

One

Faith



One

Goal


150 Years
New Apostolic Church
One Faith - One Goal
1863 - 2013



Masthead

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Dear readers,

The year 2013 is of special significance for us as New Apostolic Christians as we celebrate the 150-year anniversary of our Church. This occasion is the reason for the publication of this commemorative brochure, which I hereby lay into your hands.

We look back in admiration and gratitude to our beginnings. Believing men and women managed to accomplish a great deal in the development of this work through great personal commitment and sacrifice. Today it is hard to appreciate how difficult it must have been for them to gain clarity over the path they were to pursue. It can be attributed to the courage of witnesses of faith, both past and pre-

sent, that such a Church has developed, which is today represented all around the world. In this we recognise the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

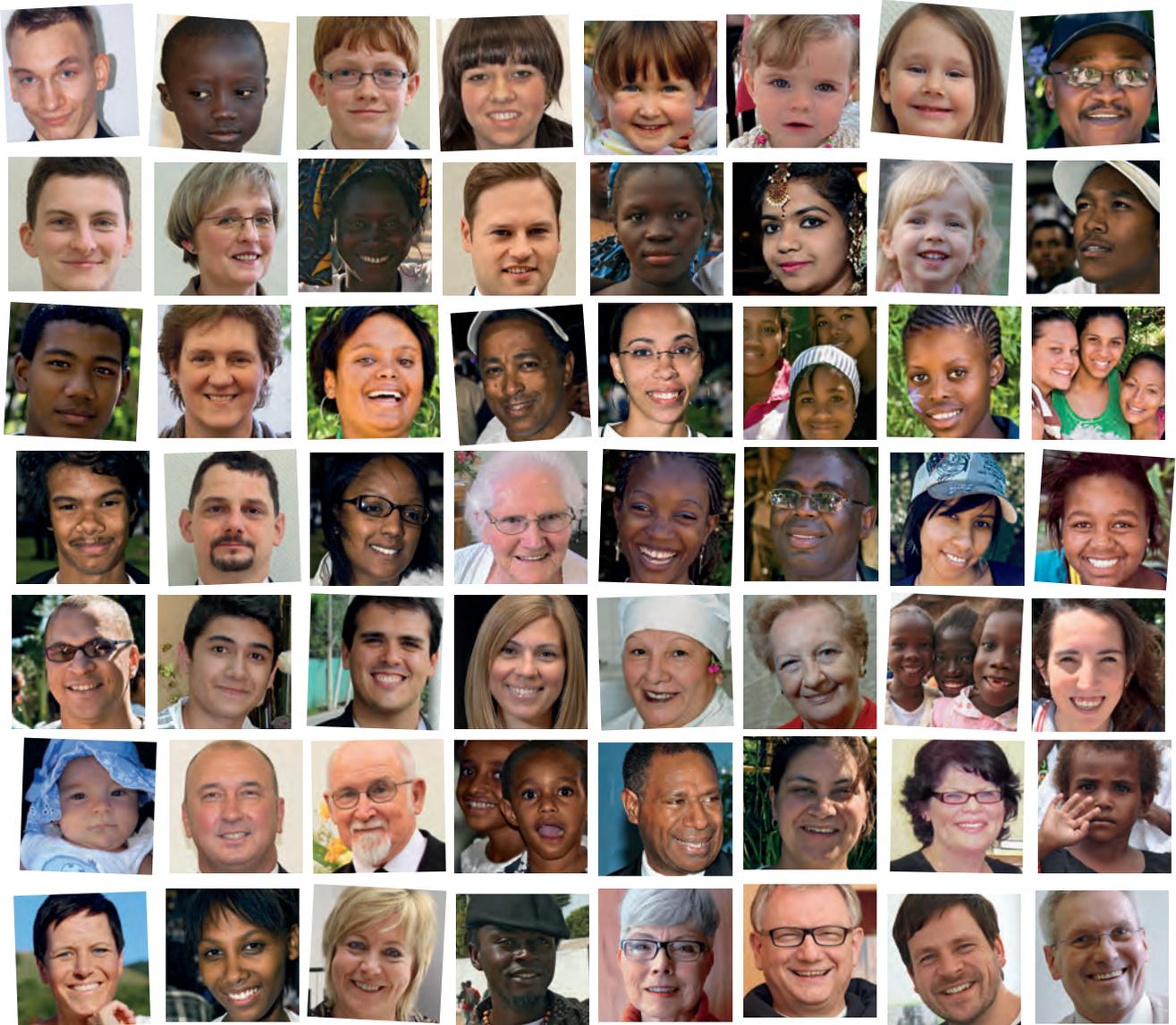
This commemorative publication provides some insight into the beginnings and development of our Church. Naturally its progress was not always as straightforward as it might appear in hindsight. There were certainly also many disappointments and setbacks along the way. We need only think back to the two World Wars which also left clear marks in the area of church. In the present there are new questions and new challenges, and so we continue on our “journey”. Around the world we are united

by the imminent expectation of the return of Jesus Christ. This is and remains our goal of faith. When this goal is attained, an important phase in our God’s plan of salvation will have been concluded. The future will remain exciting, however.

The actions and efforts of our Church are based upon clearly formulated vision and mission statements, which are likewise printed in this commemorative brochure. These guiding principles will also remain definitive for our Church in the future.

With warm greetings to all readers,
I remain







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“The kingdom of God begins when I love my neighbor and hold nothing against him.”

“When I go to church I feel secure in the congregation.”

“For me, following Christ means sharing a smile with my fellow human beings.”

“I am right at the heart of my congregation, even despite my weaknesses.”

“I am different, but I have a firm place in our fellowship.”

“I find it easier to keep my hope in the return of Christ alive when I am together with my brothers and sisters.”

“Church helps me develop the attitude:
Jesus is perfect, and I am not. But that is no
excuse not to work on myself.”

“For me, believing means recognising
that love is the greatest power on earth.”

“I can get involved
in this community.”

“There are many times in divine service when
I feel the Holy Spirit is speaking directly to me.”

“I too have a place in the
New Apostolic Church.”

“I try to integrate the instructions of the
Holy Spirit into my life more and more.”

“the promise of eternal life gives a
greater perspective to my existence.”

A church in which people feel at home and, inspired by the Holy Spirit and their love for God,

align their lives to the gospel of Jesus Christ and thus prepare themselves for His

return and eternal life







Photo: NAK Süddeutschland

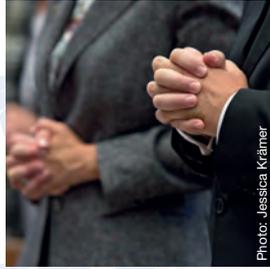


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Photo: Marco Wagner



Photo: Tabea Pfennig



Photo: Marco Wagner



Photo: IMA Argentina



Photo: NACSEA (Asien)

Reaching out to all people in order to teach them the gospel of Jesus Christ
and to baptise them with water and the Holy Spirit

Providing soul care and cultivating a warm fellowship in which everyone shall
experience the love of God and the joy of serving Him

Thomas Carlyle, one of the twelve English Apostles, responsible for Northern Germany



Winding paths

The history of the New Apostolic Church

“Ye are called, not to be spectators, but fellow-workers; not to be idly waiting to see what heroic deeds the Apostles will do, but to pray incessantly that their number may be completed—for one of the Apostles has become unfaithful—that they may all become fully active, that they may become of one mind in all things, that they may receive their full ability to fulfil God’s plan towards the Church.”

Thomas Carlyle, *A Short History of the Apostolic Work*, London 1851, p. 16.

In spring 1851 a publication appears with the title: “A Short History of the Apostolic Work”. The author is Thomas Carlyle, one of the twelve Apostles called in England in 1835. His publication, which is distributed throughout the congregations of his Northern German working area, is prefaced by an appeal

to the believers to pray for the success of an upcoming Apostle meeting on Pentecost. After all, this meeting will deal with an existential question.

The twelve-fold apostolate

As in the beginning—such was the understanding of the English Apostles—God would, at the end, prepare the church for the return of Christ through an apostolic ministry consisting of twelve men:

“Sealed by Apostles, the church is, at the first, sent into the world, to fight the fight of faith. Sealed by apostles, the church, long vanquished and captive, at length overcomes; and is, at the last, taken out of the world from the great tribulation, and so prepared to come with Christ.”

Thomas Carlyle, *Apostles—Given, Lost, and Restored*, London 1853, p. 37.

Yet the church, to whose representatives the Apostles had addressed a written manifesto—the so-called “Great Testimony”, which emphasised an intensive, imminent expectation of the Lord’s return—remains largely unimpressed by the wake-up call of the Apostles of the end time. Two of the Apostles resign. The loss of the twelve-fold unity of the Apostles comes as a severe blow to the Catholic Apostolic Church. According to their self-conception, the other Apostles can thus only fulfil their commission in a limited capacity, since there is no more Apostles’ College in the actual sense. Now some of the Apostles are raising the question: “Can the circle of the Apostles once again be made whole?”

The Apostles hope to receive the answer to this question at their con-

Prophet Heinrich Geyer, regular companion of Apostle Carlyle



Apostle Francis Valentine Woodhouse excommunicates the ministers and members of the Hamburg congregation in 1863

ference in Albury on Pentecost 1851. Apostle Carlyle in particular attaches great hopes to this conference, because he is convinced that God still plans to bring about great things through the Apostles. Nevertheless, the Apostle meeting is unable to agree on the idea of filling the vacancies in the circle of the Apostles. Carlyle's hopes go unfulfilled. But he is not the only one to harbour in his heart the hope that the Apostles' circle will once more be made whole.

Prophet Heinrich Geyer

On his travels in Germany, Apostle Carlyle is accompanied by Prophet Heinrich Geyer, who had received the apostolic laying on of hands in 1849 at the age of 31 from Carlyle and been called as a prophet only two days later. As a prophet, his primary

task is to call ministers, who are then separated by the Apostle. Carlyle, who has learned German and dedicated himself completely to his task, works with great zeal and missionary commitment in his working area. And he succeeds in founding numerous congregations.

In 1855 three Apostles die, among them also Thomas Carlyle. Apostle Francis Valentine Woodhouse takes over responsibility for Northern Germany. The relationship between him and Geyer is distanced.

Perfecting the Church without Apostles?

In the 1850s several of the Apostles still living start to become convinced that the activity of the apostolate will come to an end before the bride of Christ is caught up to God, and that

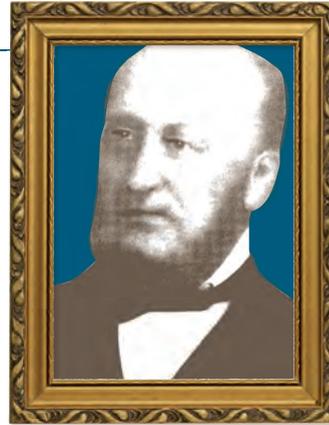
the church under Apostles is merely the model for a future church led by Bishops. In 1858 a corresponding doctrinal change is made.

Yet the activity of the prophets points in a different direction: in 1859 the "Pillar of the Prophets", Edward Oliver Taplin, calls Evangelist Charles J.T. Böhm, one of the close collaborators of the deceased Apostle Carlyle, to be the latter's successor as Apostle for Northern Germany. In the following year, Prophet Geyer once again calls Böhm as well as William Caird as Apostles. The Apostles reject both of these callings.

Conflict over the calling of Apostles

The leader of the Hamburg congregation, Friedrich Wilhelm Schwartz writes that Geyer has informed him

Called and
resigned: Apostle
Rudolf Rosochacky



of the events that have taken place in Albury:

“On his journey home [in 1860], Geyer came through Hamburg and visited me without letting me know ahead of time. Naturally he told me that in the meeting in Albury the Lord called the Angel-Evangelist Böhm as the Apostle for Germany and the Angel-Evangelist Caird as the Apostle for France, etc. I was happy to hear this. However, Brother Geyer also added that the six Apostles did not accept these callings and likely only wanted to make the two of them apostolic Coadjutors [or helpers to the Apostles]. Prophet Geyer was discontent that some of the Apostles had at first accepted the calling of the two brothers and that after a conference

of Apostles, they said, ‘We will not accept any more Apostles in our circle!’ I counselled Brother Geyer to keep silent and subject himself willingly to the decision the Apostles had made. After all, the responsibility lies with the Apostles and not with him.

He carried on with his journey to Berlin in peace. I was able to feel that in him.”

F. W. Schwartz, Peace through our Lord Jesus be and remain with you all! Amsterdam, 29 April 1891, with an epilogue by Fritz Krebs, p. 1

Geyer calls German Apostles

Confronted with the attitude of the still living Apostles, Geyer—upon whom Apostle Carlyle had left a deep impression and who, like the latter, never gave up hope for the “hastening of the work”—arrives at the conviction that a new succession of

Apostles was needed—and not in England, but in Germany:

“You know that even the Apostles have already refused to recognise the earlier calling of two Apostles and that for this reason they have also rejected several prophecies of the prophets. God wanted to fill the vacancies among them, but they rejected this. Thus God has turned aside in order to find other Apostles in Germany, an entirely new group. They had known nothing of this before, but now these men in Germany have accepted their calling as Apostles and are prepared to gather in the harvest as reapers with their Angels, so that this long spell, which has delayed the work of God, can finally be lifted, and that the Evangelists can now joyfully make their

Friedrich Wilhelm Schwartz,
Angel of the Hamburg
congregation, later Apostle



Photos: Archive

way through all the earth unhindered.”

Heinrich Geyer to Ludwig Albrecht Senior, Berlin, 23
December 1862 (Copy)

Calling in Königsberg

One of the men to be called is Rudolf Rosochacky, an Elder from Königsberg. On 10 October 1862, near midnight and during evening prayers, he is called as an Apostle by Geyer. Apostle Woodhouse, whom Geyer is accompanying on this journey, is already fast asleep and learns nothing of these events until later. On the other hand, several ministers whom Geyer takes into his confidence, do learn what has transpired, among them Friedrich Wilhelm Schwartz. The latter had been consecrated as an Angel in 1860, but is subordinate to the Angel of the Berlin congregation, Carl Rothe. Without the latter’s con-

sent, Schwartz invites Rosochacky to Hamburg. Schwartz—and nearly the entire congregation—submit to the new Apostle on 4 January 1863.

Geyer is disciplined

Already back in December 1862, Geyer is called to task over a scriptural reference in a prophecy which is no longer in harmony with the doctrinal changes in effect since 1858. Since he rejects the new doctrine, he is dismissed from ministerial activity and temporarily barred from Holy Communion. It is in this situation that he now finds support from Apostle Rosochacky and the Hamburg congregation.

Once Rosochacky publicly emerges as an Apostle, disciplinary measures are taken against him and the Hamburg ministers. Rosochacky, however,

submits to the judgement of Rothe, who obliges him to declare his calling as an Apostle to be the work of the Devil.

Excommunication of the Hamburg congregation

Schwartz and the Hamburg congregation, on the other hand, remain firm in their conviction that Rosochacky has been legitimately called as an Apostle. So it is that Apostle Woodhouse pronounces the entire congregation excommunicated. On 27 January 1863 Schwartz and Geyer are excommunicated by Apostle Woodhouse.

A street in Hamburg

The environment of the first congregation of the new order – a portrait of the time

Hamburg, which for many people marked the start of their journey over the Atlantic and into a new world, is also the starting point of the New Apostolic Mission. The city quarter in which this first congregation assembled looked completely different at the time than it does today.

Raucous male voices waft up from a basement tavern, together with a subtle fragrance of brandy. A jumble of Low German, Mecklenburgish, North Frisian, East Prussian, and Polish disturbs the quiet of the evening. Hunched figures in dusty work clothes shuffle through narrow alleyways. One of them is Carl Louis Wilhelm Preuß. A workday of over ten hours is behind him, but the carpenter still has plans for the evening. At his residence in Neustädterstraße he changes as quickly as he can, then sets off on the short walk through southern Hamburg's old town. It is also here that the notorious Gängeviertel, home to some of the city's poorest people, is located. Preuß is heading to Marienstraße, known today by the name of Jan-Valckenburg-Straße. What might he have experienced along the way?

Tenement houses in the Tudor style dominate the street scene. Often there are six to ten people sharing two heated rooms. Many families are so poor that they rent out their beds to shift workers during the day. A lot of the roofs are not weatherproof, which makes the apartments damp and the cellars musty. Bugs, rats, and mice are quite comfortable there, however. Since Hamburg is attracting more and more workers from all over Northern Germany and other countries, every free bit of space in the new town, the harbour district, and the old town has been filled by some sort of building. A good two-thirds of the population of the city-state—which numbers some 300,000 people—live here. Preuß lives in the relatively spacious Neustädterstraße. Those who are less fortunate live in the back streets. As Preuß walks along here he walks

under clotheslines through passages that are not even three metres wide in places. He expertly avoids the gutters and puddles of waste on the sidewalks. After eight years of living here, Preuß barely even notices the stench of the place anymore. Since most of the houses here are not yet connected to the sewers, everything simply ends up on the street—a breeding ground for all sorts of diseases. Scarlet fever, diphtheria, whooping cough, and measles are part of daily life for the residents—as is the plague of the nineteenth century: cholera. This is not least of all due to the fact that there is not enough fresh drinking water. Only a few of the residents of the city quarter can afford the water offered by travelling merchants. Others draw water from wells, from the Alster, or directly from the canals that crisscross the city centre—to which some of the city's effluent also finds its way. Many residents keep their water in a large jug of their own for an average of a week at a time. Viruses and germs can multiply there unhindered. Suddenly Carl Preuß comes across a wooden cart blocking his path. A family is loading it with all of their meagre possessions. It is time to pay



Photo: NAC Northern Germany

Neustädterstraße in the 1860s when Carl Louis Wilhelm Preuß lived there

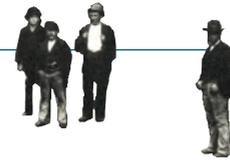


the full year's rent at their house, and they cannot afford it. It is not the first time that Carl Preuß has had to watch people lose their homes and lodging. After all, many are unemployed, and even those who do have work often receive such a low wage that they cannot save up the money to pay the year's rent. Social security does not yet exist. Many people from the old town are employed in construction or as dockworkers—seasonal work that only offers employment in the warmer months. Many are forced to fight for their survival by working as day labourers. They stand on street corners, wait at the docks, or sit in taverns where the hosts provide them with work. Even if the men manage to hire themselves out every day, their wages are not enough to feed a family. That is why their wives also take whatever work they can get—as seamstresses, laundresses, bleaching women, ironing ladies, or even domestic staff in the more refined bourgeois neighbourhoods. Workdays of ten to fourteen hours are the norm. Carl Preuß has now made his way around the wooden cart and continues upon his way. He nearly trips over

some children playing in the puddles with paper boats. Soon they will have to go to sleep because they will have to get up at around five o'clock in the morning with their parents. Their workday begins an hour later. Child labour is widespread, and for this reason children often do not attend school. If the children go to school at all, it is usually only up until the age of twelve. For many children this hardly matters because elementary school is a rather militaristic place. Discipline, which is quite often taught with a cane, holds greater value than an education aimed at cultivating independent thought or imparting broad general knowledge. It is quite likely that only one in two of Preuß' neighbours can even read or write. Under these conditions there is barely any hope of climbing the social ladder. Carl Preuß himself lives a reasonably carefree life. For three years he has worked as a piano carpenter in the fortepiano factory C. F. L. Schlüter. This permanent position enables him to apply for Hamburg citizenship, which is a condition for living in the Hanseatic city on a permanent basis. Many of his fellow journeymen are not

as fortunate because there are more craftsmen than there is work. It is only with the dawn of industry in Hamburg that this reality will gradually begin to change. In the 1860s, however, it is more likely for smoke to rise from the chimneys of the city factories, like those in Prussia's Altona, which will only become part of the city of Hamburg much later. The northern border of the Hanseatic city is where the train station lies today. St. Paul's and St. George's are suburbs. And although Barmbek, Borgfelde, and Wilhelmsdorf belong to the state of Hamburg, they are not part of the city proper. Although it is much smaller at this time than it is today, Hamburg is anything but tranquil. This is because it is the most important centre of trade for goods imported from England and a hub for the overseas east-west trade. Beyond that, it is the second-largest emigrant harbour in the German Confederation. Preuß walks past the many restaurants, which are popular meeting places owing to the crowded living conditions, and quite heavily frequented, especially on payday. He also walks past a rather permissively





clothed woman who beckons to him. Preuß has been married for three years. The couple has since lived in the residence of his wife Anna Maria. The idea of living together without being married would be inconceivable in the year 1863. The laws of Hamburg call for the arrest or even expulsion of couples living together without a marriage licence. The craftsmen, small retailers, sailors, peddlers, and beggars of the southern old town have no chance of influencing these or any other such regulations. Although Hamburg did adopt a new constitution in 1860, which at least guarantees men the right to vote for the Hamburg Parliament, one of the two chambers in Hamburg's political system, this suffrage is bound to land ownership and taxation, which excludes the poor—roughly 60 percent of the population—from any kind of involvement in politics.

When Preuß turns onto Marienstraße, the first few residents are already hanging their bread pouches on their house doors. In a few hours, a delivery man will fill them with fresh bread. This service provided by the local bakeries is virtually the only luxury

in an otherwise culinarily monotone world. The menu for the household of a day labourer or craftsmen primarily features starchy foods of lesser quality: brown or black bread, potatoes, and perhaps a few vegetables. Fish is rarely on the menu, and meat is even more seldom. Cooked crabs are a popular and affordable delicacy. Beer is also considered a basic staple, and is even given to children on account of its high nutrient content. However, Hamburg's beer in those years can hardly be compared to its beer today: the beer of this era is very thin and contains very little carbonation. It is even consumed by labourers during their workday, but it is especially popular during their brief moments of leisure time, for example at the Hamburg Tingel Tangel, when sailors, craftsmen, and soldiers gather to play cards, roll dice, or sing and dance in the harbour district.

But Carl Preuß is not interested in any of these distractions when he reaches his destination. After passing under an archway, he enters the backyard of number four Marienstraße and finds himself facing a two-storey home. Horses are sleeping in a stable on the first floor, but a light is burning upstairs. In a smaller room, the sacristy, Preuß dons the white surplice of a Priest. A number of people have gathered in the larger room, the assembly hall, most of them craftsmen like Preuß, along with their families. Many of them live in the close vicinity. In a time when many people find themselves struggling for their daily bread, the message of the imminent return of Jesus Christ falls upon fertile soil. The congregation has in the meantime grown to 150 members. Tonight, Priest Carl Wilhelm Louis Preuß will address them. Soon he will become an Apostle.

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On 16 August 1858 the first transatlantic telegraph cable goes into operation.

1858

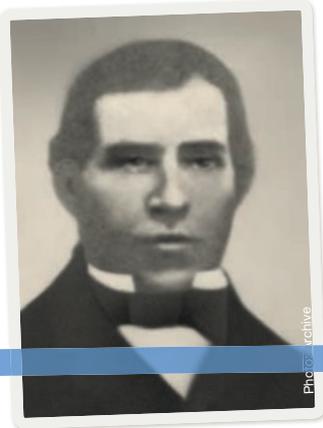


Milestones

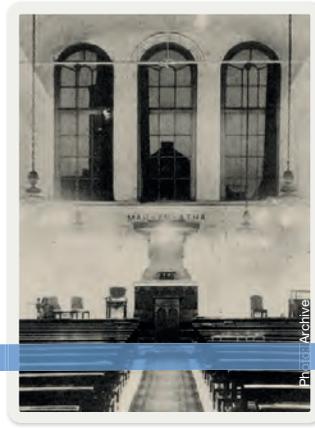


1869

In 1869 the American State of Wyoming becomes the first to give women the right to vote.



Called to be an Apostle on 12 April 1863:
Carl Wilhelm Louis Preuß



Inner chamber of the first Apostolic
Congregation in Amsterdam in around 1890



Historic view of Schladen
in the Harz region

The new order: On 10 October 1862 Rudolf Rosochacky is called to be an Apostle by Prophet Henry Geyer. The Hamburg congregation acknowledges its new Apostle. The calling is not recognised by the leadership of the Catholic Apostolic Church, however. Rosochacky withdraws from his new ministry. As of 1863, the Hamburg congregation goes its own way. It becomes the germ cell of the New Apostolic Church. In spring 1863, Carl Wilhelm Louis Preuß and Friedrich Wilhelm Schwartz are also called as Apostles there.

“Apostolische Zending”: On 27 September 1863 Apostle Schwartz moves to Amsterdam and seals the first souls there half a year later. Over the following years he establishes seven congregations in Amsterdam and the surrounding area.

Under the open sky: Since they cannot find a place in which to gather, the first souls in Schladen are sealed outdoors in a local valley on 17 July 1864. One of them is the later Chief Apostle Friedrich Krebs. Schladen becomes the first newly established congregation in Germany after the mother congregation of Hamburg.

1871 | The German Empire is established in Versailles on 18 January 1871.



1876 | On 10 March 1876 Alexander Graham Bell conducts the first telephone conversation.

1879 | On 21 October 1879 Thomas Alva Edison patents the first light bulb with a carbon filament.



Photo: Archive

The communion vestments customarily worn in the Catholic Apostolic Church and in the early years of the New Apostolic Church



Photo: Archive

Tombstone of Apostle Carl Wilhelm Louis Preuß

Parting company: On 25 July 1878 Apostle Preuß dies. Owing to conflicting prophetic calls made by a successor, Heinrich Geyer leaves the Hamburg congregation, taking the majority of the members with him. Northern Germany is temporarily entrusted to the care of Apostle Friedrich Menkhoff and later assigned to Apostle Friedrich Krebs.



Photo: Netzwerk Apostolisches

Up until 1907 the Church was known by the designation "Apostolic Congregation"

Finding a name: The Apostolic Conference of 25 July 1879 in Braunschweig confirms the separation of Prophet Geyer and his followers from the remaining Hamburg members and other congregations. The name "Apostolic Congregation" emerges for the latter group. In 1907, the group is officially renamed "New Apostolic Congregation".

Simplicity makes its debut: Beginning in 1870, the congregations in the care of Apostle Schwarz do away with the church vestments customary in the Catholic Apostolic Church. In 1885 this measure is implemented in all congregations. Beyond that, the liturgy is simplified. The liturgical hymns are eliminated, as are incense and altar candles.

§

On 29 January 1886 Karl Benz secures a patent for the first automobile with an internal combustion engine.



On 1 January 1901, the six territories of the Australian continent unite to form the Australian federation.

1883

On 15 June 1883 the German parliament approves the establishment of health insurance for workers, thus marking the start of modern social welfare legislation.



1896

The first Olympic Games of the modern era take place in Athens from 6-15 April 1896.



Photo archive

Frederik Lodewijk Anthing, the first Apostle of Asia



Photo archive

Title page of the first publication of *Der Herold* in 1884

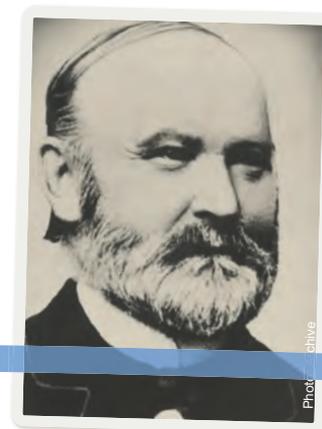


Photo archive

The head of the Apostles: Chief Apostle Friedrich Krebs

The Church becomes international: In 1883 Frederik Lodewijk Anthing is ordained an Apostle and sent to Indonesia. In 1886 Heinrich Friedrich Niemeyer is sent as an Apostle to Australia. On 8 July 1893 Carl Georg Klibbe is ordained as the first Apostle for Africa, and on 6 September 1900, South America also receives an Apostle of its own in Sijze Faber. Ferdinand Hoppe is already sent as an Apostle to North America in 1872, but the New Apostolic Church only succeeds in gaining a foothold under Apostle Friedrich Mierau.

Reading material: In 1884 Apostle Friedrich Wilhelm Menkhoff begins publishing *Der Herold*, the first New Apostolic Church magazine. This publication is followed by *Die Wächterstimme aus Ephraim* (1895–1906), *Das Apostolische Sonntagsblatt* (1907–1908), *Das Neuapostolische Sonntagsblatt* (1908), *Die Neuapostolische Rundschau* (1909–1920), *Die Wächterstimme aus Zion* (1921–1933), and *Die Wächterstimme* (1933–1941).

A new ministry: After the death of Apostle Schwartz, Apostle Friedrich Krebs takes over his working area in 1895. As a result, Krebs becomes the highest authority among the Apostles. The Chief Apostle ministry emerges.



1903

On 17 September 1903 Orville and Wilbur Wright succeed in conducting what is likely the very first controlled powered flight in history.



1912

After colliding with an iceberg, the R.M.S. Titanic, dubbed unsinkable, is submerged on 14 April 1912, taking nearly 1,500 people down with it to its watery grave.

1901

On 10 December 1901 the king of Sweden awards the very first Nobel Prizes in Stockholm and Oslo.

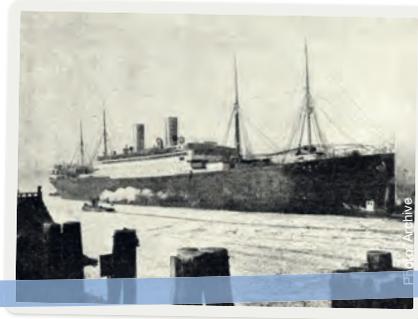


1911

On 14 December 1911 Roald Amundsen wins his race against British polar researcher Robert Falcon Scott, and becomes the first person to ever reach the South Pole.



From left to right: Apostle Georg Gustav Adolf Ruff, Chief Apostle Krebs, his successor Apostle Niehaus, and Apostle Jakob Kofman



The Apostles undertake the journey across the Atlantic Ocean aboard the steamship Cleveland



Communion jug: Up until the introduction of communion wafers, wine was poured into special cups from this jug

A new Chief Apostle: On 10 January 1905 Chief Apostle Krebs dies in Braunschweig. He had already designated Apostle Hermann Niehaus as his successor in 1898. The latter now assumes the Chief Apostle ministry.

Over the ocean: Together with Apostle Carl August Brückner from Saxony, Chief Apostle Niehaus undertakes a trip to North America in 1909. It is the first overseas trip by a Chief Apostle.

A revolution in Holy Communion: In order to allow soldiers fighting in the First World War to partake in Holy Communion, wafers sprinkled with three drops of wine are introduced in 1917. Owing to their small size, the wafers can be made available to the soldiers in letters delivered by army postal service. As a result of a devastating influenza epidemic in 1918, the communal wine cups—from which all believers had previously drunk during the celebration of Holy Communion—are abolished for reasons of hygiene, first in Holland and, as of 1919, in all Apostle districts. In place of this, the communion wafer is introduced for general use.





1914

The First World War begins in 1914 and claims over ten million lives before it ends in 1918.

1917



The Communist Bolsheviks come to power in Russia on 7 November 1917.



1920

The League of Nations, a union of 58 member states, is founded on 10 January 1920 with the intent of preventing future wars.

1928



On 28 September 1928 Alexander Flemming discovers penicillin, the most important active compound in fighting bacterial infections to this day.



Legal text granting corporate status to the New Apostolic congregations in Hamburg



Group photo with wives during the 1926 Apostle Meeting in Bielefeld



Chief Apostle Johann Gottfried Bischoff in his study

Corporate status: In 1921 the New Apostolic Church in the free state of Baden is the first German administrative district to be granted corporate status. In 1925 the New Apostolic Church in the area of the state of Hamburg follows suit. As a corporation under public law, a religious community is part of the public order and as such has employer status, the right to collect taxes from its members, and the authority to define its own canon law.

A single entity: The establishment of the Apostles' College of the New Apostolic congregations of Germany in 1922 legally merges all the Apostles of Germany for the first time. Apostles from outside the country are at liberty to join.

Successor: On 21 September 1930 Chief Apostle Johann Gottfried Bischoff succeeds Hermann Niehaus because the latter is no longer able to perform his duties owing to a serious illness.



1929

After Black Friday, a crash of the stock market on New York's Wall Street on 25 October 1929, a global economic crisis begins.



1939

On 1 September 1939 the German armed forces attack Poland and the Second World War begins.

1929

On 8 March 1929 the first test images in television are sent from a transmitter in Witzleben to the Berlin laboratory of the national postal service.



1933

On 30 January 1933, Reichspräsident Paul von Hindenburg appoints Adolf Hitler as Chancellor of Germany.

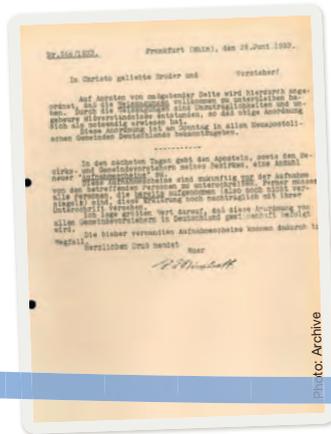


Photo: Archive

Written order prohibiting prophecies



Photo: Archive

This is what it looked like: the cover page of the first "Our Family"



Photo: Archive

The original version of "Questions and Answers concerning the New Apostolic faith"

Served their purpose: In June 1933, prophecies were prohibited during divine services in the Apostle districts of Germany.

Starting shot: In December 1933 the first edition of the Church magazine "Our Family" appears in print.

Doctrinal foundation: In 1938 the first edition of "Questions and Answers concerning the New Apostolic faith" is published. Up until the publication of the Catechism of the New Apostolic Church, this book, which undergoes several revisions in the meantime, serves as the main reference work for the New Apostolic faith.





1945

On 16 July 1945 the first atomic bomb is successfully detonated in the New Mexico desert.

1945



On 24 October 1945, 51 member states ratify the charter of the United Nations (UNO).



1949

On 23 May 1949 the constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) is announced, and on 7 October of that same year, the German Democratic Republic (GDR) is founded.

1951



On 24 December 1951, Libya becomes independent: the starting signal for decolonisation.



An assistant monitors the signal during an audio transmission in Karlsruhe during the 1950s



The Festhalle in Frankfurt am Main



Chief Apostle Bischoff conducts the Christmas divine service in Gießen in 1951

Timely sermon: In 1946 the first Chief Apostle service is transmitted via post cable in Reutlingen.

Reunited: On 5 August 1951 all European Apostles from outside Germany gather with the Chief Apostle in Frankfurt am Main for the first time after the Second World War. In the festive divine service Chief Apostle Bischoff ordains seven new Apostles.

Imminent expectation: In a divine service on Christmas 1951 in Gießen Chief Apostle Bischoff declares the message that Jesus Christ will come during his lifetime.



1957

On 4 October 1957 the Soviet Sputnik 1 becomes the first satellite to orbit the earth.



1960

On 18 August 1960, "the pill", the first hormonal contraceptive, makes its debut on the market in the USA.



1961

On 12 April 1961 Juri Gagarin becomes the first human being to ever fly into outer space.

1961



During the night of 12-13 August 1961, the GDR seals off the border to West Berlin. The Berlin Wall divides the city for 28 years.

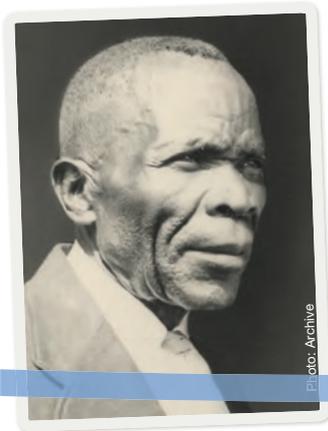


Photo: Archive

Apostle George Mkandawire Henwood



Photo: Archive

At the grave of the Chief Apostle: Apostle Friedrich Bischoff Junior (left) and District Apostle Walter Schmidt (right), who becomes Chief Apostle shortly thereafter



Photo: Archive

Chief Apostle Schmidt upon his arrival in South Africa

Ordained: George Mkandawire Henwood is ordained an Apostle for Zambia on 12 December 1954 by District Apostle Arno Abicht in Cape Town. He thus becomes the first black Apostle.

Longest time in office: On 6 July 1960 Chief Apostle Bischoff dies after serving 30 years in the highest ministry of the Church. The very next day, Walter Schmidt is chosen by the Apostle Meeting as the next Chief Apostle.

A distinguished visitor: In August 1965 Walter Schmidt becomes the first Chief Apostle to travel to Africa.



1962

In October 1962 the cold war reaches its zenith when the Soviet Union stations nuclear missiles in Cuba.

1963

On 22 November 1963 US President John F. Kennedy is assassinated.



1965

Some two million people die during the Vietnam War, which lasts from 1965 to 1975. After the withdrawal of the USA in 1973, North Vietnam conquers the South.



Guideline for Religious Instruction 1968

Educational: In accordance with a corresponding resolution by the Apostle College, Chief Apostle Schmidt introduces Religious Instruction in 1968. In 1985, Pre-Sunday School is added.



Chief Apostle Schmidt (right) and his successor, District Apostle Streckeisen (left) in front of a picture of Johann Gottfried Bischoff

A new shepherd: Chief Apostle Schmidt retires on 15 February 1957. The Swiss District Apostle Ernst Streckeisen becomes his successor. He is the first Chief Apostle not from Germany.



The congregation of Berlin-Treptow in East Berlin

Pastoral care in the east: The first visit of a Chief Apostle to congregations in the GDR takes place in August 1975. On 24 August 1975 Chief Apostle Streckeisen conducts a divine service for ministers in East Berlin, to which he invites all district leaders and rectors of the GDR. Over the ensuing years, the Chief Apostle visits all the Apostle districts of the country.

Starting in 1968, students in the USA and Western Europe protest against authoritarian society and the Vietnam War. During the Prague Spring, Czechoslovakia is occupied by troops of the Warsaw Pact.

1968



1969

On 21 July 1969, American Neil Armstrong becomes the first human being to set foot on the moon.



Group photo of all Apostles active in the year 1977 in Kitchener, Canada



Relaxing in the airplane: Chief Apostle Streckeisen on the way to South America

Legally united: In the course of an International Apostle Meeting in Kitchener, Canada, all 57 Apostles active in the year 1977 establish the International Federation of Apostles. The official headquarters of the Chief Apostle is transferred from Dortmund to Zurich.

Well travelled: In 1978 Chief Apostle Ernst Streckeisen makes a visit to South America, making him the first Chief Apostle to travel to all continents.



1981

On 1 December 1981 AIDS—acquired immunodeficiency syndrome—is recognised as a disease.

1982

On 1 October 1982 the first CD-players become available on the market.



1983

On 21 September 1983 Motorola obtains approval to create the world's first mobile telephone.



Hans Urwyler at the grave of Chief Apostle Streckeisen, whom he succeeds in ministry shortly thereafter



International Apostle Meeting 1980 in Zurich, Switzerland



Chief Apostle Urwyler in a divine service in 1986

In service to the end: On 8 November 1978 Chief Apostle Ernst Streckeisen dies in South Africa of a brain haemorrhage. Ten days later, Hans Urwyler is chosen as his successor by the Apostle Meeting.

Tradition: In 1980 Chief Apostle Urwyler invites all Apostles of the world to Zurich. It is the first time that the Pentecost service is transmitted to all congregations of Western Europe in place of the New Year's Day service. His successors have continued this tradition ever since, often with global transmissions.

A new way of thinking: In 1986 Chief Apostle Urwyler coins the term “personal responsibility”, thereby repealing the canonical restrictions concerning admission to Holy Communion previously in effect.

On 11 March 1985 Mikhail Sergejevich Gorbachev becomes the Secretary General of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. His Glasnost and Perestroika reforms bring great changes.

1985



1986

On 26 April 1986 a reactor failure occurs in the Soviet nuclear power station of Chernobyl.

1989

On 9 November 1989 the government of the GDR declares freedom of travel. Barely a year later, Germany is reunified.



Predecessor and successor: The Swiss Chief Apostles Urwyler (right) and Fehr (left)



District Apostle Fritz Schröder conducts a divine service in Alexeyevka, in what is today Kazakhstan, in 1990



Preparing the OB vehicle for the divine service

Transfer of responsibility: After suffering a stroke in the year 1987, Hans Urwyler ordains the hitherto Chief Apostle Helper Richard Fehr as the new Chief Apostle in 1988. In the Pentecost service on 22 May, Chief Apostle Fehr officially assumes the leadership of the New Apostolic Church.

Behind the curtain: With the end of the Cold War in 1989, missionary work begins in Russia and the former Soviet Republics.

Sound and picture: For the first time ever, the satellite transmission of the Pentecost service on 3 June 1990 in Vienna includes a video feed.



1991

On 6 August 1991 Tim Berners-Lee makes his invention, the worldwide web (www), accessible to the public.

1991



On 26 December 1991 the Soviet Union is formally dissolved. The cold war comes to an end.



1994

On 9 May 1994 Nelson Mandela is elected as South Africa's first black president: apartheid is abolished.



Up until 2002 this building in Zurich's Aurorastraße was the headquarters of the Church



The homepage of the New Apostolic Church International in 1997

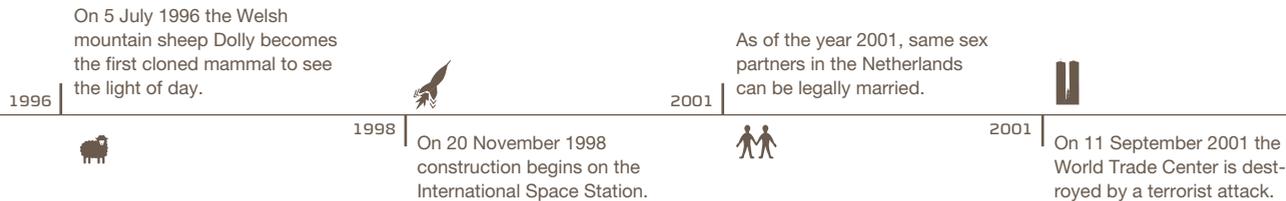


Display case with divine service times

Statutes: The New Apostolic Church International (NACI) becomes the legal successor to the International Federation of Apostles in 1990.

Online: As of 1 May 1997 the New Apostolic Church has had a presence on the internet. At www.nak.org users from around the world can find information about the Church and its beliefs. Excerpts from sermons by the Chief Apostle, current doctrinal statements, and reports from the District Churches are regularly featured on the website.

Divine service reform: In 1998 the second Sunday divine service is discontinued. At the same time, Holy Communion is introduced in midweek services.



The 1984 translation of the Luther Bible



Signs showing divine service times

New language: In 1999 Chief Apostle Fehr declared the 1984 Luther translation of Holy Scripture as the official Bible of the German-speaking countries. The text of the 1984 translation is characterised by greater faithfulness to the original text than the 1912 translation, and thus demonstrates greater harmony with Bible translations of other languages. Since 2002, the English-speaking regions of the world have also been using a new translation of the Bible, namely the New King James Version.

Need for discussion: In 1999, efforts to open the New Apostolic Church to other Christian confessions initiated by Chief Apostle Fehr lead to the establishment of the Ecumenism project group. Among other things, this body, which has since been converted into the work group Contacts with other Denominations and Religions, is to explore the possibility of acquiring observer status for the New Apostolic Church in the World Council of Churches.



2002

On 1 January 2002 the Euro is introduced as the unit of currency in twelve member states of the European Union.



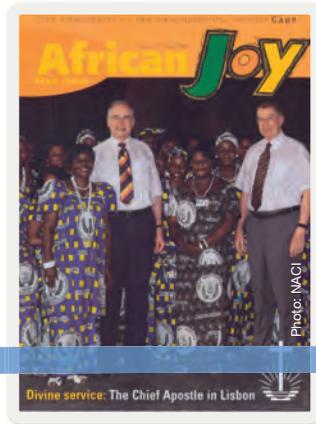
Chief Apostle Fehr (left) ordains Chief Apostle Leber (right); shortly thereafter, the latter retires Richard Fehr

Two Church leaders at the altar: During the Pentecost service on 15 May 2005, Chief Apostle Richard Fehr ordains District Apostle Wilhelm Leber from Hamburg as his successor.

2007



A US real estate crisis in 2007 leads to a financial crisis that develops into a global banking and economic crisis.



Cover of the first "African Joy" magazine

A world premiere: As of March 2009 believers in the District Churches of South Africa, East Africa, and Zambia can thumb through the pages of "African Joy" a Church magazine designed for the African continent.



2008

On 5 November 2008 Barack Obama is elected as the first black president of the USA.



Young people in front of a reproduction of the European Youth Day logo comprised of handprints

Milestones: The very first European Youth Day is attended by some 40,000 participants from 21-25 May 2009 in Düsseldorf. This is followed by the first Youth Day in South East Asia in April 2011 and the first Russian Youth Day from 5-7 August of the same year.

2010

On 17 December 2010 mass protests erupt in Tunisia. This leads to a movement which, in a short period of time, comes to envelope most Arab states.



2011

On 9 July 2011 South Sudan becomes the most recent country of the earth to be established.



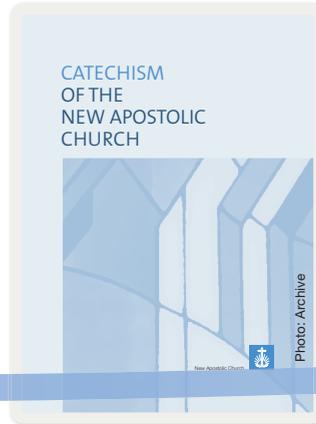
2011

On 11 March 2011 an earthquake and a tsunami trigger the largest reactor failure in Japan in the Fukushima nuclear power plant.



Communion chalices

Upgrade: An expanded Holy Communion liturgy comes into effect in December 2010. The significance of the sacrament is emphasised.



In black and white: the New Apostolic faith in book format

Ready for print: The Catechism of the New Apostolic Church, an exhaustive reference work on the New Apostolic faith, is published in December 2012.



Jean-Luc Schneider (right) after his appointment as Chief Apostle Helper by Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber (left) in the year 2012

The future: In the Pentecost service on 19 May 2013, Chief Apostle Leber ordains French District Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider as his successor. The latter had already been appointed Chief Apostle Helper in Cologne the year before.

Unity in doctrine, diversity in life

A conversation with Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber and Chief Apostle Helper Jean-Luc Schneider about the past, present, and future of the New Apostolic Church

One Faith—One Goal. Why this motto for the anniversary year?

Chief Apostle: This motto brings some essential things to expression in very concise form, namely the global unity of the Church, the faith that unites us, our attention to the future, and our goal.

A colourful Church

You both travel around the world a great deal. Can you describe your experiences with the diversity that exists in the Church?

Chief Apostle: The cultural differences are considerable. I find this to be very inspirational, very positive. For example, even the way the members in Africa move and the way they come to the divine services is already very different than in Europe. The doctrine is uniform around the world, but everything associated with emotion is different. When I hear the choirs of Zambia sing with such power that the altar shakes, it is certainly riveting! Through the globalisation of our world, elements from other continents have made their way to Europe and vice versa. But that only makes us more colourful and lively as a whole. We are grateful for this global exchange.

What do you like most in other countries?

Chief Apostle Helper: The way in which emotion is expressed is different from place to place, but in principle

I find that it is nice everywhere. I would not be able to tell what the nicest thing is.

And do you find anything particularly strange or foreign?

Chief Apostle Helper: I have actually never found anything strange or foreign. Behind it all you can always identify the deep faith of the members and their deep connection to God. This always comes to expression in different ways, but I have never found this to be foreign.

Chief Apostle: I am just reminded of a visit I made to Cambodia, where the members made music on some very original instruments which we do not even know here. Perhaps one might smile at first glance, but it does not seem foreign at all because everything is connected to our faith, and because you can see the attitude of heart that is behind it. Our members there make music in their own manner with great joy. At times one is astonished by very simple things. For example, at Thanksgiving it is customary to decorate the altar with fruits and vegetables and whatever is available in that particular area. I was once in Greenland and the members had decorated the altar with fish because they barely have any fruits and vegetables, and because their survival actually depends on fish.

It is often said that African members are especially joyful and enthusiastic. Are there similar phrases or expressions one might use to describe our members on other continents?



Photo: Oliver Rütten

Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber and Chief Apostle Helper Jean-Luc Schneider in Cologne in 2012

Photo: Klaus Emmerling



Chief Apostle: Not in the sense that one would be able to describe or characterise everything about them with one particular phrase. It is true that there is a great deal of joy and enthusiasm in Africa, which also comes to expression in the music. But then again, what is it that defines Europe? Perhaps it is more the intellectual effort to deepen one's knowledge and the endeavour to remain in conversation with our young people, especially in our time. But it is never so explicit and unequivocal that there is joy in one place and brooding elsewhere. There are always fluid transitions between both extremes.

Many Northern Europeans are of the impression that Africans are closer to the Church, that they are proud of their Church. What is different there?

Chief Apostle Helper: Naturally our members in Africa are enthusiastic about their faith, enthusiastic about the Lord, and enthusiastic about their Church. But that is also partly owing to the culture. Africans not only behave this way with respect to the Church. They can also be just as enthusiastic about a club or a political party. This is simply part of their lives. It would be wrong to derive from their enthusiasm that their faith is better, stronger, or deeper than ours. That is simply not true.

Chief Apostle: There are two things that come together here. First of all, life in many parts of Africa is less complex than in the industrialised nations. There is the family, the surroundings, and then the very next major element is the Church. For us, by contrast, religion is only one of a thousand possible ways of spending our time. This is a very important difference. This is why we cannot compare the circumstances one-to-one.

And beyond that, the historical development also plays a role. In our region, religion was practised in very strict forms in past centuries. There was little room for enthusiasm, especially the kind that would bubble to the surface.



Fortunately this has changed, but we must always see where we have come from.

Chief Apostle Helper: There is one other important point: an African only exists as a member of a community. Here in Europe, the individual is very important. We seek to develop our own personality. People in Africa do not understand this. The idea of a private life is not nearly so pronounced there. For them the important thing is: “I belong to this village, to this Church, to this family.” That is why they are also so proud to belong to Church. We, on the other hand, are rather reserved because here it is the individual who stands in the foreground. We seek to demonstrate what we are, not the groups to which we belong. This is a powerful difference that explains many things.

Europe, Africa, Asia – is there anything striking about America?

Chief Apostle: North America was the hub of the missionary activity of our Church. I have encountered a great deal of self-confidence and strength of faith among the relatively small group of New Apostolic Christians there. Important impulses emanated from there for the development of the Church as a whole. Otherwise, North Americans are rather conservatively minded. But this is changing too.

In South America, the young people often perform dances. For South Americans, dancing is an element of expression. It has a completely different function there than it does in European society. And you can see how much joy they find in it. It is simply fascinating. All of this brings only one thing to expression: joy and a common faith.

In the past, the New Apostolic Church was largely defined by a German mentality. In the meantime, we have adopted many things from other cultures, for example, music from

Africa. How did this change in attitude come about?

Chief Apostle: This is a result of our missionary activity. Through this the Church has grown around the world, especially in Africa and Asia, while it was formerly concentrated on Germany and the surrounding countries. Added to this is also the perspective of many migrant workers. In England, for example there are now even some South African congregations. And on top of this there is the internet, which has given us the opportunity to exchange ideas with people from all around the world. Of course it was not our stated goal to adopt cultural elements and adapt to our surroundings, but that is what has quite naturally developed. Nevertheless, this development was also consciously accepted and tolerated by us, because for many people culture is an important part of their personality. Why should we take anything away from them? Our intent is only to give them something, not take anything away.

In a number of interviews you mentioned that you would like to allow more room for diversity in the Church. Exactly what do you mean by that and where do you see the limits?

Chief Apostle: Here I am thinking, for example, of different kinds of musical expression and different forms of youth care. It should be very clear that there is only one doctrine. And this is actually never called into question. The doctrine itself is accepted, and has become the focal point, everywhere. The other things certainly have their value too, but they are nevertheless secondary matters. When it comes to the question of how to implement something, there are certainly always different possibilities. That is diversity, which also has an enriching effect.

How will we manage to preserve our unity in the face of such diversity?

Chief Apostle Helper: By concentrating on what is essential, namely our faith. The Catechism comprises the framework of our faith, and we can move within this framework.

Do ministers outside of Europe occupy themselves just as intensively as we do with doctrinal questions? For example, is the Catechism even a topic of discussion there?

Chief Apostle Helper: I am always irritated when I hear things like that. In Europe there is a certain percentage of members who will never read the Catechism, who will simply believe what the Priest, the rector, and the Apostle say. And then there are others who dig and ask questions when they do not understand something. It is exactly the same in Africa. There too, there are many people who inquire and read. Ministers in Africa have asked me questions that I have never heard in France.

A look back in retrospect

The Catechism is a milestone for our Church. Can you mention three other important milestones?

Chief Apostle Helper: The first point I would mention is personal responsibility. This was extremely important for me.

Chief Apostle: We could also mention the opening of the Church to the outside world, and thirdly, our international missionary activity.

Chief Apostle Helper: Perhaps this is not as significant as the other points, but the “Serving and leading” model was also very important for me.

What connection do we, as a Church, have to history?

Chief Apostle: Our Church is founded upon the calling of Apostles and the establishment of the Catholic Apostolic Church, from which our Church emerged.

As a Church, should we today be occupying ourselves more intensively with our beginnings?

Chief Apostle Helper: No, I do not necessarily see it that way. We live by that which we have been given by our fathers, by that which they have achieved, but the story goes on. It would be wrong to say that they were right and everything that has happened since then is wrong. No, these were steps in the way of progress, and we will continue to take such steps until we reach perfection and the completion of this work. The past is certainly not an ideal picture to which we must find our way back. I do not believe that.

Some people glorify the past as the ideal image of Christianity. They consider prophecies and speaking in tongues to be direct revelations of God. Wouldn't it be nice if God were also to reveal Himself to us in the same way today?

Chief Apostle Helper: This is something that God must decide. Perfection is a spiritual development, and I do not think we need these things anymore.

Chief Apostle: And we should not think of the past in such glorified terms either! By no means did everything transpire as smoothly as it is often portrayed. Even in those days, there were conflicts, differing interpretations, and some very different attitudes. The past forms our foundation and we regard it with respect, but we must move on!

The Church has appointed a special work group whose task is to reappraise its history. Will this work group also reappraise controversial issues?

Chief Apostle: Indeed, it is part of their mandate to provide clarity about the past, as far as the documents allow. As a Church we have the obligation to be open and not hide anything. This means that we must deal with our own past and own up to it even if some mistakes were made.



Is it important to the two of you personally to know the historical foundations?

Chief Apostle: Yes, I certainly want to know what has transpired! I am repeatedly asked, “How old is the New Apostolic Church and what were its beginnings?” At such times we must be able to give a response.

Chief Apostle Helper: Naturally it is interesting to know these things. I look back in gratitude to that which our fathers have done, but I also see this very objectively. I am not an idealist. I know that people always make mistakes. In my opinion, today’s generation cannot be held accountable for that which their fathers have done. The only thing that can be expected of us is to learn from the past. That is important to me. However, I do not want New Apostolic Christians today to develop a feeling of guilt because someone made a mistake here or there! Our children’s children will one day evaluate us too. And they will have a completely different view of us. They will say, “You knew about the poverty in your own country, you knew that there were wars in other countries. You knew about everything that happened. Why didn’t you do anything about it?” So if we now intend to evaluate our fathers, we must also look to our grandchildren. Then we will become very humble indeed.

Let’s jump back to the beginnings of the Church. What has become of the original idea of an apostolic mission for all Christians?

Chief Apostle Helper: The answer is right in the Catechism. The Apostle ministry has been given for the church of Christ as a whole. The message that the Apostle ministry proclaims applies to all Christians! And it is our task, on the one hand, to prepare New Apostolic Christians for the return of Jesus, but on the other hand, as a Christian church, to lead all people to Jesus Christ.



Photo: Werner Ruppel



Photo: Klaus Emmertling

Does this mean that we must once again make more of an effort to approach others, to go on the offensive in inviting them?

Chief Apostle: It is the commission of the Apostles to go into all the world, but one must also look at the conditions of our time. Here in Europe we can no longer simply stand on the corner and testify. We must find other ways to get into contact with other people. But we have always had this objective! That we prepare ourselves for the return of Christ and clearly emphasise the mission of the Apostles has not changed! And this continues to be practised on a smaller scale in our day as well.

Do you have a programme for spreading the gospel?

Chief Apostle Helper: The programme has already been given by the Chief Apostle: 2013 is the year of profession! That is the recipe. That is what counts! Missionary work—in other words, going out into the world and preaching—is no longer relevant in many places. The things that count today are our personal credibility and the conviction that radiates from us. We must explain to our members that professing is part of being Christian and that this is also the individual responsibility of every Christian. Christians must radiate a power that will ignite others—not convince, not convert—but ignite. That is our task. That is how I understand what it means to be a Christian.

Have you ever made this experience personally, namely that you ignited such a fire in someone, not at the altar, but in daily life?

Chief Apostle: Whenever I get into a conversation with neighbours, fellow travellers in the airplane, and so on, it is always a nice opportunity for me to share something with others. And there you can have some wonderful conversations which demonstrate that people are certainly open

to talking about such things. I usually cannot assess how things progress from there, but I often observe that I have managed to get people to contemplate these things and admit that they have given far too little thought to such matters in the past.

Chief Apostle Helper: When you are in Africa, you are usually the only white person in the airplane, and so you are often asked, “What do you do?” And after about two minutes I find myself in the midst of a conversation about our faith.

A look ahead

Are there any other goals or visions for the future?

Chief Apostle: We are not a business enterprise that sets objectives for a specific timeline of five or ten years. We are convinced that the Lord will come again, and we align ourselves by that. The standard for us is the gospel. This must always remain our focus. Naturally it is quite a different matter to think about how we can implement it in specific terms, and what elements we can emphasise. We will have to continue making a strong effort to address the young people and develop programmes for them. This will remain a point of emphasis for the future development of our Church.

For the doctrine we now have the Catechism. This gives us a place to start. That is a good milestone.

Does that mean there are no other specific projects?

Chief Apostle Helper: I can only underline what the Chief Apostle has said. We are not a business enterprise. The objectives for us as a Church come from the Holy Spirit, from God. When I am asked what I will do when I am Chief Apostle, I always say, “I believe in the power of the ordination. Right now I am a District Apostle and I believe in that. I will receive additional gifts if it should—or must—

come to pass that I am ordained Chief Apostle.” In other words, I cannot yet answer this. This comes from the Holy Spirit.

Naturally we can also learn from business enterprises. After all, I was once a businessman too. We can adopt many of the same methods and tools, but the inspiration comes from above. And the answer as to what we should do, what the future Chief Apostle and District Apostles should do, must come from above. Otherwise we would not be credible. Then we would merely be a business undertaking. No! We are the work of God!

The core competence of our Church has always been pastoral care. Is that still the case?

Chief Apostle: Yes! Pastoral care is actually all that we do. Divine service is pastoral care in the truest sense of the word. Personal pastoral care remains important, and it continues to be provided, perhaps a little differently than in the past in some respects because the societal circumstances have changed a little, but pastoral care continues to be necessary! Nowadays we also find that members come to the ministers with the most diverse wishes and concerns. This means that pastoral care must also continue to be further developed. We must instruct the ministers on how they can provide help to the members in their various different situations. We cannot simply hope that the dear God will do everything for us. We must also make efforts to recognise the needs of the members and find ways to do justice to all of them. This will certainly be a point of emphasis for future work. There are already many initiatives in place for equipping the ministers accordingly: seminars, training workshops—these are all merely helpful resources, but they nevertheless give us the opportunity to provide more specific and purposeful support to the members. Pastoral care remains our core competence!

The liturgy has also been further developed. Will there be any other changes in the liturgy in the foreseeable future?

Chief Apostle: Liturgy is a fixed format and thrives when it is kept unchanged. We have observed that the changes in the liturgy have been well accepted around the world. We have succeeded in bringing greater solemnity to the celebration of Holy Communion and in helping our members to be increasingly aware of what transpires at that moment. There are no concrete plans to make any further changes.

Let's talk about midweek services: at least in Germany, more and more of our members regard these as an additional offer rather than a necessity.

Chief Apostle: Those whose hearts burn with the fire of the Holy Spirit and the expectation of the imminent return of Christ will not merely consider the divine services a casual offer, but will instead engage themselves and help along and take this offer seriously. Naturally this is something each one must decide for himself, but we do not want to give up the midweek divine service. We can certainly give thought to the matter, which is already being done in some regions where the conditions are more difficult than in our own, for example in North America. There have already been some attempts there with divine services or discussion circles in peoples' homes in order to make it easier for the members to get together, but these are individual solutions. I believe that on a large scale we would be very careful about introducing any changes, if at all.

Chief Apostle Helper: We must also have the courage to say that one cannot be a true Christian without attending the divine services. This is simply part of the package! I cannot be a Christian and just go to Holy Communion once in a while, whenever I happen to feel like it. A true Christian needs Holy Communion. And that is not a New

Apostolic invention! These are the words of the Lord. He said that if we do not partake in this we have no life in us. Fellowship, collective prayer, and Holy Communion are all part of being a Christian. If the need for this fellowship is no longer present, we are only talking about religion, not a living faith.

Should we change the liturgy to improve divine service attendance? That is the wrong idea. Liturgy is important, the format of divine service is important, but if someone no longer attends the divine services, it is not because the service is boring, or because the liturgy doesn't suit him. It is simply because his relationship with God has come under attack. He no longer feels the need for grace, for Communion, for fellowship with other believers. That is the problem, not the liturgy!

Can this need be reawakened?

Chief Apostle Helper: Of course it can! I hope so. This is our task: to point to the Lord Jesus repeatedly, to emphasise His love, what He has done for us, what He continues to do for us, and what He will do for us. And we must also live this conscientiously and be credible in testifying. This attracts others. Where genuine Christian faith lives in the heart, it will be a drawing force. We cannot do any more than that. And in the process we should not forget: faith is an offer of God, a gift of grace granted to us by God. Either people accept this gift or they do not. Faith is not a product that needs to be adapted to the marketplace. It is divine truth, whether people believe in it or not. We can make the effort to offer it to others in such a way that it meets with a better reception, but in principle we cannot change the word of God!

Chief Apostle: Indeed, I see it as an essential task of mine to kindle a fire in the divine services. The divine service is the place where these impulses are generated, but here too we must be realistic: the personal relationship with



God, which our Chief Apostle Helper has just addressed, also plays a role. If people only consume the divine service with the attitude, “Well, let’s see what there is today,” then it will certainly be difficult to kindle a fire within them. But if our members are really seeking a connection to the Lord, they will also be able to experience something in the divine services.

Let us take a look into the future, to the day of the Lord. What would you like to tell God’s children concerning this?

Chief Apostle Helper: The more I concentrate on the Lord Jesus and the more I occupy myself with Him, the greater my desire to be very close to Him. For me this is the greatest motivation to wait for the day of the Lord and prepare myself for it: I want to be with Him where He is as quickly as possible. A child of God must simply be in love with the Lord, in the proper sense.

Chief Apostle: With our human understanding we cannot grasp what will take place on the day of the Lord. This is a dimension that far transcends our human experience. It remains a matter of faith. This faith must be kept alive and we are all called upon to do our part here. This cannot only be a matter for the Chief Apostle and the Apostles to tackle. This must also be a movement that develops from within the congregations.

Where do you hope to see the Church in ten years?

Chief Apostle: With the Lord!

And if the Lord has not yet come by then?

Chief Apostle Helper: Very close to the Lord!



From A to Z



Apostle | The Apostle ministry was reoccupied in the nineteenth century. The Apostle ministry has been given to the church of Christ as a whole. The Apostles have the commission to work their way into all parts of the church in order to prepare Christendom for its returning Lord.

Beyond, the | It is one of the fundamental Christian beliefs that human beings live on after physical death. Through Christ, the Lord of the living and the dead, the departed can also receive salvation. Notions such as soul sleep and reincarnation are not consistent with the testimony of the New Testament.

Christian | One becomes a Christian through the properly performed sacrament of Holy Baptism. Through baptism the believer is incorporated into the fellowship of those who believe in Jesus Christ and profess Him as their Lord. Being a Christian requires the church—it is impossible to be a Christian without the church.

Church | The church of Christ is most clearly manifest where the Apostle ministry, the dispensation of the three sacraments to both the living and the dead, and the proper proclamation of

the word of God are present. The focal point of church life is the divine service.

Congregation | The centre of church life is the congregation. The Apostle appoints a rector bearing a priestly ministry with its leadership. In Europe there are approximately 3,000 New Apostolic congregations, and around the world there are over 60,000.

Freedom | As the image of God, human beings are created to be free. Through sin, however, they are significantly restricted in their freedom of decision, action, and will. A life in freedom is only possible where the sacrifice of Christ creates redemption from the bondage of sin.

Future | The church is not only intended to exist in the present, but also has a future dimension. The church—which according to its own profession awaits the return of Jesus Christ—is future-oriented. It is a primary task of the Apostles to proclaim the imminent return of Christ and to gather and prepare the bride of Christ.

God | In His nature and activity, God cannot be grasped by human understanding. Access to God

in His omnipotence and greatness is only possible through faith. Jesus Christ revealed God to human beings as a loving, compassionate, and gracious Father, and enabled them to experience Him as such. Further revelations from God are given by the Holy Spirit.

Holy Scripture | The Bible is the foundation for the teachings of the New Apostolic Church. All doctrinal statements must be measured by the Bible. The interpretation of a Bible text forms the core of the sermon in its divine services, which are conducted without a script.

Imminent expectation | The expectation of the imminent return of Christ is a core component of the New Apostolic faith, and is at the centre of the apostolic message.

Interreligious dialogue | Within the scope of its abilities, the New Apostolic Church supports efforts to dismantle prejudices and fears and promote mutual esteem through contacts and conversation in interreligious dialogue. It is open toward the ecumenical movement and actively promotes the revival of good neighbourly relationships with other churches and denominations.

Official participation in ecumenical divine services and acts of blessing is not possible at this time.

Love | Love is the fundamental Christian attitude and the commandment of Christ. Love is evidence of faith because God Himself is love.

Meal fellowship | The unity of the believers with one another and with Jesus Christ is established by Holy Communion. In this meal fellowship, the true nature and the true form of the church of Christ are most clearly revealed. Holy Communion is also an essential means of preparing for the return of Christ.

Ordination | The investiture of a ministry is known as ordination. It is the calling, blessing, and commission to a spiritual ministry, and is a holy act. It does not constitute a sacrament, but is a special act of blessing with a sacred character, which is performed through the laying on of hands and prayer of an Apostle. The pastoral and organisational duties of ministers in the congregations are performed on a voluntary basis.

Personal responsibility | The principle of personal responsibility applies in pastoral care. Personal lifestyle is a matter left to the discretion

of the individual New Apostolic Christian, who accepts responsibility for it. The gospel provides standards for a lifestyle that is pleasing to God.

Politics | The New Apostolic Church advocates peace in the world, appeals for reconciliation, and admonishes forgiveness. It rejects all forms of violence. Within the scope of its abilities and mandate, it helps to promote the common good and is thus an integral component of society. New Apostolic Christians are active in public life. The Church does not exercise any influence on the political views or activities of its members.

Religious Instruction | Since 1968 the New Apostolic Church has offered Religious Instruction for children starting at the age of ten. At this level of instruction children are acquainted with the fundamentals of the Christian faith. In addition, the Church offers Pre-Sunday School for children beginning at the age of four, and Sunday School for children beginning at age six. Confirmation Instruction enables young Christians to take on personal responsibility for their own life of faith.

Sacraments | The New Apostolic Church recognises three sacraments: Holy Baptism with water, Holy Communion, and Holy Sealing,

which imparts the gift of the Holy Spirit to the believer.

Salvation | God's actions are aimed at creating salvation. Through Jesus Christ, the Mediator between God and mankind, salvation is accessible to all, both here on this earth and in the beyond.

Serving | Serving is a characteristic of the life and nature of Jesus Christ—a form of expression of God's love, which Christians reciprocate by serving God and their neighbour in love.

Social commitment | In addition to proclaiming the gospel and providing pastoral care, active charity is among the primary tasks of the church. The New Apostolic Church maintains its own aid agencies in order to coordinate global humanitarian initiatives in the event of natural disasters and other catastrophes.

Upkeep | The New Apostolic Church is financed by the voluntary and anonymous contributions of its members and does not levy any Church taxes or other mandatory fees. All holy acts and blessings in the Church—such as baptisms, weddings, and funerals—are performed free of charge.



Calculations – The New Apostolic Church by the numbers

Communion wafers for the world

Each year, the three wafer bakeries in Bielefeld, Cape Town, and Lusaka use enough flour to bake 112,500 one-kilogram loaves of bread. A total of 225 million communion wafers are baked each year because approximately 4.3 million wafers are dispensed to the believers during Holy Communion every week.



The global congregation

If the New Apostolic Church, with its approximately ten million members, were a single congregation consisting of 100 believers, 79 of them would come from Africa, eleven of them would come from Asia, five of them would come from Europe, four would come from the Americas, and one would come from Australia. Incidentally, most of them would converse among themselves in the African language of Swahili.



In sound and picture

On average, some 25 divine services each year are transmitted by satellite. Up to 1,500,000 believers participate in these divine services each year, the same number of passengers as flew to South East Asia from Germany in 2012.



In ministry

If all active ministers around the world were to string together their ties, they would roughly cover the distance from New Delhi to Peking. Among the approximately 250,000 globally active ministers, nearly every second one is a Deacon. This is also the ministry that is most frequently bestowed—around a thousand times in 2011 alone. Even though the Church no longer ordains anyone to the Sub-deacon ministry, it has not died out yet. In fact, there are enough remaining Sub-deacons around the world to populate a small town. Three quarters of the 1,800 still active Sub-deacons live in Africa. This is not the smallest group of ministers, however. Community elders—also a ministry that is no longer conferred—comprise the very smallest ministerial group. There are only two such ministers in the entire world. For every minister, there are 19 members in Europe, 23 in Australia, 37 in America, 38 in Africa, and 119 in Asia.





Plus or minus

On average, some 230,000 believers are sealed every year—nearly as many as the number of babies born around the world in a single day. The record holder is the Democratic Republic of Congo. A total of 85,000 souls were sealed there in 2011.

If one assumes an average of ten people per church pew, a total of up to 250 rows of seating could be saved around the world each year, because the New Apostolic Church registered 2,500 resignations in 2011. But some have also come back. A total of 65 Irish athletes competed in the 2012 Olympic Games in London, which is the same number of people who were readmitted to the New Apostolic Church in 2011.



No continuing city

If one were to send a chain letter from one congregation to the next, and if it took one day for the letter to make each trip, it would take around 168 years for the letter to reach the last congregation! This is because there are over 60,000 congregations throughout the world. The Democratic Republic of Congo is home to the majority of these congregations. Nearly one in four New Apostolic Christians lives there. Looking at the continents, the one with the fewest congregations, namely 58, is Australia. Around the world, not even one in every three congregations gathers in a building of its own! Of the approximately 18,000 church buildings in the possession of the NAC, a good 10,000 are located in Africa. The largest of these church buildings could accommodate the parliament with the largest number of members on earth, namely the Chinese National People's Congress, along with several other visitors. This is the church in Tafelsig in the Cape District, which offers seating for roughly 4,000 people.

Church attendance

In Europe and Africa, approximately one in three New Apostolic Christians regularly attends the divine services. This number drops to one in five in the Americas, and one in ten in Asia.



The widow's mite

In total, the Church annually collects as much money as the cost of Barack Obama's first presidential election campaign, namely 200 million Euros. Between regular offerings, donations, and Thanksgiving offerings alone, the New Apostolic Church collected around 180 million Euros in 2011, a sum equivalent to the budget of the United Nations. The Church invests the vast majority of these funds—approximately 60 million Euros—into its building programmes. This is equivalent to the total expenditures of the country of Gambia, or the costs incurred by a large metropolis in Southern Germany for the construction of a school centre in 2013.



Source: New Apostolic Church International (current as of 01.01.2012)

From Vancouver to Brandenburg

New Apostolic life around the world

Exchange, fellowship, charity in practice – without the dedication of volunteers, church would be inconceivable. Here is a portrait of New Apostolic daily life inside and outside the congregations of the twenty-first century—a trip around the world.



VANCOUVER



“One cold Sunday in winter our youth group set up some tables on the street in an area of Vancouver where there are many poor people. We distributed 300 servings of home-cooked food: rice with ham and vegetables. We also distributed blankets and clothing. It was all gone in an instant. We talked to some of these people and discovered just how quickly one can become homeless.”

Thomas and Andy Chhun



KITCHENER

“I always look forward to the meetings of our women’s group. My conversations with the other ladies give me strength and a new perspective.”

Emmy Klimmer (38)



MICHIGAN

„In addition to my duties as a Priest, I conduct the Southern Ontario Orchestra in Kitchener, which was established in 2003. The orchestra started with 45 members. The youngest was 12 years old, and the oldest was 70. No matter how great the age differences may be, all are enthusiastic about it.“

Marcus Jablonka (42)



DENVER



“In September 2012 three congregations in Denver were amalgamated into a single large congregation. Now there are enough ministers, teachers, and active members of all age groups in the congregation. To me as a District Elder it is especially important that we also support the smaller congregations in neighbouring states, which do not have such resources. Even though these congregations are between 150 and 800 kilometres away from our main Denver congregation, the members gladly travel these distances to ensure that as many of our brethren as possible can share in our wealth.”

Gale Fleisch



MIAMI

“For a number of years now we young people have been praising God with modern Christian music. In so doing we incorporate our Latin American culture, which is very popular in Florida. In this way we also inspire young people to take an interest in our faith. Praising God can give you strength and even be a lot of fun!”

Eileen and Elaine Ramirez (27)



AMERICA:
1,724 congregations
363,533 members
9,649 ministers
(As of 01 .01. 2012)



"I have been teaching Sunday School for 23 years. I love this job and so I decided, a few years back, to take some additional courses in order to be able to work with children who have learning disabilities."

Marta Inés Morales V

BOGOTA

"I work as a singing teacher in the music school of the New Apostolic Church in Argentina. I am always moved when I see young people—who started here as children—sing in the choir today, and it makes me happy that they can now pass along their knowledge and ability to others in the congregational choirs. Our endeavour is to ensure that this dedication can be handed down from generation to generation until the return of Jesus Christ."

Rosana Judith Bravo (42)



"I am a Deacon in Buenos Aires. Five years ago a Priest and I made our first visit to a clinic for mentally ill patients, where we celebrated Holy Communion and a prayer service with a sister in faith. Some of the other patients joined in to listen. Since then we have been making regular visits to the clinic, and in the meantime, six women have been sealed, and others also participate in these hours of blessing."

Fabián Antonio Pazos (47)



"Our project is called 'Juvestina' (Juventud Estudiantil de la Iglesia Nueva Apostólica). The objective of our network of

New Apostolic students is to establish contacts between young people who have come here from other areas in order to study. The young people can ask us questions about study programmes and anything else on their minds by e-mail. This service is intended for New Apostolic students from around the world. We look forward to getting to know you! Maranatha!"

Gabriela Leist (30) and Sabrina Neiro Rey (30)

BUENOS
AIRES



"I am a District Evangelist and have been a regional manager for one of the relief organisations of the New Apostolic Church in West Africa since 2002. I work in the countries of Ivory Coast, Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. It brings me great joy to distribute relief supplies to those in need, especially orphans, and thereby set an example of active charity."

Fritz Rohrer (65)



"When you come to another city to study it is nice when someone is there to catch you, like they do in the NACSS (New Apostolic Church Students Society). The student association is represented in all the large universities of the country. We students enjoy many experiences together. Special highlights are the divine services for students, which are also attended by believers from other denominations."

Nelisiwe Masina (24)



"My musical career began with free recorder instructions in my home congregation. Later on I also learned to play the clarinet, violin, viola, and bassoon, which became my main instrument during my studies. Today I am the first bassoonist and artistic director of the Cape Philharmonic Orchestra. When I was little, my parents inspired me to learn the recorder so that I could use it to glorify God. Today I can pass my knowledge and ability on to choirs and orchestras and thereby give back a little bit of that which the Church has given me."

Brandon William Phillips (33)

AFRICA:
50,403 congregations
7,933,342 members
205,820 ministers
(As of 01.01. 2012)

CAPE TOWN

"Our country has survived 20 years of devastating civil war. I wondered what I could do to contribute to peace in our country and to the growth of our Church. I understand a little about music, so I began teaching music because I believe that singing promotes reconciliation and a sense of community. I developed a musical instruction programme that also incorporates elements of our doctrine and peace education."

[Chipa M. Mwela \(44\)](#)



PROVINCE
OF MWINGI



"I am a volunteer with the local relief agency of the New Apostolic Church. I decided to help along in this effort because there is a lot to do and the organisation did not have any local staff. We teach Kenyan farmers how to generate greater yields."

[John Muthui Kangangi \(37\)](#)

"Since my childhood I have wanted to work for the Church. When I received the offer to work in the wafer bakery, this dream was fulfilled. All 1.4 million of my Zambian brothers and sisters celebrate Holy Communion with our wafers! The nice thing about my work is that it enriches my spiritual life as much as my human existence. I am grateful for this."

[Kahangu Mututa](#)



LUSAKA



"My vision is to help God's children lead independent and self-determined lives. I am committed to this because my goal is to show the love of God to my brothers and sisters who are in particular distress. In our country every tenth citizen is a New Apostolic Christian. There is a lot to do!"

[Martha Chilufya](#)

"The members from Nkohlakalo, a city about 400 kilometres west of Johannesburg, built their church on their own. As their District Elder I am very proud of them."

[Peter Mnisi \(52\)](#)



NKOHAKALO

JOHANNESBURG

"Twenty years ago I founded the first Amazing Grace children's home. Today my two children's homes offer shelter to over 150 orphans, abused children, and babies. Without the support of the Church I would never have managed that!"

[Grace Mashaba \(65\)](#)





"I volunteer for a Filipino women's project that functions by the motto of helping people help themselves. Sisters produce cards, purses, and cloth, sell these, and thereby contribute to their own livelihood as well as the relief organisation of the Church. I hope that the Filipino women's group can serve as an inspiration for our sisters around the world."

Dr. Reinhild Muster-Blog (58)



"My name is actually Estefana but all my sisters call me Esti. For eighteen years I have volunteered as custodian of the central church in Makati and the Church office in Manila. Besides looking after the church, I also take care of the altar decorations, the lighting, and the air conditioning of the church. My eight children and I sing in the choir, and the children also play in the orchestra."

Estefana Silvano (54)



"Although I am Catholic, I am happy to work for the relief organisation of the New Apostolic Church here in the Philippines. As a social worker it is important to me to help people who would otherwise not be able to help themselves."

Marlene Datario (34)



"I give angklung lessons. The angklung is a traditional Indonesian instrument made of bamboo that is also used in our divine services. Our angklung orchestras also perform at cultural awareness events, which helps spread awareness of our Church in the public."

Efra Istiawardhana (41)

MAKATI

INDONESIA

JAVA

AUSTRALIA:
58 congregations
4,914 members
213 ministers
(As of 01.01.2012)



"We young people from Port Moresby look after the musical education of the children in our congregation. We want to build up the children and give them the opportunity to engage their talents in the congregation and find joy in our fellowship. It is especially nice to see that our work also bears fruit: even at the age of three, little Rupa stood up in front of all the Sunday School children and sang a song for them with all her heart."

Gertrude Pouru (24)



"I love Jesus and I am happy that I have so many friends in the Church. 'Give me courage, Lord, to say Your name' is my favourite song."

Rupa Christopher (8)

PORT MORESBY



"Despite my disability I have participated in every Australian youth day since the age of fourteen. The youth day in Sydney was outstanding. During a cruise around the harbour we were able to talk to our Chief Apostle about our hopes and dreams. That was fantastic!

I even participated in the 2011 youth day in Jakarta, even though it is not easy for me to take airplane trips with my electric wheelchair. Fortunately there are always brothers and sisters who are willing to help."

Caleb Schulte (24)

BRISBANE

SYDNEY

"The ministers of the New Apostolic Church work as volunteers, and most of them do not have any theological training. In order to support them in their work we are inviting all the Australian ministers and their wives to seminars this year. The topics will be: 'The congregation as a land flowing with milk and honey', 'The value of serving', 'Strength through support', and 'Remembering the departed.'"

Apostel Trevor Williams (55)



AUCKLAND



"At our first meeting of EmpowHERed Women of Faith, we exchanged experiences of faith, received spiritual inspiration, and gained greater awareness of our opportunities. We dealt with various topics, for example how we can be inspired by the women of the Bible and how we can promote conversations about faith in our families, but we also discussed the topic of domestic abuse. In addition, we collected donations for the Shine organisation, which supports victims of domestic violence. We can hardly wait for our next meeting."

Amy Arendse (38)



JAIPUR

"I enrolled in the kindergarten of the New Apostolic school in Kherwara in the year 2001. Now I am in grade ten and can help my father sell vegetables because I have learned to do math in school. The Church has given me an opportunity because it costs nothing for me to attend and my parents would never have been able to pay tuition fees."

Mohamad Ayub (16)



ASIA:
5,339 congregations
1,159,657 members
9,709 ministers
(As of 01 .01. 2012)



"The Russian Youth Day was the first youth day I have ever experienced in my life. Just imagine: 1,300 young people from over seventeen countries came together on 8 August 2011! For me the trip was very long because there are approximately 5,000 kilometres between Vladivostok and Moscow. I was really impressed by the oneness of the ministers. I am sure that this event has helped forge us all into a single entity despite the enormous distances between us. It was unforgettable!"

[Ilja Bulatov \(16\)](#)

VLADIVOSTOK



"In 1998 the guiding hand of God brought me together with missionaries from the New Apostolic Church in Eastern Russia. Over the course of the years my initial positive impressions were confirmed by many experiences of faith. Today it is my job to translate in divine services when Apostles from Germany come to visit us. Around the world, voluntary interpreters ensure that our members not only hear their Chief Apostle or District Apostle, but that they also understand him!"

[Svetlana Bulatova \(43\)](#)



SHANGHAI

"I was present when three sisters and a little girl opened up a house-congregation for foreigners in Shanghai just over twelve years ago. Language, culture, daily life—all of these things may be foreign to visitors, but not the warmth and open fellowship they experience with us in turns every Sunday morning. This keeps us close to one another, even though the members who come to visit may change, and it is a place of rest and a source of strength in this demanding metropolis where discretion is advised for Christians."

[Sister K.](#)





"I work as an interpreter in Tamm, the northernmost congregation of Italy, which lies in the district of Ludwigsburg. The congregation offers Italian members a little piece of home and it is very important for them to experience the divine services, singing, and pastoral care in their mother tongue."

Volker Landenhammer (54)

TAMM

"Since 2010 I have been working as an editor for a monthly radio programme of the New Apostolic Church, which is broadcast over Bavarian radio. For this task I must always look at our faith, doctrine, and Church from an outside perspective in order to impart its contents appropriately to non-members. This enriches my personal life of faith."

Heike Stiegler (49)



STRASBOURG

REUTLINGEN



"I am a retired Evangelist and have been the volunteer responsible for technical issues in the Strasbourg district since 2007. In consultation with the building department in Metz I help resolve technical problems in the churches, namely everything that applies to the building, be it heating, sanitary facilities, lighting, speaker systems, or organs. My work brings me a great deal of happiness, especially because I can get involved in Church work too, even as a retired person. To this I apply the biblical statement that faith without works is dead."

Gérard Roth (74)



"Are my wife and I up to this task?" That was the question we asked after the birth of our first child. This question is asked by all young parents who take the prospect of raising a child seriously. Professionally sound experiences and food for thought comprise the content of the fifteen parent-letters I have been privileged to work on so far. As a Bishop it is a special concern of mine to help children in their life of faith. This is likely one of the most difficult, but also one of the most beautiful tasks for parents and ministers."

Eberhard Koch (63)



MUNICH



USTER



From my pastoral care experience as a District Evangelist, I know that 'coming out' situations are a special challenge for those affected, their families, and even their ministers. I am working on a pastoral care approach for homosexual, bisexual, and transsexual members in order that they can be offered optimal support, clarity, and support by their ministers."

Urs Frei (50)





VIENNA

"In March 2012 the New Apostolic Church in Vienna participated for the first time in an ecumenical 'Stations of the cross' walk for youth. The motto was: 'Your name—Christians on the way'. We proclaimed, sang about, and

exalted the name of God through prayers, readings, and music. The conclusion of the path was marked by the song 'Baba Yetu' (the Lord's Prayer in Swahili) performed by the youth choir of the New Apostolic Church of Vienna. The 'Stations of the cross' walk demonstrated how young Christians, both male and female, can rise above all differences and confessional definitions and focus on God and Jesus, and stand up consciously and joyfully for their faith."

[Christian Hiris \[32\]](#)



HAMBURG

"Grieving requires a special kind of pastoral care. I experienced this when my child died following an accident. For this reason I completed a course in grief counselling and have been providing care to grieving individuals, including some from our Church, for over ten years. Sharing memories with one another and exchanging thoughts about both our doubts and our faith enriches not only those in mourning, but me as well."

Leonore Matouschek (60)



"Hamburg-Borgfelde is my home congregation. This is where I belong and where I feel at home. It is certainly a special feeling to attend church here, where the history of the New Apostolic Church began in Germany."

Erika Junghans (76)



"In January 2012 I moved into Gute Hoffnung (Good Hope), the New Apostolic seniors' home in Oberhausen. I found new friends among the other residents, and not only in my brethren in faith! There is great cohesion in my household community and, even though not all the residents are New Apostolic, we always pray together before lunch."

Helmut Stuwe (81)



"Palisa lived in the USA with her daughter Lily, and I live in Frankfurt am Main. In 2010 we both became members of nacworld, the social network of the New Apostolic Church. A casual e-mail exchange turned into a love that spanned the continents. We are now married and are both very grateful that Christians from around the world can get into contact with one another through nacworld."

Palisa (36) und Werner Ruppe (56)

OBERHAUSEN

"I am 24 years old and have Down syndrome. The members accept me just as I am. I spend a lot of time with the Handicapped-Kids. This is an initiative that takes care of members with disabilities. Everyone is welcome, regardless of age. We all spend a good long time together during the integrated recreational events for youth, which is really nice. I have a good life because everyone likes me."

Tanja Scheibe (24)



COLOGNE

"As of this year I have been responsible for the audio-book library for the blind in Mainz, and I am happy that I can help make the contents of the "Our Family" magazine accessible to visually impaired members, with the help of some dedicated members from the Mainz district. In order to do this we get together six times each year to read divine service reports and other articles aloud and record these readings on CD. Then we send the recordings to our listeners."

Jörg Ragge (54)



FRANKFURT

MAINZ



"My job at the Church café in Brandenburg an der Havel links work and faith together. I have many conversations about our Church with visitors. The words our District Apostle Nadolny spoke at the opening of the café have turned out to be very true: 'For many people, the threshold into the café is lower than the threshold into the Church.' I find it exciting to make others aware of my Church in this way and to thereby profess my faith."

[Gudrun Weinholz \[63\]](#)



BRANDENBURG AN DER HAVEL



SALZGITTER

"We are children from the congregation of Lebenstedt and we really enjoy making movies. One time we recorded a piece of chime music about the Easter story, and children from the district of Braunschweig drew some pictures for it. The recording and pictures were edited into a film—and that way the Bible story really came to life for us. Even 'Our World', the children's magazine of the New Apostolic Church, did a report on it. We had so much fun!"

[Kevin \[14\]](#), [Kilian \[12\]](#), [Lara \[11\]](#), [Meriell \[8\]](#), [Tabea \[9\]](#), [Malte \[8\]](#), [Mia \[7\]](#)



Photos: Private



EUROPE:
3,053 congregations
463,452 members
23,586 ministers
(As of 01.01.2012)

**And if I go and prepare a place for you,
I will come again and receive you to Myself;
that where I am, there you may be also.**

John 14: 3

