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The European District Apostle Meeting arrives at some wide-ranging decisions

Ursula Riedel during her presentation on the subject of the teacher's manual that is to accompany the children's hymnal

Zurich. At the end of April, the District Apostles of Europe assembled for their first conference of the year. Among other things they approved the production of a so-called "Image DVD" about the New Apostolic Church. Production of this new DVD will be entrusted to the Church's own Public Relations Work Group in collaboration with a professional agency based in Germany.

The DVD is considered a follow-up project to the Church film "As alive as Christianity 2000 years ago," which is now to be taken out of circulation after 7 years. The "Image DVD" is to be implemented around the world and will make information about the organisation and doctrine of the New Apostolic Church available for specific target audiences. The date of completion is not yet known, however the District Apostles expressed great interest in seeing some results in the near future.

Also on the agenda of the European District Apostle Meeting was the European Youth Day 2009. The planning committee for this mega-event has commissioned a website for the youth day, which is to go live on 21 May—exactly two years before the actual date of the event. Its web address is: www.ejt2009.eu.

Annette Conrad of the Bischoff-Verlag, director of the Music Project Group, briefed the District Apostles on the current state of efforts to compile a new collection of hymns for New Apostolic congregational choirs. A modern hymn book for young people is also slated for production. Completion dates for these projects are not yet known, since the production of the Catechism has been given priority status.

Apostle Volker Kühnle, chairman of the Ecumenism Project Group, provided the District Apostles with detailed information on the status of ongoing discussions with the Association of Christian Churches (ACC) in Baden-Württemberg. Toward the end of the year, a comprehensive information letter is to be distributed to all New Apostolic congregations throughout Germany to ensure that all members are made aware of the latest developments.

The new children's hymnal of the New Apostolic Church "Stimmt mit ein" ["Join our song"] was well received by the District Apostles, and as a result of the positive response, the "Children and Music" Project Group was also commissioned to produce a teacher's manual to accompany the work. It is to contain instructions and material for making music with children, and is to supplement the children's hymnal with methodological and pedagogical advice. The work is slated to appear sometime in early 2008.

The teacher's manual is designed for all those who teach music to children, including children's choir leaders, singing teachers, directors of ensembles and instrumental groups, and any teachers involved in instruction for children. The teacher's manual can be especially helpful in providing essential help to teachers who have little musical training, in terms of how and what they may sing and play with the children in the context of their classes. The new book is structured into sections of text containing tips for musical practice and organisation, pedagogical advice, and a collection of supplementary pieces. It offers a wide variety of material, including supplementary compositions to the children's hymn book, spiritual canons, hymns for the daily and annual cycle, hymns of welcome, parting, and fellowship, hymns and exercises for breathing and vocal training, as well as rhythm exercises and speaking verses.

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