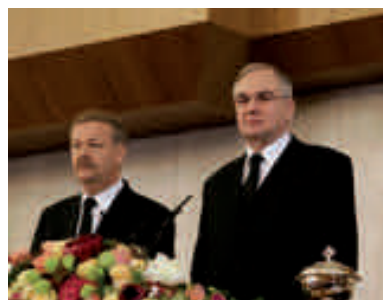
to make this fellowship even more beautiful. Sometimes this means that we need to move problems out of the way and look for solutions. Here let us not simply “sweep things under the rug”! That does not achieve anything. Let us pray sincerely and frequently for solutions. ■

Let us ask ourselves: “What do I contribute to this fellowship? How do I support it?” All of us can do something. Of course, the divine service is the focal point of the fellowship, but fellowship means so much more.

1. To care for one another. This should be a trademark of our fellowship.
2. Let us contribute our talents to the work of God. Let us put a special emphasis on this.
3. Let us pray for one another. This will bind us together and create a warm and loving fellowship.
4. Let us turn to those who are on the side lines or who are going through difficulties. They are also part of our fellowship. A

fellowship is strong when even the weakest member feels secure. Ours is not a fellowship of elitists but a fellowship in the Spirit of God. Everybody can contribute to it.

Let us set such benchmarks. Thereby we will fulfil our commission from God and it will even be outwardly visible. Let us not segregate ourselves! We are open to the outside world, and that has to be obvious. Let us foster a sense of belonging. This is not easy in our time. Many influences seek to push us out of this fellowship. We need to create a counterbalance and strive to remain inside. We need to foster a loving fellowship, and everyone can contribute



11 May 2008—Berlin (Germany)



Impressions 2008



Pentecost 2007

Setting

Nine European District Apostles and 46 Apostles came to Hamburg for a European Apostle Meeting on the Friday and Saturday before Pentecost. For the first time in the history of the New Apostolic Church, their wives were also invited to the conference. They participated in a number of workshops to discuss current issues of the church. About 8,000 congregations around the world were able to participate in the divine service via satellite and, for the first time, also via the internet.

Bible text

But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.
(1 Corinthians 6: 17)

Pentecost Greeting

Let not your heart
be troubled. You
believe in God,
believe also in Me.

(John 14: 1)

Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber,
District Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider (France), Apostle Volker Kühnle (Southern Germany), Apostle Gert Opdenplatz (Rhineland-Palatinate)

Core thoughts

Over the course of our lives, our hearts will certainly be troubled at times. But let us not be troubled in our innermost being. Let us en-

deavour to be more like the Son of God. He was strong in prayer. He led a life of service and devotion to all people.

Ordinations

None

Publications

Our Family, Volume 2007,
No. 13





Chief Apostle's remarks on the Pentecost greeting for 2007

I would like to give a special greeting to the congregation today: **“Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in Me!”** (John 14: 1). There are so many things that can trouble us. As children of God we are not exempt from this. Perhaps some are troubled by health issues. Others may have problems at work. We



might be troubled by something that is happening in the congregation. There are many things on the horizon that create feelings of uncertainty. As human beings we do indeed become troubled or frightened at times. We cannot change that, we are human.

But I would like to point out that it says here: “Let not your heart be troubled!” I believe that it is intentionally expressed this way. The heart is the innermost part of a human being. This passage therefore actually means: “Do not be troubled in your innermost being!” This is really important. Our innermost being should not be troubled when one or the other thing happens that causes us to be concerned. And this is my message: dear brother, dear sister, do not be troubled in your innermost being! Let us hold fast to what we have come to know and experience. The Bible

text also tells us what we need to do so we do not become troubled: “You believe in God, believe also in Me”—in other words, let us also believe in the Son of God.



Of course, this requires more than just a general belief in the Creator. That would not protect our innermost being. There has to be more. We need to believe in God's guidance. We need to have faith in His help and His blessing. Nothing can then trouble us.

It says here: "Believe in the Lord Jesus". This does not just mean that we are to remember traditions. This means that we are to have faith in the grace of God, and believe in the redeeming power of the Son of God. Just believe in His promise that He will return to take us unto Himself! Whenever this faith burns in our soul, we are safe. Then nothing can trouble our innermost being to such a degree that we no longer see clearly. This is a message that we are to take with us into the future: "Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in Me!"

In all modesty I would like to add: "Let us also believe in the Apostle ministry and the power of the Apostle ministry in our time. I do not want to say more on this subject because I do not want anyone to think that we would assign greater priority to the Apostle ministry than to the Lord Jesus. That is not our intent. But I would like to point out that we are an apostolic Church and that we intend to remain one. That is all I have to say on this subject.

My dear brethren, when things arise that seek to trouble us in our



innermost being, let us remember this message. Let us counter those things that seek to trouble us with our faith. These are the means we can engage to ensure we are not troubled in our innermost being. ■





Impressions 2007



Pentecost 2006

Setting

The largest church building of the New Apostolic Church in Tafelsig, near Cape Town, has seating for 4,000 people. It was here that Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber conducted his first Pentecost divine service. Some 1.7 million members and guests in 8,000 congregations were able to hear the call of the Chief Apostle: "Never draw back!" This statement has become almost proverbial in the New Apostolic world.

Parallel to the events of Pentecost, the New Apostolic Church also celebrated its 100-year anniversary in this part of the continent.



Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber, District Apostles Karlheinz Schumacher (Northern Germany), Armin Studer (Switzerland), Richard Freund (USA)

Ordinations

None

Publications

Our Family, Volume 2006, No. 15

Bible text

And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

(Acts 4: 31)

Core thoughts

What are the conditions that might cause us to draw back? This occurs when there is opposition. That is a danger in our time. There are influences that could actually push us to such a degree that we draw back. There are dangers from outside as well as dangers from inside.



Pentecost greeting

But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.

(Hebrews 10: 39)

4 June 2006—Cape Town (South Africa)

Chief Apostle's remarks on the Pentecost greeting for 2006

It has become a beautiful tradition—started by Chief Apostle Fehr—to issue a special greeting at Pentecost. I would also like to give you such a greeting today. We can read this message in Hebrews 10: 39:

“But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.”

This is our message for the coming year. It speaks here of “perdition”, which actually sounds quite harsh. So I would like to disregard this part and rather emphasise the part before that: “But we are not of those who draw back.” It says here: “But we are not of those...”

This means that, while other people generally draw back, we do not draw back. Children of God do not draw back.

What is the difference between children of God and others? We know that the gift of the Holy Spirit is within us. The Holy Spirit gives us the strength not to draw back. What are the conditions under which one might draw back? When there is opposition. This is a danger in our time. There are influences that could actually push us so far that we draw back. There are dangers from outside and dangers from inside. The many different religious opinions, for instance, are some of the dangers from outside. We are confronted



by many different opinions about religion and, in a certain way, this puts pressure on us. Let us not give in to this pressure. We have the power of the Holy Spirit which helps us to be steadfast.





The other danger is on the inside. That danger can be even worse. Let me give you a few examples. Sometimes we pray for help and nothing happens. At such times we might be tempted to draw back, thinking: "It is not worth praying anyway. Our heavenly Father probably will not grant our prayer anyways! Dear brothers and sisters, do not draw back! Let us look at another situation: perhaps we try to give testimony and tell others about our faith, and often there is no success. There is a danger that we might then draw back and say: "Nobody listens to us anyway!" But children of God do not draw back! "But we are not of those who draw back but of those who believe." **The Holy Spirit gives us the power not to draw back.** There is another example, and I want to be quite open about it: there are brothers and sisters that are not happy about the one or the other situation in the congregation. It happens. We are all human. But that brings with it the danger that we might draw back. Brothers or sisters who do not feel the love of

God in the congregation will draw back. Maybe one or the other has problems with his or her brother or sister. Then there is a danger that we might draw back. I would like to admonish you not to draw back. Children of God can fight—not in a human way, but with the weapon of prayer. Whatever happens to us in the future, we will not draw back. We will fight the battle of faith. The Holy Spirit gives us the power to do so. Our heavenly Father will give us His blessing so we can be victorious. ■



4 June 2006—Cape Town (South Africa)



Impressions 2006



Pentecost 2005

Setting

Pentecost 2005 was an outstanding event in the history of the New Apostolic Church. About 2 million participants in more than 70 countries were able to participate in the divine service via satellite.

On the previous Friday, during an International Apostle Meeting, the Chief Apostle announced the name of his successor over the internet. All 356 Apostles who were present gave their heart and hand to the newly designated leader of our Church.

Bible text

But tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.
(Luke 24: 49)

Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Richard Fehr, District Apostles Wilhelm Leber (Northern Germany and North Rhine Westphalia), and Klaus Sauer (Southern Germany)

Core thoughts

“May this word guide you in the future, in the coming hours and days, and in the coming weeks and months! Let us always be ready. How can we be ready? When we fulfil the words of Jesus: ‘Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.’”

Ordinations

Ordination of Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber

Retirement

Retirement of Chief Apostle Richard Fehr

Publications

Our Family, Volume 2005, No. 13
Booklet: “One in Spirit”



Pentecost greeting

Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

(Matthew 24: 44)

15 May 2005—Fellbach near Stuttgart (Germany)

Chief Apostle's remarks on the Pentecost greeting for 2005

Every Pentecost I have felt the urge to give God's people a special message that reaffirms our anticipation of the Lord's return. Today is the eighteenth time that I would like to give you such a message. It is taken from Matthew 24: 44. I greet God's people on this Pentecost day with the words:

"Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

May this word guide you in the future, in the coming hours and days, and in the coming weeks and months! Let us always be ready. How can we be ready? When we fulfil the words of Jesus: "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matthew 26:



41). It requires strength to always be ready. We receive this strength every time we come into the house of God. Let us not fool ourselves: the Lord will come at a moment when nobody expects it, without notice. We will all be overwhelmed when He comes. Nobody will say: "Lord, you have come too late!" But many will have to admit to themselves: He came too early for me! It will be a total surprise when He comes, in

a moment when nobody expects it. This should keep us watching and praying. We will continue to watch and pray together as we make our way to the goal. ■

Impressions 2005



Pentecost 2004

Setting

Over 1,000 members and guests gathered in anticipation of the divine service in the New Apostolic Church in Wiesbaden. Another 430,000 were connected around the world. Unfortunately, the satellite transmission to Zambia had to be cancelled at the last minute, even though the test had gone very well. Nevertheless, the tape-delayed Pentecost divine service was transmitted to North and South America without interruption. On the Saturday before, nearly 60 Apostles had come together for an Apostle Meeting



Bible text

When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.
(Acts 2: 1)

Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Richard Fehr, District Apostles Hagen Wend (South Western Germany), Wilfried Klingler (Central Germany), Klaus Sauer (Southern Germany)



Core thoughts

“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise to return, but some may count it as slackness. Why? Because the Lord has not come yet, and because we measure by human standards! It should be a consolation for us that He has not come yet: He is being patient with us, so that we may all come to repentance.”

Ordinations

None

Publications

Our Family, Volume 2004, No. 13

Pentecost greeting

The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

(2 Peter 3: 9)

Chief Apostle's remarks on the Pentecost greeting for 2004

By now it has already become something of a tradition for me to read you a special passage from the Bible for Pentecost. Today, I begin my seventeenth year as Chief Apostle. Every year, I have given you a message that is focused on the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. My greeting for this year is recorded in 2 Peter 3, verse 9:

“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as

some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”

These words, which the Apostle Peter spoke in his time, are to flow into your souls as a source of strength and consolation. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise to return, but some may count it as slackness. Why? Because the Lord has not come

yet, and because we measure by human standards! I would like to add something to this: brothers and sisters, the work of the Lord is broader, greater, and more magnificent than we might have expected some 50 years ago. The gospel is now being spread to the farthest corners of the earth. We see great faith there: faith in the commission of the Apostles as well as faith in the return of Christ. If the Lord had returned earlier, this work would have to be done in the kingdom of peace. It is the will of God to still add those that have been called to the marriage feast of the Lamb.

It should be a consolation for us that He has not come yet, even if some think it is slackness: He is longsuffering toward us. We have to see it this way: God is being patient with us so that we can ripen out and be ready for this wonderful event. If the Lord had come, say five years ago, would we have been ready? All of us? I repeat this intentionally, and I have said this on several occasions before already in the divine services: the Lord will not come too late for any soul. But it may indeed be that He will come too early for one or the other. He is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Repentance—well, that is a very special word. It is probably not a word that everyone likes to hear.





We tend to push it off to the side a bit. What does repentance mean? I only want to give you one explanation: return to the godly order. That is what repentance means. Let me make reference to one of the commandments. "I am the Lord your God. You shall have no other gods before Me." Those who repent will return to this Godly norm. In the western world today, there is no longer any danger that we might pray to the sun, moon, or stars,

that we might regard a godly phenomenon in every thunderclap and lightning bolt, or regard every tree as a divine entity. Today, we have 'modern' gods. But we are not to have other gods before Him. Shall I name such a god that is very prevalent in our time? Self-actualisation! Self-actualisation has become a catchphrase in our time, and many people arrange their lives around it. Brothers and sisters, let us grow increasingly into the like-

ness of Jesus. This is the only way to achieve complete freedom and salvation.

What other gods or idols are there in our time? Leisure. Whole industries cater to it. Not all, but many people, have more leisure time today than ever before, and they seek to fill this time with a thousand things. I do not mean to condemn anything, anything at all, brothers and sisters. But I would like to call



30 May 2004—Wiesbaden (Germany)

out to God's people: let us fill our leisure time with thoughts, words, and deeds that serve the work of redemption in Christ, even if we do not have much leisure time. "I am the Lord your God. You shall have no other gods before Me." The message this year is intended to give courage to all of God's children to continue faithfully on the narrow way, to gladly help and work along in the knowledge that the Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any soul should perish but that all should come to repentance—back to divine standard. ■



Impressions 2004

Pentecost 2003

Setting

All the European District Apostles and Apostles as well as District Apostle Helper Hoffmann (USA) had come to Dortmund to celebrate this day of Pentecost. The divine service was transmitted from there to more than 1,500 congregations in Africa, Europe, and South America. Nearly 420,000 souls were able to experience this blessed day. At the end of the service, the Chief Apostle introduced the New Apostolic Church's new interpretation of the first resurrection.

Bible text

I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgements and do them.
(Ezekiel 36: 27)

Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Richard Fehr, District Apostle Wilfried Klingler (Central Germany), Apostles Erhard Studer (Spain), and Rudolf Kainz (Austria)

Core thoughts

"Together we have just sung: "Now thank we all our God." This hymn goes on to state that we do so with "heart and hands and voices". We can only do that if God's work lives in our hearts, if we give testimony

of our faith at the right moment, and if we help along in God's wonderful work."

Ordinations

Ordination of District Evangelist David Middleton to the Bishop ministry

Publications

Our Family, Volume 2003, No. 15



Pentecost greeting

Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him for a thousand years.

(Revelation 20: 6)





Chief Apostle's remarks on the Pentecost greeting for 2003

By now we can say that it has become a custom for me to read you a verse from Holy Scripture as a greeting for Pentecost. Every year, this greeting has had something to do with the return of Christ. And it will be the same this year: I greet God's children around the world, including those who are not connected with us this morning, with the words recorded in Revelation 20: 6:

"Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him for a thousand years."

We all know this Bible verse very well. We associate with it the goal of our faith, the return of Christ when He comes back to fetch His bride. You may have noticed that, in the recent past, I have not mentioned this verse. Maybe the one or the other even missed it. I have pondered a great deal over the book of Revelation, especially Revelation 20: 4-6. It is the only place in Holy Scripture that mentions the first resurrection. I have shared my thoughts in the circle of the District Apostles.

When I read verses 4 and 5, I realised that the term "first resurrection" has a broader meaning than what we have come to believe. In

a way this is an expansion on our doctrine. And since it is so important and since the service is being translated into 20 different languages, I have written my thoughts down so that the translators have something tangible in their hands and do not have to guess.

Revelation 20:6

"Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him for a thousand years."

We all know this Bible verse very well. We associate with it the goal of our faith, with the return of Christ

when He returns to fetch His bride. The words: "Blessed and holy is he" refer to those who have been described in more detail in the two preceding verses: Verse 4, part 1: "And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgement was committed to them." To sit with the Son of God on His throne and rule (exercise judgement) with Him is promised to the overcomers who will go with the Lord Jesus when He returns—namely His bride. And John also saw other souls who will likewise take part in the first resurrection: Verse 4, part 2, and verse 5: "Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshipped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands, And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection." This does not refer to the bride, but to the martyrs. They professed Christ after the bride had been caught up to God and during the time of the great tribulation on earth, and were killed as a result.

Consequently, the bride and the martyrs will take part in the first resurrection. Together, they make up the priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Christ in the thousand-year kingdom of peace. Of them it is said: "Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection."

However, the resurrection of the two groups does not happen at the same time. In the time between the Lord's return to fetch His bride and the resurrection of the martyrs, the marriage feast of the Lamb will take place in heaven, and parallel to that, there will be a time of great tribulation on earth. The return of the Lord to take home His bride is and will remain the goal of our faith! Only the term "first resurrection" will, as of today, be interpreted in something of a broader sense because there are two groups that will take part in it. When you



get home, please take the time to read verses 4 and 5 from Revelation 20. An article explaining the issue in greater depth will soon be published in the Our Family. If you do not yet have a subscription, you can still get one. It will not hurt anyone to read our own Church magazine in addition to all the other magazines out there.

So in the future we will again hear this beautiful passage from Re-



8 June 2003—Dortmund (Germany)

velation 20: 6 from time to time:
“Blessed and holy is he who has
part in the first resurrection...” It
is a wonderful message, a mar-
vellous message, a message that
moves our soul, and I am happy
that we will hear it again. ■



Impressions 2003



Pentecost 2002

Setting

A total of 318 Apostles from all over the world came to South Africa for Pentecost this year. The weekend's agenda included an International Apostle Meeting, and all but three Apostles were able to participate. The divine service on Sunday was held in the Sandton Convention Centre. Approximately 1.6 million souls were able to experience it via satellite transmission. At the end of the divine service, Chief Apostle Richard Fehr ordained ten Apostles and seven Bishops for various countries in Africa.

Bible text

Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.
(2 Corinthians 1: 21-22)



Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Richard Fehr,
District Apostles Fritz Nehrkorn
(Saxony-Thuringia), Johann R. Kitching
(South East Africa), Richard Freund
(USA)

Core thoughts

"Let us persist in the imminent expectation that our Lord will come soon. The bridal congregation prepares for the marriage feast of the Lamb. Let us take the time to ponder this. I call out to all of you, my

dear brothers and sisters around the world: make time for the work of the Lord! Make time for your soul! Make time to pray!

Ordinations

Ordination of ten Apostles and seven Bishops for various African countries

Publications

Our Family, Volume 2002, No. 17
Booklet "South Africa 2002 —
International Apostle Meeting"



Pentecost greeting

Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. [...] You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

(James 5, part of verses 7 and 8)

Chief Apostle's remarks on the Pentecost greeting for 2002

This year I would once again like to give you a special greeting for Pentecost. It is an excerpt from James 5: 7-8:

“Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. [...] You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.”

Let us persist in the imminent expectation that our Lord will come soon. The bridal congregation prepares for the marriage feast of the Lamb. Let us take the time to ponder this. I call out to all of

you, my dear brothers and sisters around the world: make time for the work of the Lord! Make time for your soul! Make time to pray! Even though we are often very busy, let us remember that God gave us time so that we can use it to prepare for our eternal salvation.

How wonderful it is when we find time to attend the divine services! Please, dear soul, make time for it! When the Lord blesses our time, we will always have time for the house of the Lord. Take time to ponder the plan of salvation! Also make time to help along in this beautiful work of God. Especially in the industrialised countries we



hear so often: “Sorry, but I don’t have time!” Who made time? Who is ruler over time and eternity? God, our heavenly Father. When He blesses our time, we will have time to ponder over the development of our own soul, to retreat into our private corner and think about the plan of salvation, about





the miracle of being children of God, and the fact that the return of the Lord is imminent.

Dear brothers and sisters, let us do this more often in the future because it says in Holy Scriptures: "And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him?" (Luke 18: 7). Maybe here and there this cry is not so loud anymore, especially among those who are doing well, who have food, clothing, and a roof over their head, and who can afford a good many other things as well.



The thought might at times come up: "Actually, I really like it here on this earth." But I tell you, dear soul, your home is not here! Your home is in the light of heaven. Let us take

the time to ponder that. ■

19 May 2002—Johannesburg (South Africa)



Impressions 2002



Pentecost 2001

Setting

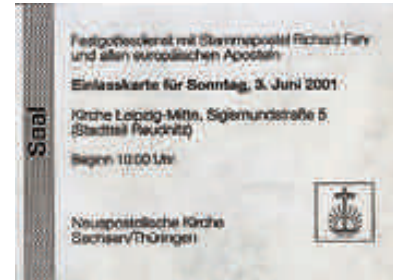
This divine service was translated into 18 different languages and transmitted via satellite to 41 countries. Approximately 220,000 members and guests were able to witness the divine service as a result. A total of 59 District Apostles and Apostles had gathered from all over Europe. They participated in a European Apostle Meeting on the Saturday before the divine service.

Bible text

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.
(Timothy 1: 7)

Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Richard Fehr, District Apostles Klaus Sauer (Southern Germany), Horst Ehlebracht (North Rhine-Westphalia), Hagen Wend (South West Germany), District Apostle René Higelin (France)



Core thoughts

“Anyone who enjoys civic rights must also put up with certain civic duties. In addition to his rights, a citizen also has certain duties. I will caption the duties of the heavenly citizen with the words: “No half-measures!” Please, let us not apply any half-measures when it comes to performing our duties as heavenly citizens.”

Ordinations

None

Publications

Our Family, Volume 2001, No. 17



Pentecost greeting

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

(Philippians 3: 20-21)



Chief Apostle's remarks on the Pentecost greeting for 2001

I have once again prayed for a special message of greeting for this year. We can read it in Philippians 3, verses 20 and 21:

“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.”

I greet all of God's children this Pentecost with these words of the Apostle Paul to the Philippians. Whatever happens, whatever we have to endure, let us always remember: our citizenship is in hea-

ven from which we wait daily for our Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body, according to the working by which He is able to subdue all things to Himself.

What kind of a special power is this by which Christ is able to subdue all things unto Himself, and by which He will transform our lowly body? It is the power of His Spirit which revealed itself on Pentecost and which will also have its effect upon us when He returns to complete His work. Remember, we have citizenship in heaven, and this citizenship sets us apart. It is, therefore, quite right to call us the elect of the Lord. Of course, God desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (Timothy

2: 4). But the Lord gathers his elect, who have citizenship in heaven, so that this work may be completed in this world and in the beyond.

Anyone who enjoys civic rights must also put up with certain civic duties. Dear brothers and sisters, it is true: as citizens of a country we have certain rights which we can demand and to which we are entitled. But a citizen also has certain duties in addition to his rights. Today I would like to talk about the duties of the heavenly citizen, and I would like to caption them with the words: “No half-measures!” Please, let us not apply any half-measures when it comes to performing our duties as heavenly citizens. If we did things half-heartedly, we would

Pentecost 2001

thereby demonstrate that we love God and His work with only half of our heart. No half-measures. Let us make a promise this morning: "Dear Lord, my whole heart is Yours!"

What would happen if our faith was half-hearted, if we believed some of it but doubted the rest? Let us not be half-hearted when it comes to our faith! Half-hearted faith is little faith. It is not possible to make any experiences of faith with that. No half-measures! Our faith needs to be whole. Faith comes from hearing the word of God, taking it into ourselves, and allowing it to move our soul.

If our hope was only half-hearted, we would thereby demonstrate that our confidence was low. We can read in the epistle to the Hebrews: "Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward" (Hebrews 10:35). Brothers and sisters, we cannot wait for the day of the Lord some of the time, and the rest of the time wonder whether the Lord will really come. We cannot be half-hearted in our hope



that He really knows us, and wonder whether we really have citizenship in heaven. Let us not have a half-hearted hope! That would imply that we had very little confidence!

What would happen if we our joy was half-hearted? I can tell you this: no half-measures! For someone who is only halfway joyful, things can become too much in church. I know that we are all very busy these days. We have one appointment after the other. We hardly have the time to take a deep breath. But if complete joy fills our heart, then we do not mind bringing sacrifices here and there.

If our zeal was only half-hearted, it would be a sign that we are often tired. But our duty as a citizen is this: do the work with zeal and joy in the knowledge that the Lord will come. And when He returns, we will be transformed by the power by which He, the Lord, is able to subdue all things unto Himself. ■





Impressions 2001



Pentecost 2000

Setting

Ten District Apostles and 49 Apostles gathered with the Chief Apostle in the Hamburg Congress Centre on this occasion. The service was transmitted to 39 countries via satellite, and some 220,000 members and guests were able to share in the divine service.

Bible text

But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.
(John 15: 26)

Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Richard Fehr, District Apostles René Higelin (France), Theodoor de Bruijn (Netherlands), Wilfried Klingler (Central Germany), Apostle Wladimir Danilov (Russia), District Apostle Klaus Sauer (Southern Germany), Apostle Hermann Magney (North Rhine-Westphalia)

Core thoughts

"In the last chapter of Revelation we see the call for the return of the Lord on several occasions. This call is an excellent remedy for superficiality. [...] The works of faith that we have per-

formed in the past will no doubt have their reward. All good works that we have done in the past will have been worthwhile. And the good works that we do when He comes will make us worthy. These two things comprise our crown. Let us perform works of faith, love, and hope now, and not just rely on what we have done in the past."



Ordinations

None

Pentecost greeting

And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.

(Revelation 22:12)

Publications

Our Family, Volume 2000, No. 19



11 June 2000—Hamburg (Germany)

Chief Apostle's remarks on the Pentecost greeting for 2000

This is already the thirteenth feast of Pentecost in my ministry and every year, I have given a Pentecost greeting to the children of God. Over all of these years, this greeting has had something to do with the expectation of the imminent return of Jesus Christ. We cannot let this expectation diminish. That would lead to superficiality. I have asked the Lord again this year for a special Pentecost greeting. We can read it in Revelation 22: 2:

“And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.”

This is the Pentecost greeting for the year 2000 for all of God's children in all countries and on all continents. This passage is taken from the last chapter of the book of Revelation, the last chapter in Holy Scripture. When we read this chapter, we find several references

to the return of the Lord. In verse 6, for instance, it says: “... the Lord God [...] sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place.” And in verse 17, we can read the significant words: “And the Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come!’ And let him who hears say, ‘Come!’” And in the second last verse of the Bible it says: “He who testifies to these things says, ‘Surely I am coming quickly!’” (Revelation 22:20). Is this call for the return of the Lord, which we can read in this last chapter of Holy Scripture on several occasions, also alive in our hearts? It has to be! It is an excellent remedy for superficiality.

“And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me...” And then it says here in the Luther translation: “... to give to every one according to what His work will be.” That really caught my attention: “... to what His work will be”.



Dear brothers and sisters, the works of faith that we have done in the past will no doubt have their reward. All the good works we have done in the past will certainly have been worthwhile, for His reward will be great beyond measure and description. But the good works that we do when He comes will make us worthy. Let us remember: everything we have done in the past will have its reward. The good works that we do when He comes will make us worthy. These two things comprise the crown. Isn't that wonderful? Reward, worthiness, and then the crown. Let us see to it that no one can say of us: “They did good works at



Pentecost 2000



count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us" (2 Peter 3: 4, 9). Dear brothers and sisters, God is still patient with us, so that we can manifest works of the first love, a living faith, and a deep hope until the end. It should be clear to us that the Lord will surely come, even if we have been waiting for many years. The calls for Christ's return, which are expressed on several occasions in Revelation 22, should also live in our hearts. ■

some point in the past," but that we also do good works when the Lord returns. I am thinking primarily of works of faith. They create security. I am also thinking of works of love. If we do works of love, we will feel fulfilled. Only works of love can bring fulfilment to our lives. I am also thinking of works of hope. If we do works born out of hope, we will experience utmost joy. If our joy has diminished, or if it is even non-existent, it may be a sign that there is not enough hope.

Brothers and sisters, I appeal to all of us: let us do works of faith, love, and hope now! It is not enough to have merely done them in the past. That will bring a wonderful reward when the Lord comes to complete His work.

Of course, we might become tired over the course of the years and think: "Where is the promise of His coming?" Apostle Peter has the answer: "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some



11 June 2000—Hamburg (Germany)



Impressions 2000



Pentecost 1999



Core thoughts

“Where God’s grace is active, there is redemption, and where the peace of the Risen One is manifest, there is bliss. Thus we have redemption and bliss through grace and peace.”

Setting

Seventeen Apostles were not allowed to leave their respective countries, but 268 Apostles were able to attend the International Apostle Meeting. Some 830,000 participants in just under 2,000 congregations were able to participate in the live service transmission from the Westin Harbour Castle Hotel on Lake Ontario. At the end of the divine service, the Chief Apostle ordained two Apostles for India, four Apostles for Africa, one for Papua-New Guinea, one for Cambodia, and two for the USA, as well as one

Bishop for Papua-New Guinea. In addition to the Pentecost festivities, the New Apostolic Church in North America celebrated its 100-year anniversary.

Bible text

It is the Spirit who gives life.
(John 6: 63)

Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Richard Fehr, District Apostles Armin Studer (Switzerland), Wilhelm Leber (Northern Germany), Erwin Wagner (Canada), Noel Edward Barnes (Cape Town)

Ordinations

Ordination of Apostles: Galanki Isaac Jayapaul and Vinod Kumar David Bediawala (both India), Apostles Sylvain Mukome Mupeke, Renie Victor Mukanza Bukaba, Jean Baptiste Mater Nkenebi, and Ferdinand Kubanza Mbande (all four for the Democratic Republic of Congo), Aimol Wasimbai (Papua-New Guinea), Nov Sarin (Cambodia), Wilbert Karl Hoffmann and John William Fendt II (both USA), as well as Bishop Zuhuke Hungito (Papua-New Guinea)

Publications

Our Family, Volume 1999, No. 15
Booklet: “Pentecost 1999—International Apostle Meeting in Toronto”

Pentecost greeting

Grace to you and
peace from Him who is
and who was and who
is to come.

(Revelation 1: 4)





Chief Apostle's remarks on the Pentecost greeting for 1999

Dearly beloved brothers and sisters in the Lord, I bid you a warm welcome at the altar of the Lord. I wish you a most blessed feast of Pentecost. On Pentecost, I always greet the people of God around the world with a special passage from the Bible, for which I pray fervently. I will do the same this year.



This year's Pentecost greeting is recorded in Revelation 1: 4 (excerpt)

Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come.

May these words make your hearts happy, create new joy, and give you renewed strength! Where God's grace is active, there is redemption, and where the peace of the Risen One is manifest, there is bliss. Redemption and bliss through grace and peace, if we have these in our heart, we already have a piece of heaven here on

earth. This grace and peace come from the almighty God, the Holy Spirit, and Jesus Christ.

This grace and peace are from Him "who is and who was"—from eternity through all the ages—"and who is to come." To be ready on the day when the Lord Jesus returns to take His own unto Himself is the goal of our life and of all our striving. It will be the most glorious day that will ever have been experienced on this earth. This is the goal for which we strive with child-like faith. ■

Pentecost 1998

Setting

For the first time, the service was transmitted via satellite to Zambia, which on its own had half a million participants. A total of just under 1 million participants was thus able to experience the divine service live. All District Apostles (with the exception of Alfons Tansahtikno and Andrew Andersen, who were ill) and all European Apostles were present. On Saturday, 30 May, a small celebration took place in honour of Chief Apostle Richard Fehr's 10-year anniversary as Chief Apostle. Over these 10 years, the number of New Apostolic Christians had almost doubled.



Bible text

Because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. (Romans 5: 5)

Core thoughts

"To what must we hold fast? We have a living, childlike faith. Let us remain in the first love. This love is capable of bringing sacrifices. We also need to remain in hope. Hope creates faith and trust."

Ordinations

None

Publications

Our Family, Volume 1998, No. 15

Officiant/ Called to assist

Chief Apostle Richard Fehr, District Apostles Peter Dessimoz (Switzerland), Gijsbert Pos (Netherlands), Erwin Wagner (Canada), Wilhelm Leber (Northern Germany)



Pentecost greeting

But hold fast what you have till I come.

(Revelation 2: 25)

Chief Apostle's remarks on the Pentecost greeting for 1998

A message for today's celebration of Pentecost has begun to move in my soul. It is recorded in Revelation 2: 5:

“... but hold fast what you have till I come.”

Dear brothers and sisters, this is exactly what it is all about: to hold fast what we have until the Lord returns, to throw nothing away, not to let the spirits steal anything, not to lose anything! No! Let us hold fast what we have till He returns. What do we have that we need to hold fast? Dear brothers and sisters, I cannot list everything, but I will mention a few things and write them into your hearts.

We have a living, childlike faith. We have to hold on to it until the Lord returns. There is a danger in our time that this childlike faith might diminish here and there. Where does childlike faith come from? Apostle Paul makes it clear: faith comes from hearing the word of God (Romans 10: 17). But if the word of God is no longer kept holy and is instead brought down to a human level and dissected, how can childlike faith be strengthened? Certainly, the servants of God, the Apostles of Jesus who preach the word of God, are human beings like anyone else. They have faults and failings like everyone else. That is why I mention it again today: brother, sister, make a distinction bet-

ween the ministry and the bearer of the ministry. The bearer of the ministry is and remains a human being. But the ministry remains holy. We can read in Holy Scripture that the Lord will not allow His anointed to be touched (1 Chronicles 16: 22). Sooner or later this will backfire, even if the only result is a decline in our childlike faith. We need to hold on to our faith until the Lord returns! I can guarantee you: if you have childlike faith, you will be able to move mountains, just as the Lord Jesus said (Matthew 17: 20).

To what else must we hold fast? The first love! Let us remain in the first love. This love is capable of bringing sacrifices. This love is



Pentecost 1998

capable of forgiveness. Let us keep in mind that the power of love will play an important role in the realm of glory, in the new world and new creation to come. As we have heard in our Bible text, this love is poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. May it remain with us, and may we always give it room in our hearts. What is it that has built up the work of God until today? The works of faith and of love! These works have made everything possible. Let us ask ourselves: are we still in this first love, or has this love already cooled down? Do other things take first place in our heart, such that this love is no longer a first love, but a third or a fifth



love? Do we have other loves? May the love for the Lord and His work always come first! In other words, may this love always have first place in our hearts!

It is also important to remain in hope till He returns. Dear brothers and sisters, this hope will be fulfilled. Do you know what happens when we have hope in our hearts? We become patient! And that is so important while we wait for the Lord. Hope also gives confidence. When confidence is shaken, many other things are also shaken. Let us see to it that this confidence is still alive in our hearts.



Apostle Paul already spoke about faith, love, and hope, and he said: "... but the greatest of these is love" (1 Corinthians 13: 13). Faith will become sight, hope will be fulfilled, but love will remain into all eternity. That is why we have this Bible text for Pentecost, which tells us that "the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us." We must also hold fast to our crown until He returns (Revelation 3: 11). The crown of eternal life is not yet on our spiritual head, but once the Lord has returned and the marriage feast in heaven unfolds, this crown of eternal life will adorn the heads



of those who have remained firm in faith, love, and hope until the end. Let us not throw away the crown of life!

And there is something else that we need to hold fast. What is that, dear brothers and sisters? The promise of Christ! There are two aspects to this promise. On one hand Christ says: “I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matthew 28: 20). What a wonderful promise! He is with us always. On the other hand He says: “... I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also” (John 14: 3). Let us hold fast to this wonderful, twofold promise until He returns. It is to live in our hearts, and the Holy Spirit will ensure that it remains alive. The Holy Spirit reaffirms it again and again, just as in the time of Abraham when, after a certain time, God confirmed the promise that He had made to Abraham (Genesis 15: 4-6; Genesis 18:



10-14). Likewise, the Holy Spirit tells us also on this day of Pentecost: “Hold fast to the promise until He returns!” ■



Impressions 1998



Pentecost 1997

Setting

A total of 85 active and retired Apostles from Europe gathered in the Meistersinger Hall in Nuremberg. The service was transmitted via satellite to Europe (240,000 participants in 1,440 congregations), Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe (500,000 participants). For the first time, the signal was transmitted digitally.

Bible text

Therefore, if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfil my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.
(Philippians 2: 1-2)

Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Richard Fehr, District Apostle Siegfried Karnick (Saxony-Anhalt), Apostle Luigi Albert (Italy), District Apostle René Higelin (France), Apostle Rudolf Kainz (Austria), District Apostles Gijsbert Pos (Netherlands), and Wilfried Klingler (Lower Saxony)

Core thoughts

“What sort of melody does this last trumpet play? A melody from the past? [...]. The melody which the last trumpet plays in our days is the melody of our glorious present, in which we can make use of the time of grace. We can hear the sound of a wonderful future, the glory of the Father for His own.”

Ordinations

None

Publications

Our Family, Volume 1997, No. 15

Pentecost greeting

Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet.

(1 Corinthians 15: 51 and part of 52)



Chief Apostle's remarks on the Pentecost greeting for 1997

It has already become a tradition for me to read, and also send, a special greeting to all of God's children every Pentecost. Each of these greetings has pointed to the coming of the Lord, and the first resurrection. And since it is not possible for all congregations around the world to be connected with us this morning—and since therefore, by far not all of God's children will be able to hear this message on Pentecost—this word will have to spread like wildfire all over the globe to be made known to all the children of God. This year I have once again prayed for a special passage for this day, and I would like to read it to you now. It is recorded in 1 Corinthians 15: 51-52:

“Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet.”

This is my greeting for God's children on this year's celebration of Pentecost. When Paul wrote these words, he probably hoped and believed in his heart that this would happen in his lifetime. Only in the course of the history of the church did it become obvious that these words did not fit into the time of the first Christians but was meant for the time of the Omega. “Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the



twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet.” These words refer to all those who are still in the flesh on the day of the Lord and have prepared themselves for the return of Christ. They will experience the greatest mystery in the history of the kingdom of God. They will be changed in a moment and caught up to the Lord who will have already fetched those from the realm of the redeemed (1 Thessalonians 4: 16-17).

Apostle Paul says that this will happen in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. What kind of melody does this last trumpet play? A melody from the past?

There are some who like to dig around in the past and investigate the past. They believe that this will make them smarter, that in so doing they will accumulate a broader knowledge, and finally come to

Pentecost 1997

know everything. In this context, I would like to call to mind another passage from Apostle Paul: “Forgetting those things which are behind ... I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3: 13-14). Do we want to investigate the past and risk standing still? This is not the melody that the last trumpet is playing. The melody the last trumpet is playing in our days is the melody of our glorious present, in which we can make use of the time of grace. We can also hear the sound of a wonderful future, the glory of the Father for His own.

many human voices, beautifully sung and performed. Dear brothers and sisters, let us listen to the sound, the melody, of the last trumpet in our days, and let us wait for the moment in which all who are—and I want to repeat this—still in the flesh and willing to be prepared for the return of Christ will be changed. ■



Let us pay attention to the melody of this trumpet in our days. When the choir was singing at the beginning, it sounded to me like the sound of a trumpet comprised of





Impressions 1997



Pentecost 1996

Setting

A total of 260 Apostles, more than ever before, gathered in Nairobi. Four Apostles were ill and could not come. The Chief Apostle called it a demonstration of unity and harmony. The service was transmitted via satellite to Europe, North and Central America, and to Southern and Central Africa. More than a million souls were thus able to share in the divine service. In East Africa, the service was transmitted via radio broadcast.



Bible text

I say then: Walk in the Spirit.
(Galatians 5: 16)

Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Richard Fehr, District Apostles Duncan Mfune (Zambia), Wilfried Klingler (Lower Saxony), Erwin Wagner (Canada)

Core thoughts

“Do we really call out to him day and night? ... This does not refer to the daytime and night time of an earthly day. When things go well in our lives and we are healthy, this is comparable to the daytime. Then there is light. When we go through trials and tribulations, when we experience sickness and pain, when we suffer injustice, then we experience the darkness of night. In those moments, it is not so diffi-

cult to call out: ‘Lord, come soon!’ After all, who would not want to escape such a night? But when it is daytime and the sun is shining in the sky, when everything is well with us and we are happy, then it is more difficult to call out: ‘Lord, come!’”

Ordinations

Ordination of Bishop Karamat Khusal (Pakistan) and District Elder Gorre Sunder (India) to the Apostle ministry

Retirement

Retirement of Apostle Prasad Bhasker (India)

Publications

Our Family, Volume 1996, No. 17
Booklet “1996 Nairobi—Walk in the Spirit”

Pentecost greeting

And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?

(Luke 18: 7-8)



Chief Apostle's remarks on the Pentecost greeting for 1996

It has become customary for me to give a special greeting to God's children on Pentecost, and I would like to do so again this year. It is a passage from the gospel of Luke. I read verses 7 and 8 from the eighteenth chapter, and greet all of God's children around the world with the words written there:

"And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"

I would like to ring in Pentecost 1996 with these familiar words and, at the same time, ask God's

children this important question: "Do we really call out day and night? Or is the call not as loud anymore due to the many earthly problems and matters that affect us here and there? Might it be that the call has even gone silent here and there? Let us call out day and night!

This not only refers to the daytime and night time of an earthly day. When things go well in our lives, when we are healthy, when all our wishes are fulfilled, when we have peace in our hearts and are at peace with those around us, this is comparable to the daytime. Then there is light. When we go through trials and tribulations, when we experience sickness and pain, when we suffer injustice, then we

experience the darkness of night. In those moments it is not so difficult to call out: "Lord, come soon!" After all, who would not want to escape such a night? But when it is daytime and the sun is shining in the sky, when everything is well with us and we are happy, then it is more difficult to call out: 'Lord, come!' But God will avenge His elect who cry out day and night to Him.

This passage makes something very clear: the Lord must even have a group of elect in the last days. These elect call out day and night to God. They have become God's children by His grace. They have secured their election through Holy Sealing. Now the important thing is to call out day and

night. The Lord will then avenge His elect speedily, as it is mentioned in this year's Pentecost greeting. The word 'speedily' does not mean a length of time as measured by human standards. It does not refer to a few earthly years. 'Speedily' means something else in this context. He will save them in the twinkling of an eye, when no one expects it. All of a sudden, He will be there and take His own unto Himself. What is our salvation? The moment of His return to take us into His realm of glory!



These words from the gospel of Luke have been in the Bible for a long time. I am sure that many were disappointed when the Lord did not come in their lifetime. But the Son of God described the signs of the time when He would return. A pregnant mother does not know the exact day or hour



when she will give birth, but she knows the time is coming. The bride of Christ does not know the day nor the hour when Jesus will return to complete His work (Matthew 25: 13), but she knows the time is coming and believes that He will save her speedily, in the twinkling of an eye, when no one expects it.

But now the Son of God poses a question: "...when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"

We live in a time when faith is diminishing in many people, when some are no longer able to have such childlike faith. But I say today to the children of God: He who will come to take His elect unto Himself in the twinkling of an eye, He will find faith in us. Undoubtedly, the danger exists that childlike faith might even diminish in our ranks, that our faith might be replaced by purely rational considerations. What then do we believe, and what should we believe? Our faith in Christ's return must remain strong! The belief that Jesus Christ still reveals himself through His ministers has to remain strong and secure. What Jesus said to His disciples is still valid today: "... you in me, and I in you" (John 14: 20).

When the Lord returns, what kind of faith does He want to find in us?

Faith in the word of God inspired by the Holy Spirit! Every Priest has the divine commission to preach the word of God. In our time we have to be careful that we do not pull God's holy word of life down to a human level, a level of discussion and debate. That must never happen to the holy word of God! Jesus' question: "... when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?" shows that He knew the time would come when faith in the word of God would no longer be a given. Today's Pentecost message makes it clear that the Lord will indeed come and that He will indeed complete His work. He will save His own if they cry out to Him day and night. But He wants to—and He will—find childlike faith in us! Not a faith based on compromise, not an historical faith, not a general faith, but a childlike faith in the word of God! ■

26 May 1996—Nairobi (Kenya)



Impressions 1996



Pentecost 1995

Setting

All District Apostles and Apostles from Europe gathered in the Swiss metropolis for the 100-year anniversary of the New Apostolic Church in Switzerland. Already on Thursday, 1 June 1995, a celebration had taken place to which politicians and officials of other churches had been invited. The Swiss television station SF recorded the Pentecost divine service on Sunday and broadcast it in part, together with an interview with Chief Apostle Richard Fehr, during its evening newscast. The divine service was transmitted via satellite to all European District Churches with a total of 250,000 participants in 36 countries in 1,300 church buildings.

Bible text

And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed and therefore I spoke," we also believe and therefore speak.

(2 Corinthians 4: 13)

Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Richard Fehr, District Apostles Robert Higelin (France), Klaus Sauer (Southern Germany), Ernst Graf (Cape Town), District Apostle Helper Urs Hebeisen, Apostle Peter Gfeller (Nigeria)

Core thoughts

"Being watchful means more than just being awake and not being sleepy. Being watchful means looking up in anticipation. Someone who is watchful sees danger coming and can act accordingly. Being watchful is the attitude of all Christians who prepare themselves for the return of Christ."

Ordinations

None

Publications

Our Family, Volume 1995, No. 15



Pentecost greeting

Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

(Matthew 25: 13)

4 June 1995—Zurich (Switzerland)

Chief Apostle's remarks on the Pentecost greeting for 1995

Over the course of the past years, it has become customary for me to give a special greeting to all of God's children on Pentecost. I will do that again today. The focal point of these greetings over the past years has always been the completion of the work of God and the return of Christ for the first resurrection. My greeting for God's children around the world for Pentecost 1995 is recorded in Matthew 25: 13:

“Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.”

My very dear brothers and sisters, being watchful means more than

just being awake and not being sleepy. Being watchful means looking up in anticipation. Someone who is watchful sees danger coming and can act accordingly. Is this not extremely important? This should be the attitude of every Christian who prepares himself for the return of Christ. Permit me to repeat this: being watchful is the attitude of all Christians who wait for the return of Christ!

We can read the familiar parable of the ten virgins in Holy Scripture. This parable points to the return of Christ when He will return to complete His church on earth and fetch His own, who will share in it. The parable speaks of wise and foolish



virgins. What exactly makes the foolish virgins so foolish? They had no oil! If we apply this parable to our time, we can say that the Spirit of God was not able to create enough substance in them. They were not foolish because they had fallen asleep. No! In the parable it says: “But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept” (Matthew 25: 5), even



V. Pentecost services in review (2013 - 1981)

Pentecost 1995



accept His grace, and pray fervently. If we act this way and are watchful, we will see dangers coming and can react with the attitude of all Christians who wait for the return of the Lord. ■

the wise virgins. Tell me, dear brother, dear sister, is this not a comfort to you? After all, you too have likely become tired every now and again while you were waiting, and then suddenly noticed: “I am not really awake. I am daydreaming!” They all slumbered. But when the cry was heard: “Behold the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!” (verse 6), they all awoke, both the foolish and the wise—but only the wise had enough oil in their lamps. Dearly beloved brothers and si-

sters, if it says here in our Pentecost greeting: “Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming”, then let us ensure that we have enough oil in our lamps, enough spiritual and divine substance in us, which we receive when we absorb the word of God,



4 June 1995—Zurich (Switzerland)



Impressions 1995



Pentecost 1994

Setting

All the Apostles of Europe had assembled in Dortmund's Westfalenhalle. Some 11,000 members and guests congregated with them in the large hall for the divine service, while another 270,000 throughout Europe and South Africa participated in the service via satellite.

Bible text

But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.

(1 Corinthians 2: 10)



Pentecost greeting

Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.

(Revelation 1: 3)

Officiant / Called to Assist

Chief Apostle Richard Fehr, District Apostles Gijsbert Pos (Netherlands), Klaus Sauer (Southern Germany), Wilfried Klingler (Central Germany), Apostles Pavel Gamov (Russia), and Rudolf Kainz (Austria)

Core thoughts

"Regardless of all the developments in all areas of life, there is one thing we must not forget: the time is near. It is really very important that we continuously practise the three steps that are mentioned here: read the words of the prophecy, hear them, and keep those things that are written in it. [...] These three things are important: 1. that we comprehend what God wants, 2. that we understand what God is, and 3. that we realise what God gives to us."

Ordinations

Ordination of District Elders Viktor Bezgans from Russia and Devan Chowdhury from India to the Apostle ministry

Publications

Our Family, Volume 1994, No. 17

Chief Apostle's remarks on the Pentecost greeting for 1994

I have asked our heavenly Father for a special greeting for this year's celebration of Pentecost. It is recorded in the first chapter of Revelation and we read as follows in verse 3:

"Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near."

This is my greeting for this year's feast of Pentecost for all of you, my dearly beloved, elected, purchased, and faithful children of God.

Dear brothers and sisters, regardless of all the developments in all areas of life, there is one thing we must not forget: the time is near. It really is very important that we continuously practise the three steps

22 May 1994—Dortmund (Germany)

mentioned here: read the words of the prophecy, hear them, and keep those things which are written in it.

Reading, hearing, and keeping—we need to practice these three steps, otherwise we will not be able to recognise that the time is near. The words of the prophecy—perhaps some will now say that these no longer officially exist in the work of God—but what glorious and unique prophecy is mentioned here in the third verse of the first chapter of Revelation? What does this mean? This prophecy states that the time is near. We still hear this prophecy in the house of God, even today. It is still just as important as ever. I would like to write it into each and every soul today. Blessed is he who reads the words of this prophecy. Those who do not do so will find it difficult to be blessed.

Let us read more often from Holy Scripture. How many times do we read there that the Lord will return to complete His work! Blessed is he who reads these words. Let us make it a part of our daily and weekly routine to read such words. And let us remember the three steps we must practise to remain in this joy. The time is near!

But we must also hear the words of this prophecy. I call on all the ministers in the church of Christ: “Do not quench the Spirit! Proclaim it with a happy heart, again and again: our Lord is coming! The time is near!” God’s children must hear this message! God’s children are permitted to hear it, and God’s children want to hear it! After reading and hearing the word, the third step is to keep it. If we read it often and hear it again and again, then it will be quite pos-

sible for us to keep it—if we want to. Only those who keep the word and practise it will be blessed and live in the knowledge that the time is near! Dear brothers and sisters, it is also important not to forget it! We live in such a fast-paced time, and so much happens so quickly in all areas of life, that the danger is great that we might forget something. But those who make use of the time, who follow faithfully, and who remain closely connected will experience the activity of the Spirit of our almighty God again and again. ■



Pentecost 1993

Setting

The Jahrhunderthalle in Frankfurt-Höchst was the location for this Pentecost divine service. A total of 20 District Apostles and 216 Apostles had gathered for an International Apostle Meeting. Unfortunately, three active Apostles were unable to participate. Some 1,200 congregations in 33 countries were connected via satellite, making it possible for approximately 280,000 souls to participate in the service.

The International Apostle Meeting on Saturday marked the 130-year anniversary of the New Apostolic Church which emerged from the Catholic Apostolic Church in 1863.

Bible text

Do not quench the Spirit.
(1 Thessalonians 5: 19)

Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Richard Fehr, District Apostles Arno Steinweg (Lower Saxony), Johann R. Kitching Jr. (South Africa—Pretoria), Erwin Wagner (Canada), District Apostle Helper Madan Khusal (Pakistan), and District Apostle Willy Adam (Mecklenburg))

Core thoughts

“How blissful are we? In the western world we live in a time when people have more free time than ever before and yet nobody has any time! Everyone is always in a hurry. [...] What do we do with our free time? Or better yet: do we make time for the salvation of our soul?”

Ordinations

Ordination of District Elders Hans-Jürgen Berndt and Wolfgang Nadolny to the Apostle ministry for the District of Berlin-Brandenburg

Publications

Our Family, Volume 1993, No. 17
Booklet: “Do Not Quench the Spirit”



Pentecost greeting

For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

(Matthew 24: 21-22)



Chief Apostle's remarks on the Pentecost greeting for 1993

Dear brothers and sisters, I would once again like to read you a special greeting for this year's feast of Pentecost. I also think about the problems of the time, I see the currents here and there, and I ask myself now and again: dear heavenly Father, where will all of this lead? We see so much, we hear so much, and everything happens so quickly. That which seemed a sure

thing yesterday is obsolete today. Yesterday's truth is only a half-truth today—and will be untrue tomorrow! Many things are changing. These days, more happens in a single year than in 100 years in the olden days. In our day, a single generation experiences more than 20 generations in medieval times. It is a very fast-paced world and there is also a risk that our faith might

also become fast-paced. In what sort of time do we live today then? Our time is described in the gospel of Matthew, in the familiar chapter 24. I will only read verses 21 and 22::

“For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.”

Other translations do not speak of tribulation, but of distress, and that is a bit more to the point. There will be great distress, such as has not been since the beginning of the world, nor ever shall be.

“And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be



Pentecost 1993

saved”—Not you, not me, not anyone! —“But for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened.”

That is my greeting for Pentecost 1993! When we have reached the goal, we will all say: “Dear heavenly Father, it seemed so long, but it really wasn’t. After all, that which You have created during this time is so colossal that it needed all this time..

The distress that we must endure—which no generation before us likely ever had to experience—brings with it the danger that no flesh will be saved. We should all ask ourselves, brother, sister, how blissful are you after you have prayed and told your heavenly Father everything? How blissful are you after the divine service, after a visit from the ministers or after a few hours of quiet contemplation at home? In the western world, we

live in a time when people have more free time than ever before. And yet, nobody has any time. Everyone is always in a hurry. A short time ago I read the following headline in a magazine: “The more free time people have, the more foolish they become”. This sounds a bit offensive. I would like to emphasise that this sentence is not my own creation. I only read it. But what do we do with our free time? Or more to the point: do we make time for the salvation of our soul? Let us not grow tired in this time of distress but rather follow until we have reached the goal.

Certainly, there are many positive developments in our time, of which former generations could only dream. New inventions, as well as progress in technology and other areas of research and development have made our daily lives much easier. In many parts of the world, people live in far more af-

fluent conditions than 50 or 150 years ago, when hundreds of thousands of people emigrated from Europe to avoid starvation. Who populated the vast spaces of North and South America? The emigrants of Europe, who were fleeing bitter poverty in their own countries! Many countries have already improved their living conditions, and others are in the process of doing so. Much progress has been made in the health sector. Where in the past man would have died of an infection, he can now be cured with new medicines. And there is much more that could be said. But that is not what is meant by distress and tribulation. This has nothing to do with our daily lives. It goes deeper than that and speaks to our soul and spirit. That is where the distress is felt. ■



30 May 1993—Frankfurt/Main (Germany)



Impressions 1993

Pentecost 1992

Setting

The divine service took place in the famous Carnegie Hall. All 19 District Apostles, seven District Apostle Helpers and 22 Apostles had come. The service was transmitted via satellite throughout Canada, the United States, Great Britain, and Puerto Rico.

Bible text

For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.
(Romans 8: 6)

Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Richard Fehr, District Apostles Mario Fiore (Argentina), Horst Ehlebracht (North Rhine-Westphalia), Johann R. Kitching (South Africa—Pretoria), and Duncan Burton Mfune (Zambia)

Core thoughts

“The word ‘quickly’ means one thing for us in particular: let us always be ready. Why? Because the Lord could already come today!”

Ordinations

None

Publications

Our Family, Volume 1992, No. 19



Chief Apostle's remarks on the Pentecost greeting for 1992

We celebrate another feast of Pentecost today. Today also marks the start of my fifth year as your Chief Apostle. It has become a custom by now for me to give a special greeting to God's children on Pentecost. I will gladly do that again today.

Do you know what was awakened in my soul? Over the last few days, whenever I thought about this morning and imagined God's children in my mind, I thought of the words recorded in Revelation 3: 11. And that will be my greeting for all God's children around the world this Pentecost.

**“Behold, I am coming quickly!
Hold fast what you have, that no
one may take your crown.”**

Many times the question has been asked: what does God mean by ‘quickly’? Does He mean days, months, years, decades? By now, almost 2,000 years have already passed since Apostle John heard these words and wrote them down. What does it mean when the Lord says ‘quickly’? Brothers and sisters, I cannot give you the exact year, I cannot specify the month and the day. ‘Quickly’ means that we should be ready. When the Lord Jesus returns, we will all be surprised.

Pentecost greeting

Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.

(Revelation 3: 11)



Brothers and sisters, may these words—"Behold, I am coming quickly"—burn in our hearts! May no one push the return of Christ off into some point in the distant future! We do not know the day nor the year, but we do know the time in which we live, and we can see how God's work is growing and developing towards completion. But there is one thing we must never forget: God's work, the work of redemption, is far greater than anyone could ever imagine. And this does not always match our own understanding of the word 'quickly'..

May I give you a brief explanation? God's plan of salvation is as old as mankind, and even the moment in

which He laid the foundation for His church is already almost 2,000 years behind us. God's work of redemption includes hundreds of peoples and nations from many different ages, and if we look at it under this light, it becomes ever greater, more and more comprehensive, and more and more magnificent. The word 'quickly' means one thing for us in particular: let us always be ready! Why should we always be ready? Because the Lord could already come today! And even if He only comes next year, it will still be 'quickly'!

Those who live in this knowledge will hold fast to their crown—others will lose it. What is this "crown"? A

crown is a symbol of honour and power. What will the greatest power one day be? Actually, it is already the greatest power today, only it is not yet so obvious. But what will the greatest power be? It is written in the Bible that the Lord gave those who received Him the right to become children of God (John 1: 12). That is the greatest power! And what is the greatest honour? To have overcome and to have followed! That will be our crown. And all those who have the word 'quickly' written in their heart will not lose this crown. The work of God and the return of Jesus Christ are everything to them. ■

Pentecost 1991

Setting

The divine service was transmitted via satellite to Western Europe, a number of countries in Eastern Europe and, for the first time, also to South Africa. Approximately 260,000 members and guests in some 1,000 congregations were able to participate in this divine service either in person or by transmission.

Bible text

Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit.
(Psalm 51: 12)

Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Richard Fehr, District Apostles Gijsbert Pos (Netherlands), Siegfried Karnick (Saxony-Anhalt), Robert Higelin (France), Apostles Wilhelm Leber (Northern Germany), Joachim Quittenbaum (Saxony), and Rudolf Schneider (Switzerland)

Core thoughts

“James is the symbol and representative of a living hope. And now I would like to ask all of us: do we hope as he did? [...] In our time, much has become too much for many. Let us take heed that this living hope does not diminish in our hearts, that we never consider our work in the cause of the Lord to be too much, and that we never think of it as too much trouble to follow Him.”

Ordinations

None

Publications

Our Family, Volume 1991, No.17



Pentecost greeting

You also be patient. Establish your hearts,
for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

(James 5: 8)



Chief Apostle's remarks on the Pentecost greeting for 1991

In each one of the past three Pentecost divine services, I have greeted you with a special passage from Holy Scripture. Over time, this message has grown stronger in the souls, has begun to work and take action, and has become a source of strength and security. Sometimes, this greeting has even provided help in making decisions. For this reason I have prayed again for a special greeting for all of you for this year. We can read it in the epistle of James, in the eighth verse of chapter five:

“You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.”

This will be my greeting for Pentecost 1991 for all of God's children. My dearly beloved, I hope to make you all happy with this greeting. Let us be patient and strengthen our hearts in the knowledge that the return of the Lord is at hand. Who spoke these words? Apostle James. James is the symbol and representative of a living hope. And now I would like to ask all of us: do we hope as he did? A man without hope is a pitiful creature. Once someone has given up all hope and has resigned himself to his fate, once he expects

nothing more out of life, he will withdraw, and often he will become cynical. As children of God, do we not have reason for hope? We do not have to become loners and cynically analyse the things that are happening in our time! Rather let us be patient—and consequently



Pentecost 1991



strong in our hearts. Why? Because we hope and believe that the return of the Lord is at hand. Perhaps one or the other among you might now say: "I have already heard that for 50 years!" Yes, certainly, but the return of the Lord is now closer by those 50 years. And one day, He will complete His work. It is important to prepare for it and do everything necessary to keep this hope alive. We cannot allow our hope to be suffocated.

In our time, much has become too much for many!

Let us take heed that this living hope does not diminish in our hearts, that we never consider our work in the cause of the Lord to be too much, and that we never think of it as too much trouble to follow Him. We must not allow anything to become too much for us because the return of the Lord is at hand. ■

We live in a time when nearly everything is possible in all areas of life. But even though so much is offered, many hearts are empty and without hope. Why? Because they do not expect the return of the Lord! But especially in this time, when so much is offered, I would like to underline one thought which is meant for us, the children of God. And this is not some profound insight on the part of unbelievers:



Impressions 1991



Pentecost 1990

Setting

For five days, the capital city of Austria was the hub of the New Apostolic world. With the exception of three who were ill, all the Apostles of the world had gathered in the Austria Center in Vienna, along with over 2,500 members and guests. Another 250,000 in both Eastern and Western Europe were also able to share in the service. Some 830 congregations were connected by audio-video satellite transmission and 110 stations were connected by audio. An International Apostle Meeting was convened on the Saturday before the service.

Bible text

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen.
(2 Corinthians 13: 14)

Official / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Richard Fehr, Apostle John Thompson (India), District Apostles Robert Higelin (France), Duncan Burton Mfunne (Zambia), District Apostle Helper Wilbert Vovak (USA), District Apostle Klaus Sauer (Southern Germany), Apostle Rudolf Kainz (Austria)

Core thoughts

"We still have a little while, or as the French say "un peu de temps", a little bit of time. Let us use this little bit of time, the short time we have on earth, to prepare for our eternal salvation. [...]. Let us remain active in the work of the Lord, in our offerings, in prayer, and in following, and let us strive to benefit from every day for our soul's salvation. Then it will only be a little while because the time will pass very quickly."

Ordinations

None

Publications

Our Family, Volume 1990, No.15



Pentecost greeting

For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry.
Now the just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him. But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.

(Hebrews 10: 37-39)

Chief Apostle's remarks on the Pentecost greeting for 1990

On this year's birthday of the church of Christ, I would like to greet you with a message that the Holy Spirit has awakened in my soul. It is recorded in Hebrews 10: 37-39:

“For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him. But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.”

Just a little while yet, brothers and sisters, and then He who is to come will come, and He will not tarry. Why yet “a little while”—the French say “un peu de temps”—why a little bit of time? We all still have the opportunity to take advantage of make use of the golden time of grace. Let us not sleep through it. Brothers and sisters, come, let us use this little bit of time, the short time we have on earth, to prepare



for our eternal salvation, as it says in one of our hymns. I know that the thought might arise: this little while is very, very long and not little at all! Dear brothers and sisters, let us remain active in the work of the Lord, in our offerings, in prayer, and in following, and let us strive to benefit from every day for our soul's salvation. Then it will only be a little while because the time will pass very quickly! Let us not be bored, but rather make use of the little while that is left before the Lord comes. Dearly beloved, may this year's greeting accompany you on your future ways and have an effect on your souls, because we are not

of those who draw back, but those who believe and who will be worthy to see the glory of God. Those who do not believe will not see what God has prepared. ■



Pentecost 1989

Setting

All District Apostles and District Apostle Helpers of the world, as well as all the Apostles from the working area of District Apostle Michael Kraus, were invited to Kitchener, Canada. A total of 136 receiving stations in North and South America, as well as Great Britain, were connected by cable.

Bible text

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. (Romans 8: 14)



Pentecost greeting

He who testifies of these things says, “Surely I am coming quickly.” Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

(Revelation 22: 20-21)

Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Richard Fehr, District Apostles Johann R. Kitching (South Africa—Pretoria), Gijsbert Pos (Netherlands), Siegfried Karnick (Saxony-Anhalt), Alfons Tanshtikno (Indonesia), Pablo Alfredo Bianchi (Argentina), Robert Higelin (France), Karl Kühnle (Württemberg-Bavaria), and Michael Kraus (Canada)

Core thoughts

The gift of the Holy Spirit, which has been laid into us through Holy Sealing, will guide us, and actually even prompt us, to do good works, and if we feel this power within us, it is proof that we have given the Holy Spirit enough room within us. But if we do not feel this, then the Holy Spirit has very little room in us.

Ordinations

None

Publications

Our Family, Volume 1989, No. 19



14 May 1989—Kitchener (Canada)



Chief Apostle's remarks on the Pentecost greeting for 1989

Another feast of Pentecost has dawned. I prayed this morning in the home of your District Apostle: "Dear heavenly Father, please give me a special message for this day of Pentecost." I opened the Holy Scripture. Before my eyes was the last page of Revelation, and I read the last two verses from the last chapter:

"He who testifies of these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly."

These are the words of the Lord Jesus, dear brothers and sisters. And they are followed by the answer of

the bridal congregation. Do you know what the bridal congregation says?

"Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" (verse 20).

And below that, as a golden staff in our hand, are written the words:

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen" (verse 21).

These are the last words in Holy Scripture. One day, that which is happening in our days will be added. This is my Pentecost greeting for you. ■



Pentecost 1988

Setting

This was the first divine service conducted by Chief Apostle Richard Fehr. A few days before, Chief Apostle Hans Urwyler had ordained Richard Fehr as his successor. In attendance were all District Apostles, a large number of District Apostle Helpers and Apostles from overseas, as well as all the Apostles of Europe, 58 Apostles in total. The divine service was transmitted via cable to 921 congregations. After the opening prayer, District Apostle Arno Steinweg read a letter and officially informed the congregations that Chief Apostle Hans Urwyler had retired. In his last official act as Chief Apostle he had ordained District Apostle Helper Richard Fehr as the new Chief Apostle.

Bible text

Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.
(Revelation 1:19)

Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Richard Fehr, District Apostle Helper John W. Fendt Sr., and District Apostle Johann Rissik Kitching Sr.

Core thoughts

“When a change happens somewhere and a new man receives the commission to continue a certain task, people expect at the time of his appointment that he make a statement to indicate what he plans to do in the future. [...] I will tell you my “agenda”: ‘Marana tha! O Lord, come!’”

Acts and Ordinations

Chief Apostle Richard Fehr officially assumed his ministry.

Ordination of Apostle Peter Des-simoz as District Apostle for Switzerland and District Elder Burdu Komba Gborie as Apostle for Sierra Leone

Publications

Our Family, Volume 1988, No. 17



Pentecost greeting

O Lord, come!

(1 Corinthians 16: part of verse 22)!

22 May 1988 - Fellbach near Stuttgart (Germany)

Chief Apostle's remarks on the Pentecost greeting for 1988

Dear brothers and sisters, when a change happens somewhere and a new man receives the commission to continue a certain task, people expect at the time of his appointment that he make a statement to indicate what he plans to do in the future. I can imagine that the children of God have the same expectation in this morning hour, even the many hundreds of thousands who are not connected but are united with us in Spirit. I will tell you my "agenda". It is old and yet completely new, because our heavenly Father has placed this thought into my soul in this morning hour. The agenda is

"Marana tha! O Lord, come!"

That was the greeting of our brothers and sisters in the early church. They hoped, believed, and prayed that it might happen in their lifetime. Today we know that this was not possible because the latter temple—whose glory shall be much greater than the former (Haggai 2:9)—still needed to be built. Brother, sister, let us remember: the Lord is coming! Let us strive to be worthy when He returns. Let us seek the last souls every day and bring them in, so that



He will not have to delay His return by one moment because the number of those who are chosen for the marriage feast of the Lamb is not yet filled. ■



Pentecost 1987

Setting

A total of 40 Apostles from Europe came to Frankfurt for the feast of Pentecost 1987.

Bible text

...in Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of your inheritance unto the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.
(Ephesians 1: 13-14)

Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Hans Urwyler, District Apostles Hermann Engelauf (North Rhine-Westphalia), Richard Fehr (Switzerland), and Michael Kraus (Canada)

Core thoughts

"The Holy Spirit gives us the right to be children of God. Dear brothers and sisters, to be God's own is certainly the greatest thing that can happen to a human being. God created mankind. They were His own. But they turned away from Him. And the result was something that is still clear in my mind from Sunday School when we as children used to sing: "Darkness soon will gather round us if we turn away from Him. Soon our steps will be uncertain and our light of joy grow dim." I still remember getting goose bumps whenever I would sing this song as a child. I always thought: heavenly Father, don't ever let that happen to me! Let me never turn away from you!"

Retirement

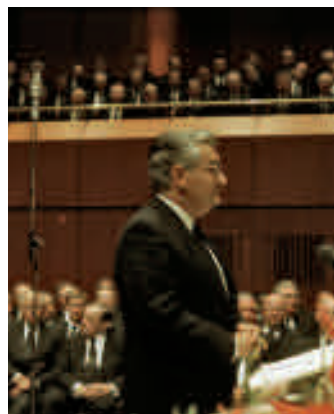
Retirement of Bishop Emil Rapp

Ordinations

Ordination of Volker Kühnle and Bernd Dittus into the Bishop's ministry

Publications

Our Family, Volume 1987, No. 17



7 June 1987—Frankfurt/Main (Germany)

Pentecost greeting from the Chief Apostle for Pentecost 1987

On today's feast of Pentecost, there are again many among us that, just a year ago, I was not yet able to address as children of God. Let us bid them a warm welcome as they join those of us who have been privileged to have received the gift of the Holy Spirit already years or decades ago.

We all had to first of all believe in Him whom God had sent, namely His Son, but then also in those whom the Son of God had sent. Jesus said to His contemporaries: "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent" (John 6: 29). That has not changed. From this faith came the knowledge



of that which Jesus explained to Nicodemus: "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3: 3). Not only was their faith strengthened after receiving the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands and the prayers of a living Apostle, but also much of that which they had believed before then became clear knowledge.



Apostle Peter also needed some time before he was able to attest: "Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (John 6: 69).

Faith had by this time become solid knowledge. Only then was the Lord Jesus able to say to His disciples: "To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God..." (Mark 4: 11). God's work of redemption did not stand still. Later on, the early Apostles were able to say: "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God..." (Romans 8: 28).

Or

"For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Corinthians 5: 1). This gives us confidence for our daily lives, even if we have to go through trials, sickness, and tribulations. Our faith has become the know-

ledge: "... that the Lord Jesus will return as surely as He ascended into heaven and that He will take to Himself the firstfruits of the dead and living who have hoped for and were prepared for His coming", as it says in the Ninth Article of Faith...

In the gospel of Matthew, chapter 25, verse 13, we can read about something we do not yet know: "... for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming."

For this reason, let us wait daily and be watchful.

With heartfelt greetings and in oneness with all the Apostles

Yours,

Hans Urwyler

Source: Word of Life, Volume 61

Insert dated 1 June 1987 ■

Pentecost 1986

Setting

All European District Apostles and Apostles, as well as District Apostle J.R. Kitching (South Africa—Pretoria) and Apostle Urs Hebeisen, were invited to Heilbronn for the celebration of Pentecost 1986. The divine service was transmitted to 1,294 congregations in Europe and, for the first time, also to Argentina, Malawi, and South East Africa.

Bible text

Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.
(Acts 8: 17)

Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Hans Urwyler, District Apostles Richard Fehr (Switzerland), Robert Higelin (France), Fritz Nehrkorn (Saxony-Thuringia), Arno Steinweg (Lower Saxony)

Core thoughts

“Dearly beloved brothers and sisters, it is our great joy at Pentecost that we have the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, the power from on high, is able to make a new being out of us. ... I know that in some of you this change has already progressed to such an extent that it is obvious.”

Ordinations

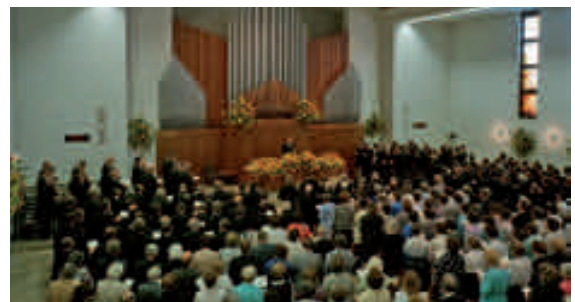
Ordination of Theodor Hirschi (Switzerland) and Simon B. Marena (South Africa) to the Apostle ministry

Ordination of Bruno Bühler into the Bishop ministry.



Publications

Our Family, Volume 1986, No. 16



18 May 1986 - Heilbronn / Pfühl (Germany)

Pentecost greeting from the Chief Apostle for Pentecost 1986

Dearly beloved brothers and sisters,

This is the fifth time that I address God's children around the globe in this way at Pentecost. As I do so, I am deeply moved in my soul: the eternal God, our heavenly Father, has poured out a rich blessing in this past year. A great many human beings on all continents of this earth have been able to experience the same thing that many of the inhabitants of Samaria experienced. The Holy Scripture tells us about this in Acts:

"Now when the Apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptised in the name of the Lord Je-

sus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit" (Acts 8: 14-17)

When I read these words, I am even more moved in my soul. I am deeply thankful that this not only happened in the early history of the kingdom of God, but that we, who are permitted by grace to be children of God, have also been permitted to experience it in our time. We are also very thankful that many have been added in yonder realms.

The message for this year, which has been our guide for almost half a year, speaks to the point:

"Walk as children of light—for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth—finding out what is acceptable to the Lord" (Ephesians 5: 9-10).



Without these fruits of the Holy Spirit we cannot be perfected for the day of the return of the bridegroom of our soul. We realise the depth of the words of Apostle Paul to the Ephesians:

"And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption" (Ephesians 4: 30).

We are joyful on this day of Pentecost that we are permitted to be one people, one flock, as well as God's elect, His saints and beloved, as Paul already called the brothers and sisters of the early church.

In oneness with the Apostles around the world, I greet you all, my dear co-workers and ministers, and my dearly beloved brothers and sisters in all countries.

Yours,

Hans Urwyler

Source: Word of Life, Volume 60

Insert dated 15 May 1986 ■



Pentecost 1985

Setting

Twenty-five Apostles from Europe, as well as District Apostle Bianchi, Apostles Mario Fiore and Guillermo J. Vilor from Argentina, and Apostle Isaak Kankam from Ghana, were invited to the feast of Pentecost in Zurich.

Bible text

But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.
(Acts 7: 55, excerpt)

Core thoughts

"I have also read another beautiful message: 'for the Spirit, which is a Spirit of glory and of God, rests upon you.' Dr. Martin Luther expressed this very beautifully and poetically. But the Holy Spirit is not merely to 'rest' in you and me in the same way that one puts something beautiful into a glass cabinet. You enjoy looking at it but it rests in there from now until eternity. That is not what is meant here. The Holy Spirit does not rest or stop. On the contrary, the Holy Spirit has made it possible for many in our time to be so moved by His activity that the words, 'But

seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness' are more than just a religious verse from the Bible."

Ordinations

Ordinations of Tussi Balume and Bernhard Meier (Switzerland) to the Apostle ministry

Ordination of Bishop Boniquet for Spain

Publications

Our Family, Volume 1985, No. 16



Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Hans Urwyler, District Apostles Richard Fehr (Switzerland), Robert Higelin (France), Pablo Alfredo Bianchi (Argentina), Arno Steinweg (Lower Saxony), and Wilhelm Pusch (Berlin)





Pentecost greeting from the Chief Apostle for Pentecost 1985

My dearly beloved ministers, dearly beloved brothers and sisters in all congregations,

The prophet Haggai (whose name means “festive” in our language) spoke of a latter temple, which would be filled with glory. The glory of this latter temple shall be even greater than the former (Haggai 2: 7, 9).

Glory is visible!

A portion of this was already visible on 20 February of this year, when all the District Apostles of the world were with me in Zurich. If it is already written in the book of Revelation (21: 24) that the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and that the kings of the

earth will bring their glory and honour into it, then this state of glory must have had a beginning at some point in time.

Its beginnings already lie far in the past. This state of glory has reached increasing perfection over the past decades. This is my greatest joy at Pentecost! May the day soon come when not only the District Apostles but all the Apostles, ministers, and brothers and sisters will be together with the Lord! Then said the words of Apostle Paul will be fulfilled:

“Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will

sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”

The eternal God and Father laid the foundation for this when He sent Jesus and poured out the Holy Spirit.

We are waiting for this event. I pray that we may all be worthy and that the time may be shortened. With heartfelt greetings I remain

Yours,

Hans Urwyler

Source: Word of Life, Volume 59

Insert dated 15 May 1985 ■

Pentecost 1984



do not grieve the Holy Spirit if we build heaven into our souls. This is a very simple explanation. In us is a part of earth, but also a part of heaven. The Lord wants to move both, so that in the end, heaven can gain the upper hand, because earth will not be changed."

Ordinations

None

Setting

More than 27,000 participants experienced the feast of Pentecost 1984 together with the Chief Apostle, 15 District Apostles, and 25 Apostles in Dortmund's Westfalenhallen. The divine service was transmitted to 790 receiving stations in Europe, Africa, Australia, Canada, and the USA.

stralia), and District Apostle Andrew Fernandes (Zambia)

Publications

Our Family, Volume 1984, No. 17

Core thoughts

"We grieve the Holy Spirit when we build the earth, earthly desires, into our souls. Consequently, we

Bible text

"...do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."
(Ephesians 4: 30)

Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Hans Urwyler, District Apostle Arthur Köhler (Saxony), Apostle Eric de Lisen (Au-



10 June 1984—Dortmund (Germany)

Pentecost greeting from the Chief Apostle for Pentecost 1984

My dearly beloved brethren in all congregations of the world,

Today, on this day of Pentecost 1984, we are all together in one accord, just like the disciples of Jesus were on that first Day of Pentecost. They were filled with the gift of the Holy Spirit. At that time there was only one congregation. Now, there are more than 17,000! We also have the Holy Spirit from God the Father. We have received the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands and the prayer of a living Apostle of Christ.

We not only want to be together in one accord in the congregations on today's feast of Pentecost and at the usual divine service times, but we also want to meet one another in the marriage feast in heaven!



There we will see the Lord and our loved ones who have already preceded us into eternity. The power of the Holy Spirit seeks to make this possible.

In the New Year's Day service, the following words were written into our hearts: "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind!"

This wonderful Spirit from the Father "bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God", wrote Apostle Paul to our brothers and sisters in Rome (Romans 8: 16). And he continues joyfully:

"And if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together."

It is a great joy for me on this day of Pentecost to be able to call you my brothers and sisters and heirs of the glory of God. And it is our earnest desire to remember the words recorded in Revelation 3: 11:

"Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown."

Let us hold on to our crown, even if our heavenly Father permits us to go through trials and tribulations at times. "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not



Pentecost 1984

worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us”, says Apostle Paul (Romans 8: 18).

I greet you with these thoughts from the Holy Spirit, and in oneness with all the Apostles I remain

Yours,

Hans Urwyler

Source: Word of Life, Volume 58

Insert dated 1 June 1984. ■



10 June 1984—Dortmund (Germany)

Impressions 1984



Pentecost 1983

Setting

On Pentecost 1983, all European Apostles were invited to Hamburg to share in the Pentecost service in the city's Congress Centre. The divine service was transmitted to 842 congregations in Europe as well as some overseas countries. For the first time, congregations in Zambia and Zimbabwe were also connected.

Bible text

I came to send fire on the earth...
(Luke 12: 49, excerpt)

Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Hans Urwyler,
District Apostle Andrew Fernandes
(Zambia), Apostle Günther Beck

(Württemberg), and District Apostle
Pablo Alfredo Bianchi (Argentina)

Core thoughts

"Fire consumes. This is probably one of the most important things in our New Apostolic life of faith. The forgiveness of our sins can be compared to this property of fire. The sins that have been forgiven through the absolution spoken by a minister of Christ are forgiven! They are consumed and can never be found again. And that is our good fortune. Those whose sins are forgiven, they are forgiven!"

Ordination of Bishops Klaus-Dieter König (North Rhine-Westphalia) and Carlos Milioto (Uruguay)

Publications

Our Family, Volume 1983, No. 17



22 May 1983—Hamburg (Germany)

Pentecost greeting from the Chief Apostle for Pentecost 1983

My dearly beloved ministers, brothers and sisters in all corners of the world,

This is the fifth feast of Pentecost since Chief Apostle Streckeisen passed into eternity. Chief Apostle Schmidt also passed on at about the same time. Some Apostles have retired or have passed from their working areas on this earth into the beyond. We can see thereby how quickly time passes, and that reminds us of the words

church and it is just as important for the church in the time of completion. We can say that the events surrounding Pentecost in the former days and the events of Pentecost in these latter days both comprised the beginning of the work of redemption by the Apostles of Jesus Christ. So when we look back, we realise more and more how important Pentecost is.

For many years, God's children around the world regarded New

His blessing on our gathering here and give us much joy. And our loved ones from the beyond will join with us as well.

There will be a second highlight in this year. All the Apostles of the world will come together next month. The Apostles will be united for two Sunday divine services, one in Kitchener (Canada), and one in Buffalo (USA). On the Wednesday in between, they will serve in 37 districts throughout North America, Mexico, and Jamaica. Additionally, the Apostles will have several meetings with the Chief Apostle. May our heavenly Father lay His richest blessings also on these plans! We are thankful when all God's children pray to our heavenly Father. It is He who must prepare everything and open ways and doors.

I am very happy to share these thoughts with you concerning the festive days of this year. In spirit I remain united with you, and I greet you with the words given to us by the Lord for this year. They are recorded in Romans 12: 12:

**“Rejoicing in hope, patient
in tribulation, continuing
steadfastly in prayer.”**

Yours,

Hans Urwyler

Source: Word of Life, Volume 57

Insert dated 15 May 1983 ■



in Matthew 24: 22: “...but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.” During this time, new Apostles have joined the harvest activity on various continents. There is a great hurry to bring the last souls in and seal them with the Holy Spirit.

One hundred and fifty years ago, the Holy Spirit was poured out for the second time, just as it had been foretold in the Bible. This event was extremely important for the early

Year's Day as the day for the most important divine service with the Chief Apostle. However, these services were never transmitted outside of Europe. Almost imperceptibly, the emphasis has now shifted to Pentecost. At the same time, it has become possible to transmit the services to all five continents wherever technology permits. This fills my soul with great joy. I know that the Apostles and all of God's children are just as happy about this. May our heavenly Father lay

Pentecost 1982

Setting

A total of 40 Apostles had come to Böblingen to celebrate the feast of Pentecost 1982. For the first time, the divine service was transmitted to all continents where English was spoken, specifically 822 congregations in Europe, 52 in North America, 63 in South Africa, eleven in Australia, and one in Hawaii.

Due to the severe weather conditions on New Year's Day 1982, many brothers and sisters had been unable to come to church, and so the leaders of the Church had decided that the most important divine service by transmission would, in future, be held on Pentecost, the birthday of the church of Christ. Also for the first time, Chief Apostle Urwyler had written a greeting for this feast of Pentecost, which was read at the beginning of the divine service in all the congregations around the world.

Bible text

And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.
(Luke 24: 45)

Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Hans Urwyler, District Apostles Richard Fehr (Switzerland), Arthur Köhler (Saxony), Gottfried Rockenfelder (Hesse), and Apostle Helmut König (Saxony-Anhalt)

Core thoughts

“Let me reverse our Bible word for today: he who is one spirit with Him is joined to the Lord. He is so closely connected with Him that he prays every day: ‘Lord, shorten the time, send Your Son to whom I am joined, and take me in grace.’”

Ordinations

Ordination of Willy de Smedt (South Africa) to the Apostle ministry

Ordination of Bishops Botha and Maree (South Africa—Pretoria) and Kardiman Hadiwidagdo (Indonesia)

Publications

Our Family, Volume 1982, No. 15



30 May 1982—Böblingen (Germany)



Pentecost greeting from the Chief Apostle for Pentecost 1982

My dearly beloved ministers, and brothers and sisters in all nations and countries of the world,

Everyone who ever walked the face of this earth has had a birthday. Children of God have two, namely the day of their natural birth and the day when they were reborn. When we look at God's work of redemption, we can see a similarity. The day the Son of God took on flesh was the first step, and the day the Holy Spirit was poured out was the second.

In the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord Jesus talked about the degree of perfection that His own are to attain: "therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5: 48). In order to attain this state of perfection it is necessary to have both birthdays.

God started this work when He poured out the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, following the Ascension of Christ into heaven, on the birthday of the early church. On that memorable day in the history

of the work of God, 3,000 souls received the gift of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands of the Apostles. Holy Scripture tells us so.

We are very thankful that on this feast of Pentecost, we not only look back on this historic event, but we remember—each and every one of us as individuals—our own New Apostolic birthday,

when we were reborn in order to become a child of God. This

Pentecost 1982



transmitted to all continents where English is spoken. Our hearts are moved and we are deeply thankful. This is another step towards perfection.

Source: Word of Life, Volume 56

Insert dated 15 May 1982 ■

prompts a question in my heart: what has the Lord been able to do upon my soul, upon me as a human being, and upon me as a child of God? Apostle Paul wrote to the brothers and sisters in Corinth: "But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him" (1 Corinthians 6: 17).

Let me reverse our Bible word for today: "he who is one spirit with Him, is joined to the Lord!" He is so closely connected with Him that he prays every day: "Lord, shorten the time, send Your Son to whom I am

joined, and take me in grace!" Dearly beloved, I greet you all with these words, and wish you a richly blessed feast of Pentecost in the house of the Lord.

Yours,

Hans Urwyler

Note

Our hearts are filled with a very special joy on this day of Pentecost. For the first time in the history of our church, this divine service is being



30 May 1982—Böblingen (Germany)



Impressions 1982

Pentecost 1981

Setting

Divine service and transmission to Western Europe. A total of 34 Apostles were present..

Bible text

When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

(Acts 2: 1)

Officiant / Called to assist

Chief Apostle Hans Urwyler, District Apostles Andrew Fernandes (Zambia), Siegfried Karnick (Saxony-Anhalt), Klaus Sauer (Baden), Michael Kraus (Canada)

Core thoughts

"I look into our time and I read the words again: 'And when the Day of Pentecost'—and permit me to insert the year 1981 here—'had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.' Who are 'all' of these? They have become a multitude, a multitude of many peoples, tongues, and nations. And this multitude is not only comprised of the souls we see here in the flesh today! Our loved ones from the beyond also belong to this multitude."



Ordinations

Ordination of Richard Fehr into the ministry of District Apostle for Switzerland



Publications

Our Family, Volume 1981, No. 16



7 June 1981 — Berne (Switzerland)

Pentecost greeting from the Chief Apostle for Pentecost 1981

My dearly beloved brothers and sisters in all parts of the world,

One year ago, on the day of Pentecost 1980, the Apostles of the Lord were together in Switzerland. This meeting brought about much blessing and joy. This blessing and joy was then spread to all the congregations and districts.

In addition to several smaller meetings that the Apostles will have this year, two larger gatherings promise to increase this blessing:

In the middle of May, I conducted an Apostle meeting for all the Apostles in the working area of District Apostle Kraus. It was held in Kitchener, Canada. Several Apostles from Europe accompanied me. The divine service on that Sunday was transmitted all over the USA and Canada.

Today's feast of Pentecost was an opportunity to meet with all the Apostles of Europe. For the first time in many years, they had conducted the services at the end of the year 1980 and the beginning of the year 1981 in their own districts. The usual transmission of the divine service on 1 January to the districts of Western Europe which, in the past years, included Scandinavia, did not take place this year. This transmission is taking place today, on the birthday of the church of Christ. This is a special joy for me. It is now also possible for those brothers and sisters to participate who had to miss the divine service for the New Year due to inclement winter weather conditions in the mountains, and especially also in the Northern parts of Europe. On New Year's Day 1979, 10,000 brothers and sisters were unable to make it to the service.

For the first time, at the threshold from last year to this year, the same Bible text was used in all congregations around the world for the year end service and the New Year's Day service, namely the same Bible text which I used for the services in Vienna. At the same time, all the children of God worldwide received a greeting from Psalm 26: 6: "So I will go about Your altar, O Lord."

Today, on the day of Pentecost 1981, it will be the same. The same Bible text that I have read will be used in all the congregations around the world. The Apostles and I, who are together here in Berne, unite our hearts with our brothers and sisters of all tongues and nations and peoples, especially on this day. We know that this connection reaches deep into the realms of eternity.

May the Holy Spirit, who works through all the ministers, lay into these vessels the bread of life which is necessary for our perfection and completion!

In heartfelt unity with you all I greet you warmly, and remain

Yours,

Hans Urwyler

Source: Word of Life, Volume 55

Insert dated 1 June 1981 ■





New Apostolic Church

