



New York. Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber, the international leader of the New Apostolic Church, expressed words of farewell at the close of the two-day fall session of this year's worldwide District Apostle Meeting in New York. These words of farewell applied to two different situations: to begin with, the Church leader commemorated the recently departed District Apostle Norberto Batista from Buenos Aires, Argentina, and all in attendance rose from their seats for a minute of silence. Then the focus turned to District Apostle Richard Freund (68), who was participating in his last such international conference. On Sunday, 12 October 2008, he retired from ministry after 50 years of active service.

"Not only does your name mean 'friend', you really *are* a friend!" It was with these words that Chief Apostle Leber expressed his thanks to the American District Apostle, who also played host to the two-day conference in the American metropolis. This was also the last District Apostle Meeting for District Apostles Alfons Tansahtikno (Indonesia) and Hagen Wend (Germany), and District Apostle Helper Henri Higelin (France).

In addition to questions of faith, the agenda contained many items of an organisational nature. For example, the District Apostles and their helpers were presented with a newly designed Image-DVD, which is to be employed as a multilingual calling card of the Church.

District Apostle Andrew Andersen from Australia reported on the work of the New Apostolic Church in the continent "down under". He said it was his intent to especially promote the establishment of congregations in the cities. The extensiveness of the country has always presented obstacles for pastoral care, which is why, according to the District Apostle, it is so important to structure New Apostolic support stations in a more closely meshed fashion.

The national Church leaders also approved a new baptism certificate, which has been amended to reflect the revised concept of Holy Baptism in the New Apostolic Church. In addition, they agreed to present the global finances of the Church in an overview period covering the last four years. Previous to this, the central organ of the New Apostolic Church, "Our Family" had always reported twice annually on the disbursements and revenue of the Church in Germany and Switzerland. The first international overview is to appear in the December edition of the Church magazine.

The vast majority of the District Apostle conference dealt with questions of faith. With great care and diligence the Church leaders spent several hours discussing theological questions on the concept of the Church and its sacraments. The agenda also dealt with items related to the introduction of the new Catechism. At present,

the Church leadership estimates that this new textbook on the New Apostolic Church's principles of faith will be ready by the year 2010.

*All District Apostles and District Apostle Helpers of the New Apostolic Church meet twice each year for District Apostle Meetings. This year's fall session took place in New York because Richard Freund, the District Apostle responsible for the USA, was scheduled to retire from active ministry on Sunday, 12 October 2008.*

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