

Divine Service



Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider

(uncorrected)

Date	Sunday, 28 May 2023
Place / Country	Tafelsig Church in Cape Town, South Africa
Apostle District area	John L Kriel
Bible word	“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.” (2 Timothy 1:7)
Opening Hymn	(EH: 45) Let us sing with joyful voices
Accompanied by	All the District Apostles and District Apostle Helpers from around the world
Called to assist	DAH John Schnabel; DAH Peter Lambert
Sacraments	Holy Communion; Serving of Holy Communion for the departed
Attendance	2435
Remarks	Divine service conducted in English

Opening Hymn: 45 Let us sing with joyful voices

Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider:

Opening Prayer:

In the name of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, Almighty God, God of grace and God of mercy, dear Heavenly Father, on this festive day, we gather together in a great circle here, in all the connected congregations, here on earth and in the yonder world. And we want to worship You together and to praise Your holy name and to thank You for Your love and for the work of Your love. We thank You for the work of salvation. We thank You for having sent Your beloved Son. We thank You for having sent Your Holy Spirit to save us. We thank You for Your patience and for Your faithfulness. We thank You for Your grace and for Your kindness. We thank You for the future You've prepared for all of us, without exception. You want us to be in eternity with You in Your kingdom. And we thank You for the knowledge we've got through the Holy Spirit. We know that You love us, and we know that You have prepared everything needed for our salvation. We thank You for Your help in our daily life. We thank You for Your guidance. We thank You for all the prayers You've already answered. We thank You for the fellowship of the children of God we can experience. Dear Heavenly Father, we thank You also that we can come to You to express our wishes and our prayers and our needs. We want to pray together for all those who have to bear a heavy burden. We want to pray all together for all those who are suffering, whatever their suffering consists of. Dear Heavenly Father, we cannot say everything. This prayer would be too long. But let everyone know that he is not forgotten. Please let all those who are suffering, who are moaning, experience Your presence, Your love and Your help. Take care of all the human beings, whoever they are, wherever they are. You know their sufferings. Please help them as soon as possible. Now, dear Heavenly Father, You know also the needs and the longings of Your children. Please grant us Your grace, Your peace, Your joy. Strengthen our faith and let us experience the power of Your Holy Spirit. Allow our beloved ones from the yonder world to join us and grant us much more than we can express in this short prayer. Hear us in Jesus' name. Amen.

Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider:

My dear brothers and sisters, for this feast of Pentecost, we have a Bible word out of the Second Epistle of Timothy 1:7, "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."

Please be seated.

Choir: Give me more, Lord, of Thy nature (HC:201)

Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider:

Beloved brothers and sisters, it's definitely a great joy to celebrate this holy feast of Pentecost in such a great and wonderful circle. If we think about all those who are connected with us today, we are thankful to our Heavenly Father that He made it possible to celebrate Pentecost in such a great circle. We commemorate today, as you know, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and what we call the birth of the church of Christ. And I think it's nice, and even useful, to listen once more to the story of Pentecost, to hear how the Bible reports or talks about this great event. And so, I invite our sister, Maxine Peters, to read us out of the Acts of the Apostles.

Bible reading:

The Bible reading is from Acts 2:1 to 13. 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 of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs - we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God." So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "Whatever could this mean? Others mocking said, "They are full of new wine."

Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider:

Thank you so much. Choir, please.

Choir, children's choir & orchestra: Holy Spirit

Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider:

Thank you. Yes, dear brothers and sisters, now we have heard the story, what the Bible tells about Pentecost, what happened. Now, it may be useful also to recollect the meaning of this great event and the purpose of the whole thing. As usual, everything begins with the love of God. That's the beginning of everything. The Almighty God loves mankind, and in His love, He wants to make accessible to men the fellowship of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. And that's the purpose of the love of God. He wants man to have access to the fellowship of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. And for this purpose, He has sent God the Son on earth to open the gate to salvation, to grant access to men to salvation, to the fellowship with God. And Jesus Christ opened this gate through His sacrifice. Then, Jesus Christ went to heaven, and then God the Spirit was sent on earth to continue this work of salvation. And today, the Holy Spirit is still at work on earth to make this salvation accessible. And God the Holy Spirit is working to sanctify men and to prepare them for the return of Jesus Christ, when Jesus Christ will come back to take His own in His kingdom, where they will have eternal fellowship with God. That's the work done by the Holy Spirit today. And this work is done in the church. That's where the Holy Spirit fulfils His mission, mainly through the Apostolate. Through the Apostolate in the church, the Holy Spirit sanctifies us and prepares us to enter the fellowship with God. The first man who entered this fellowship with God was Jesus Christ, the risen one. He was the first man who was allowed, who was enabled to enter eternal fellowship with God. And as a matter of fact, if we want to enter eternal fellowship with God, we have to become like Jesus Christ. To be with Christ in eternity, we have to become like Christ. That means to think as He thinks, to work as He worked, and to become like Him. That's the way we have to follow. If we want to be in eternity with Christ, we have to become like Him, to think like Him, to work like Him, to be like Him.

And who was, who is Jesus Christ? Jesus Christ is the loving one and is the serving one.

He was sent on earth to serve, to serve God and to serve His neighbour, as I said, to open the gate to salvation. Jesus Christ went back to his Father. And what does He do in heaven? He continues to serve. He intercedes for us. He helps us. He serves us. Thus, to become like Jesus Christ, to think, to work, to be like Him, we have to be the loving ones and the serving ones. And that's why we are called to serve, not because God needs our help. The Almighty God, He managed to create heaven and earth out of nothing. So, imagine, He doesn't need me to fulfil His work. He can do without me. It's not about God needs man to help Him. God needs nobody. But I need to serve to become like Jesus Christ, because that's the only way for me to enter the eternal fellowship with God. I want to become like Christ, so I want to become the serving one. And what does it mean to serve? Like Jesus Christ did, to help others to be saved, to contribute to the work of salvation, to make sure that salvation remains accessible for men, and thus that we have to proclaim the Gospel through our works and conduct, for people to know about Jesus Christ, to know about the possibility to enter the kingdom of God. And we have to make sure that salvation remains accessible in the church, so to make sure that the Gospel is proclaimed, that the forgiveness of sins is pronounced, that the sacraments can be dispensed, that one can experience the fellowship of the saints in the church. That's the meaning. That's why we have to serve. If we want to reign one day with Christ, we have to become like Him and to serve as He served. But for sure, I can hear many voices that say, yes, but in the meantime, it became so difficult. People are no longer interested in God. They are not interested in faith. They don't need God. They can do without Him. And being a witness of Jesus Christ, that's quite impossible today. You have no chance, and it's so complicated, and the church has no chance to survive, and oh my God. And others say, well, it's nice, yes, yes, but not me. I cannot. I'm not able to do that. I am too weak. I am too small. Others say, you know, I'm so busy with myself. I have so many problems to deal with. I have no strength and no possibility to serve and to contribute to the functioning of the church. I have no possibility to contribute to the salvation of others.

Then comes the Bible word of today. Don't fear. God has not given us a spirit of fear. Through the gift of the Holy Spirit, all of us, we have been enabled to serve the Lord and to fulfil our mission. The translation is different in the different languages. Here, in this English version, it's about God has not given us a spirit of fear. In other languages, it's a spirit of timidity, in some versions, even a spirit of cowardice. That's said very clearly. But it's the same. Not a spirit of fear, not a spirit of timidity, not a spirit of cowardice. That means don't be frightened. Don't fear. Don't lose your courage. The coward is the one, as soon as it becomes difficult, he gives up, or he loses his courage. Don't be a coward. Don't shy away from your mission. Believe in the gift of the Holy Spirit. Believe in your Holy Sealing. Believe it. God has enabled you to become like Jesus Christ in the sense that you can serve as Jesus Christ served and you can love as Jesus Christ loved. You are enabled to do this through the Holy Spirit. And this Holy Spirit is a spirit of power. And the Holy Spirit is described as the power of God. That's the action, the deeds of God. Through the Holy Spirit, God expresses His might, His power. Remember, the church is not a work of man. The church is the work of the Holy Spirit. If it would be a work of man, it would no longer exist, because we know man and what he's able to do and especially what he's not able to do. The church would no longer exist if it would have been a work of man. But it's the work of the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is the power of God. So, nothing can hinder the Holy Spirit to fulfil His mission. And the church will overcome death. Nobody can hinder the Holy Spirit to fulfil His mission in the church. And we have received the gift of the Holy Spirit as Jesus Christ as man received the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was with Him. And it says that the Holy Spirit enabled Jesus to overcome evil and to raise from the dead. And Paul says, and if this Spirit dwells in you, lives in your heart, you can do what seems to be impossible to man, because it's the same power. If the Spirit who enabled Jesus Christ to overcome evil and to raise from the dead lives in you, you can do what Jesus wants you to do. Just believe it. It's not depending on your ability. It's depending on your willingness. If you believe, you can do it. And don't fear. The work done in the Spirit will never be in vain.

May I repeat it? The work done in the Holy Spirit will never be done in vain. Don't fear. It's a spirit of power that dwells in you. It's also a spirit of love. Oh, I know when we talk about love, sometimes it's misunderstood, because, ah, we think about love between man and woman, between parents and children. And that's not exactly that. The love of God is much more than just emotion and feelings. The love of God is a strong commitment, still the beginning. God loves man, and He does everything to save man, to lead man into the fellowship with Him. The love of God is a strong commitment. The love of God is a self-sacrificial one, a self-sacrificial energy. That's the love of God. That's much more than just feeling and emotions. And Paul says that this love has been poured out in our hearts when we received the sacrament of the Holy Sealing. I like this expression, has been poured out. The love of God has been poured out in our heart. We didn't get just a few drops, drop, drop, drop, that's it. No. The love of God has been poured out in our heart so that it may fill all our being, all our heart and soul. God has given us the maximum you can get. That's the meaning of this sentence. The love of God has been poured out through the Holy Spirit in your heart. That means that when you have received the gift of the Holy Spirit, God has given you the maximum of love man can receive. That's the meaning. God cannot do more for you. You have received the maximum of love through the gift of the Holy Spirit. And once we are aware of that, we believe it, then our answer is quite clear. Then we are grateful to God, and we love him, because He is so kind and so gracious. His love is so great for us, we cannot but answer His love. And so, everything we do, we do it for the Lord, for God, out of gratitude. And that makes us strong. We serve not because we are forced to. We serve out of love and out of gratitude. And as a matter of fact, we are no longer depending on the reaction of people. We are not depending on their gratitude, on their consideration. We are not depending on the success of our work. We are not depending on the glory or the success we get or not. That's independent. Our serving really becomes unwavering because it's just motivated by our gratitude. So, whatever happens, whatever people do, if they thank us or not, or if they criticise us or not, if we are successful or not, that does no longer matter. We do it for the Lord out of love and out of gratitude. And that makes us strong and able to serve, whatever happens. And we serve and we love as Jesus wants us to love and to serve, and so that's our wish, our will, to contribute to the salvation of others. We do want others to receive the same grace, the same gift, and to enter the fellowship with God as we are able to do. And for this, we serve the Lord in the church, and we just want to make sure that salvation remains accessible for every believer who wants to come to the Lord. It's not our task to force him to come, but it's our task to make sure that once somebody has decided to come to Jesus, that he can listen to the proclamation of the Gospel, that he can receive forgiveness of his sins, that he can receive the sacraments, that he can experience a Divine Service, that he can experience the fellowship of the children of God. And brothers and sisters, that's our deep motivation to serve in the church, each one at his place. We serve the Lord to thank Him, to express our love and gratitude for Him. We serve the Lord because we love our neighbour, and our task consists in making sure that whatever happens, salvation remains accessible in church, that those who want can hear the preaching of the Gospel, can receive the sacraments, receive forgiveness of sins, experience the presence of God in the midst of his own. The Spirit of love.

And then he said the third attribute of the Spirit, here in English, it's the spirit of a sound mind. Again, in other translations, it's the spirit of wisdom, and in other translations, and I like it, it's the spirit of self-control, but the meaning is quite the same. A sound mind, self-control, wisdom. The Holy Spirit is a spirit of sound mind because He reminds us, don't worry, you are just a tool. Actually, the work is done by God, and you are just a tool. You are just a servant. Jesus said, even use this servant, because it does not depend on you, but it's for you that you serve the Lord, because you want to become like Jesus. So don't think too highly of yourself. And if we listen to the Holy Spirit, then we have a sound mind, and we do not think too highly of ourselves.

The Chief Apostle, the District Apostle, the brother, the sister, the child, the young boy, the

young... Everybody, a sound mind. It's not about me. God does. I'm just a servant. I know we preach this. We have been preaching this for years, but sometimes I wonder, did I get it really? Do I really believe it? A sound mind. God does. We are just tools. A spirit of self-control. What does it mean? Well, that's very easy to explain. The Spirit tells us, hey, don't forget, do to your neighbour what you want others to do to you. Nothing new but think about if really this thought lives in our heart because we allow the Holy Spirit to tell us, hey, don't forget, do to your neighbour what you want others to do to you. Then we have enough self-control. That's very helpful, a spirit of self-control. A spirit of wisdom. The Holy Spirit allows us also to discern the spirits, as He did for Jesus when Jesus was tempted. You remember the story? The devil came and wanted to tempt Jesus. And the devil came even, and he quoted the scripture. Imagine. The devil had his own interpretation of the scripture. And with this interpretation, he came to Jesus, it's said in the scripture. But with the help of the Holy Spirit, Jesus could recognise, that's not the will of my Father. And He could recognise also the motivation of the devil, even if he quoted the scriptures, that no, no, no, no, that's not okay. Your motivation is not a pure one. The same for us, dear brothers and sisters. We have received the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit dwells in our heart and teaches us through the preaching during the Divine Service. Let us use it to discern the spirits, even if they quote the scripture. If something comes from the Holy Spirit, then this thought or this deed produces love, peace and joy, kindness and self-control. That's the definition of Paul. So, each time something happens, something is said, something is published, please check. If it comes from the Holy Spirit, then it produces peace, love, joy, kindness and self-control. And with this tool, it's very easy to discern the spirit, a spirit of power, a spirit of love, a spirit of a sound mind, of wisdom and self-control.

Dear brothers and sisters, let us put it in a nutshell. Our goal is to enter eternal fellowship with Jesus Christ. To be able to enter this fellowship, we have to become like Jesus Christ. And Jesus Christ is the loving one and the serving one. Because we have received the gift of the Holy Spirit, we are enabled to serve the Lord, serve God and to serve in the church with the spirit of power, of love and of wisdom. God wants us to become like Jesus, and with His help, we can become like Him. It's just a question, do you really want it? Amen.

Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider:

Now, you see there are plenty of District Apostles, District Apostle Helpers. Oh, there are some new faces in this circle, and maybe it's the opportunity to introduce them. We've got a new District Apostle Helper in the USA. That's District Apostle Helper John Schnabel. Nobody knows him, though it's easy for me now. Everybody will know him. I ask him to serve along. And let's sing together out of the first one, out of the hymn number 74, "At the feet of Jesus".

Congregation & organ: At the feet of Jesus (EH:74)

District Apostle Helper John Schnabel:

Dear brothers and sisters, it's an immense privilege to be together with you and to receive this word. I think I have a lot of homework to do. It's to improve on the love of God that comes out of my heart, that has been poured into my heart. When the Chief Apostle says the love of God has been poured into our heart, not little drops, we have knowledge that we are the children of God. But in moments like this, with His word and with His sacraments, we feel it in an unbelievable way. If a child is with their parents and they're walking down the street, they're probably very secure, and they're holding the hand of that parent. But if the parent stops, picks up that child and hugs it, its position as a child hasn't changed, but the feeling has changed. And the embrace that we have received now says, now you become like Jesus Christ. I will not only give you and equip you with the ability to do that, but you will have the power to do that. I thought of the Lord Jesus, the last moments He was really with

his disciples before He would give His life. And I think He thought, what's the last message I'm going to give these guys? And He washed their feet, if you recall. He kneeled down and He washed their feet. This is the message He wanted. He wanted that they would love one another as they have been loved. And as the Chief Apostle said, it's not a love of human love, which is very often mixed up with attraction. No, it was the sacrificial love that the Lord showed, and He washed their feet. And you know, brothers and sisters, the feet, I don't know, it's one of my least desirable features. I don't know how yours are. Yes. But He washed their feet. Why? I think this was a picture of the Lord showing the disciples, I know what you can be. I know, if the Holy Spirit works through you, I know what you... I have a picture already in my mind of what you will be when I come again. I have a picture of you completed. And He says, now, you wash each other's feet, you deal with some of these things. And it's because you have the same wish. You want your brother to be with you on the day of the Lord. You want your sister to be with you on the day of the Lord. He has that same feeling. So, brothers and sisters, are we so loving? The Chief Apostle said, yes, we have to be a little bit self-forgetful. It cannot always be about us. We must start the day thinking, Lord, now what is it that I can do in Your hand? We must be the people of Matthew 25. At the end, it says that you gave the Lord to drink, to eat, you visited Him, you did all these things. When did you do these things? I don't know about you, brothers and sisters, but when I go visit somebody, I'm aware of it. These people weren't even aware of what they were doing. Why? Because it was in their nature. The Spirit had taken control. They didn't have to think about it. They were lost in this love. And that is our opportunity as well. Brothers and sisters, the Holy Spirit has been poured into your heart and soul. Let it out, and we will receive much in doing and giving. Amen.

Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider:

So that was the new one from the USA. In Africa too, you have got a new District Apostle Helper. I know you know him, but worldwide, he's not yet known. That's District Apostle Helper Peter Lambert from South Africa. He may serve us. And, oh, you've prepared something beautiful, as usual. Please.

Choir & organ: Holy Spirit, O Light divine

District Apostle Helper Peter Lambert

My dear brothers and sisters, Chief Apostle said he's introducing the new faces. And you know when you are introduced, you're supposed to say, pleased to meet you. I'm not so sure that I'm pleased to meet you in this way. Yes. Chief Apostle spoke in the beginning about becoming like Christ. And that requires transformation. Because I'm sure, if each one looks at... If we look at ourselves, I'm the first one to say I am so far from the nature of Christ. There is so much transformation that must take place. And the only power that can help me transform into the nature of Christ, is the power of the Holy Spirit. But transformation means radical change, not just a little bit of change. It means radical change. And we know that wherever there is change, there is resistance to change. We see that in the world of work. People resist change. And the resistance to change is rooted in fear. We heard this morning; you have not received the spirit of fear. But resistance to change is rooted in fear. I'm afraid that I'm going to lose whatever is precious to me. I'm afraid I'm going to lose my security, I'm going to lose my privilege, I'm going to lose my power, lose my freedom, whatever it may be. It's rooted in fear. And today, we hear that the Holy Spirit helps us to overcome that fear, because to transform and to overcome the old nature, it means I must accept that I'm going to fight the resistance in my old nature. In our country here in South Africa, there is unfortunately often a fear of speaking out against things that are illegal, things that are evil. And people fear that because there is a consequence if you speak up. Again, it comes to fear. I cannot fear the power of evil so much that I prioritise that over becoming

like Christ. I have to overcome that fear. But I cannot do it. The Holy Spirit helps me to do it. Yesterday, we reflected on the history a little bit in our country and focused on slavery. And what came through strongly... And now, we speak of this aspect of power, you've received the spirit of power, and we see that power was exercised without love. Because some people came and exercised power over other people and said, I take away your freedom, I take away your dignity, I take away your rights. That is the exercise of power in the wrong way. And the Holy Spirit says, learn from Jesus Christ, who says, all power is given to Me, and yet He uses his power to serve. He uses his power to heal. He uses his power for us when He doesn't have to, because He already has everything. And dear brothers and sisters, so we also want to learn from that, that I use the power of the Holy Spirit combined with love. And then the sound mind. Again, if we continue this theme, one of the unfortunate outcomes of this wrong use of power is that the injury, the hurt, the resentment, the hatred, it goes from generation to generation. And when you look at the history, then you see that even those who had that power could not hold onto it. Dear brothers and sisters, a sound mind helps me to think about the long-term impact of my actions, of my choices here on earth. But a sound mind as it is given by the Holy Spirit, enables me to consider the eternal consequences of my actions, not just the long-term consequences, not just on what impact it will have in 50 years from now or 100 years from now, but what impact it will have right into the kingdom of God. I must be able to look into your eyes when we sit in the kingdom of God. I must be able to look into your eyes and know that I treated you with love, with dignity, with respect, as Jesus taught, so that there is no more memory of hurt, of injury, of prejudice, anything that does not fit into the kingdom of God. May we use the sound mind to ask ourselves, does my behaviour towards my brother, my sister, my neighbour, today, does it promote an eternity of joyful fellowship, an eternity of peaceful fellowship? Let us use that power today. Amen.

Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider:

Yes, my dear brothers and sisters, I have plenty of other brothers. All of them are excellent. But I just thought, oh, now it's like in the South African restaurants. We have good food here, and then they come with another dish and another dish, and it's excellent, and I'm sure this one is excellent too, but it's just too much for me. And I think, if we have listened to the preaching and if we really want to deal with... As he said, we have enough to do. But you have already prepared, oh yes, we cannot miss that, the children's choir. Yes, we want to listen to you, please.

Children's choir, organ & piano: Search, ponder and pray (B&B 63)

Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider:

Thank you so much. Great. As I said in the beginning, the feast of Pentecost, we want to remind, to recollect the meaning of the whole thing and the mission and the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit reveals us the love of God, the love of Jesus Christ. He teaches us how great Jesus is, how great His love is, and so He creates in us the desire to become like Christ. He teaches us also what is pleasing to God and what is contrary to His will, and as one of the Apostles said, and then we realise we are far away to be like Jesus. And sometimes, we lose our courage and say, we just cannot make it. We cannot make it to become like Jesus, to love like Him, to serve like Him. Then comes the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, who tells us, don't fear. You don't need to become sinless. You cannot become sinless. Jesus Christ was the only one who was without any sin. All you have to do, is to love and to increase and to develop yourself in the love of Christ. The Holy Spirit is our Helper, and He helps us to pray in the right manner and to ask for what makes sense for our salvation. The Holy Spirit tells us, don't pray I want to become perfect. It doesn't work. But the Holy Spirit tells us, pray to increase your love for God and for your neighbour.

And we have in our hymns one hymn, and I thought about this hymn this week, thinking,

that's a wonderful prayer inspired by the Holy Spirit. Thanks God, it exists in most of the languages. In English, it's "Lord, More Would I Love Thee". Let me just read the first verse. Lord, more would I love Thee, hear me, I pray! I make this earnest plea to Thee each day. More, Lord, would I love Thee. O Saviour, more love Thee, still more love Thee, still more love Thee". What a wonderful prayer, inspired by the Holy Spirit. And I would propose that we take a moment to let the Holy Spirit inspire us and to let this prayer, Lord, still more love Thee, still more love Thee, penetrate deeply in our soul, in our heart. Our organist will play this song, and we'll just remain seated for a moment and allow this thought, in silence, to unfold in our soul. Please.

Hymn of Repentance: Organ – Lord, more would I love Thee (EH: 384) (No congregation singing)

Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider:

Now we want to rise and pray the prayer the Lord Jesus taught us.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider:

Absolution

And now I proclaim unto you the glad tidings. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, Your sins are forgiven. The peace of the risen One abide with you. Amen.

Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider:

God of grace and God of mercy, how can we express our gratitude? We thank You for the salvation You offer us. We thank You for the forgiveness of our sins. We thank You for the grace to be children of God. We thank You for Your patience and Your kindness. We thank You for Your love. Dear Heavenly Father, really, we want to love more, to love You more, to love our neighbour more. Please hear our plea and help us to grow into the true nature of Jesus Christ. Bless all the Apostles. Bless the co-workers. Bless all Your church, every and each congregation. Bless Your children. Let them be full of your Spirit and let them experience the power of Your spirit and of Your love. Help us to be a source of blessing for many. Help us to serve steadfastly until the end. Dear Heavenly Father, now we are longing for celebrating Holy Communion. We are longing for experiencing your presence in our midst and receiving the body and the blood of Jesus Christ. We need it. Dear Heavenly Father, let Your Holy Spirit be active in His power, so that this miracle can take place. Hear us in Jesus' name. Amen.

Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider:

And now we shall celebrate Holy Communion. And now the Lord's table is prepared.

Consecration of Holy Communion

In the name of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. I consecrate bread and wine for Holy Communion and lay thereupon the once brought eternally valid sacrifice of Jesus Christ. For the Lord took bread and wine, gave thanks and said, "This is My body which is broken for you. This is My blood of the new covenant given for many for the remission of

sins. Eat and drink. Do this in remembrance of Me. For as often as you eat of this bread and drink of this wine you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes." Amen.

Celebration of Holy Communion

Congregation & organ: When peace with the Father (EH: 400)

Congregation & organ: What a Friend we have in Jesus (EH:226)

District Apostle J Kriel:

My dear brothers and sisters, our Chief Apostle has mentioned our loved ones from yonder world. They too will be served with the blessed sacrament, where the Apostle Mintoor and the Apostle Joubert will serve as the proxies to receive Holy Communion on their behalf.

Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider:

Now, dear brothers and sisters, it's always something very special when we can celebrate Holy Communion for the departed in such a great circle. There are many thoughts raised in our hearts. The Holy Spirit is also working in the yonder world, as He works here on earth. His task is exactly the same. He is the Comforter, He is the Helper, He is the Teacher. For sure, when we think about our beloved ones in the yonder world, we suffer from their absence, and that's absolutely normal. But Paul said, and even we are absent in our body, we are present in Christ. And that's the way it is, actually, in the church. They are absent in their body, but we can be sure they are present in Christ. Through the gift of the Holy Spirit, to quote Paul once more, they have received the guarantee that mortality will be swallowed up by life. And I like this English expression in the English Bible. Mortality will be swallowed up by life. That's the promise of the Holy Spirit also to those in the yonder world and for us. Don't fear. What's mortal will be swallowed up by life. Life will overcome. When we think about our beloved ones, we also feel the need to express our gratitude to them for their serving, for the work they have done. But sometimes, I think that's not what they want us to do. That's not what they expect us to do. Because if we could hear them, they would say, I'm absolutely convinced about that, we thank the Lord, He did it, not we. So, if we really want to be in communion with them today, dear brothers and sisters, let us thank together our God and our Lord and the Holy Spirit for His work. We praise God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit for what He has done for us, for what He does for them, for what He has done through them. Glory be to our God. He's powerful here on earth and in the yonder world. To prepare ourselves for the communion for the departed, let's sing together verse two out of the hymn number 519, "Sing, all you Christians". We remain seated. After Holy Communion has been served for the departed, the male choir will sing.

Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider:

Now, the congregation may rise. The Lord Jesus Christ invites you, our beloved ones from the yonder world, those we know, we have known, those we remember, but also all those that are so many, we do not know, or we have forgotten. Jesus Christ forgets nobody, and He loves each of you as He loves those living on earth. His will is always the same. He's at work to prepare you and us to enter His kingdom. Don't fear. He will come. Come and receive what I lay into the hands and the hearts of the Apostles. The body and the blood of Jesus Christ is given for you, for your peace in Jesus Christ, for your perfect joy in Jesus Christ, and for eternal life, the eternal fellowship with Jesus and His own in His kingdom. Amen.

Conclusion: Holy Communion for the departed – Male choir: The future is in His hands (MCHC: 154)

Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider:

Thank you so much.

Closing Prayer:

Almighty God, dear Heavenly Father, thank You for Your word, for Your grace, for Your peace. Thank You for the communion we could celebrate together, and also with our brothers and sisters from the yonder world. Thank You for Your blessing and for Your love. Once more, we ask You to be especially with all those who are suffering. Please grant them Your help. There are so many people on this earth who are suffering in so many ways. You are the only one who really can help and solve the problem. Please grant them Your help, and then send Your beloved Son and fulfil Your plan of salvation until the new creation, so that all men can have access to salvation. In the meanwhile, dear Heavenly Father, grant us the help we need in our daily life. Bless the offerings and the service of your children and grant them all they need in their daily life. Once more, bless every and each congregation. Let them be full of Your joy, a true joy, the joy in Christ. Grant us much more than we can ask with our words. Hear us in Jesus' name. Amen.

Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider:

Benediction:

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.

Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider:

Please be seated. Choir, please.

Choir, children's choir, and orchestra: Spirit-renewed!

Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider:

Thank you. I'm sorry, I don't have the words in English to express my feelings. It's just great. Thank you. Thank you so much, my dear brothers and sisters. I'm far to imagine all the work that has been done to prepare this feast. And let me be a spokesman of the District Apostles and their Helpers and of all the children of God who were connected. Thank you for all the work you have done. Thank you for serving the Lord in the way you serve Him. Thanks. It was a true blessing. And thank you to all of you, my dear brothers and sisters, for your faithful support, for your prayers and for your love. It's truly a blessing for all of us. Now it's time for me to go home. And I know your District Apostle, on the one hand, he says, oh, it's so sad that you have to go, but behind, he's like, thanks God he goes.

District Apostle J Kriel:

We are not happy for them to go. I think, dear brothers and sisters, we, from our side, want to thank the Chief Apostle and the District Apostles and their Helpers for blessing us in the way that they have. And the fruits thereof will be seen long into the future. We are sorry to see you go. That's from the heart. We wish you could stay a bit longer, but we wish you Godspeed on your way home and your journeys home, that you arrive home safely.

Dear brothers and sisters, our joy, I can speak for all of us, knows no limits, and we are extremely happy. However, we have to leave, and the Chief Apostle and the District Apostles in his party must leave. And so here in Tafelsig, we will sing an exit hymn, 477. We do that while we are seated. And we really have to get going, because there's still some things to do. So together, while we remain seated, we sing together hymn number 477, "The Comforter has come".

Congregation, orchestra, piano & organ: The Comforter has come (EH:477)
