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Motto for 2022: "Together in Christ"

Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider's message for the upcoming year is about togetherness; he sees it on four levels. In his video message, he introduces the motto of the New Apostolic Church for 2022: "Together in Christ".

The New Year's address, verbatim:

Dear brothers and sisters,

Once again, a new year has begun. And once again we take time to reflect upon what keeps us together as New Apostolic Christians: the return of Jesus Christ. No matter what the coming months may hold in store for us, in faith we focus on the day of the Lord!

We firmly believe that the Lord will come in order to take *us* to Himself. Christ will not come to take a group of loners to Himself, but rather a community, an entity, namely the bridal congregation. In the year 2022, let us give special thought to this standard.

Our motto for this year is: "Together in Christ". May these words accompany us through the days ahead!

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

- first: our *fellowship with the triune God*
- second: our *fellowship in the divine service*

- third: *living together in fellowship*
- and finally: the *fellowship of the living and the dead*.

What does it mean to have *fellowship with the triune God*? – It is very simple: divine life is a life in fellowship. The triune God is a God of fellowship between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. And this God calls human beings into fellowship with Himself. Those who carry divine life within themselves will also long for fellowship with God and His own.

This fellowship with one another is something we experience first and foremost in our *fellowship in the divine service*. In the divine service, Jesus grants us His word, His grace, His body, and His blood. We also experience fellowship with those who share with us the same priorities, the same goal, and the same path.

Why is this fellowship in particular so important? – Because *living together in fellowship* prepares us for the return of the Lord, because we grow together here as a bridal congregation. Within it we learn to overcome that which divides us.

This does not mean that we must give up our own identity. It simply means that we must accept the otherness of our neighbour, that we must look beyond our own concerns, beyond our own congregation, our own country, and our own generation. Those who live in Christ are attentive, and they respond to the needs of their neighbour. They share in the joys and sorrows of others. Living together in Christ means being prepared to give to our neighbour and also to receive from him. And to really learn this, we have to come truly together.

There is still the *fellowship of the living and the dead*. Fellowship in Christ is stronger than death. The living and the departed prepare themselves together for the return of Christ. They experience the same divine services, receive the same sacraments, and pray for one another. At His return, the Lord will bring together the living and the dead. And then we will all be with him together forever.

That is our goal. And we work toward it collectively—together in Christ!

See, dear brethren, this is what our motto is about:

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

No matter what the new year brings, please be assured: God is with His own. And the Apostles pray for you.

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

31 December 2021

