New Apostolic Church International

Extensive resolutions in Zurich

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Zurich. The District Apostle Meeting in Zurich has passed some sweeping resolutions, most of which relate to the New Apostolic Church's concept of ministry. One of these resolutions was to approve a date for the concept's global introduction.

Launch of the concept of ministry starting on Pentecost 2019

The District Apostles have come to an important resolution with respect to the concept of ministry. Pentecost 2019 has been chosen as the key date for its worldwide launch. The Chief Apostle himself will present the concept to all interested members in advance of Pentecost by way of a video address. Some further training on the subject will also be provided for ministers before Pentecost.

"The elaboration of the concept of ministry is an extremely important matter for the global Church," said Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider over a year ago in a divine service for ministers in October 2017, which was transmitted throughout Europe by satellite. "Our intention is to define the ministries and the ministerial structure, as well as the services and leadership functions, in a clear and understandable way."

The activity of the ministers is a service equipped with divine authority that is issued through ordination. Deacons, Priests, Apostles, and the Chief Apostle will continue to be ordained. By contrast, the spiritual leadership of congregations, districts, and regions will in future be conferred by way of appointment. Other spiritual services, which are not necessarily associated with a ministry—for example, teaching activities—will in future be conferred by "assignment". Here a blessing is requested in prayer so that the assigned individual may fulfil a particular service.

These decisions have already been implemented on the ministerial level of the Apostles: District Apostles Jürg Zbinden (Switzerland) and Peter Schulte (Western Pacific) were appointed, not ordained as per previous practice. This practice will be expanded to apply to the priestly level of ministry as of Pentecost 2019.

Expansion of the liturgy in divine services

The liturgy within divine services for the youth is to be expanded. The District Apostles also discussed new possibilities for this. For example, it has been decided that an additional Bible reading will now be possible. This is to be discussed with the young people in advance of a given divine service, and then read out in that service. In principle, this will now also be possible for the so-called "Bible study" services that take place once each month in the congregation. A corresponding Bible reading will be suggested in the Divine Service Guide on which these divine services are based. A broader context would also be advantageous for the sermon in divine services dedicated to Bible study, according to the District Apostles.

As an option, it will also be possible to replace the hymn of repentance with a moment of silence, depending on the situation or the congregation. Interactive discussions with members, or prayers by members of the congregation, can take place either before or after divine services for the youth.

Redemption through Jesus Christ

In his spiritual introduction to the meeting, the Chief Apostle explained the importance of being connected to the Lord Jesus Christ and the gospel. The message of the gospel is joyful because it speaks of redemption and deliverance, among other things—which is a worthwhile goal for all Christians. The Church leader then went into great detail with respect to the goal of faith of New Apostolic Christians.

“Unfortunately, not all of our brothers were able to attend,” noted Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider at the beginning of the session. District Apostle Tshitshi Tshisekedi from the Congo and District Apostle Helper Patrick Mkhwanazi from South Africa were prevented from attending due to problems securing their travel visas.

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