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First District Apostle Meeting in Asia

Singapore. It was the very first District Apostle Meeting ever to take place on the Asian continent - and also the last one with Chief Apostle Richard Fehr, who has made it known that he will be retiring from ministry in a divine service this coming Pentecost.

It is quite natural for first or final events to take on special significance, and such was also the case here. In his welcome address at the end of the session, hosting District Apostle Leslie Latorcai (Canada) reminded everyone of the familiar saying: "All's well that ends well". He related these words to the 17-year term of office of the chief apostle. Through all these years the latter had always had "the courage to make changes", said the district apostle.

Before breaking for lunch, all district apostles and district apostle helpers from around the world were given a bit of insight into some of the many changes that have been implemented over the last 17 years. An impressive slide presentation summarised the many topics with which the District Apostle Meetings have dealt over the past years. These topics have affected all domains of church life, including doctrine, organisation, legal questions, liturgy, and much more.

Among other things, the Singapore District Apostle Meeting also dealt with the question as to the point at which a person must be declared dead. A corresponding elaboration by the Project Group "Medicine" entitled "Brain death / Cardiac death" will be introduced in all District Churches in the form of an established conceptual model. We will shortly be publishing a special article on this subject.

The participants of the District Apostle Meeting were also brought up to date on the status of the hymn translations from the new German-language hymnal. By the 2005 Pentecost service, a number of hymns should be ready to sing in as many languages as possible. At some point afterward, a total of 50 hymns in 83 languages are to comprise the common hymn content of all New Apostolic brethren around the globe. These hymns will be used for special divine services with satellite transmission. The chief apostle and the district apostles were happy to hear that a great many brethren have in the meantime purchased the new German-language hymnal. It is to be officially implemented in the congregations starting on Easter 2005.

Another emphasis of the District Apostle Meeting was an elaboration on the topic of "The New Apostolic Christian's belief in the beyond". The District Apostle Meeting decided to have a brochure produced on the subject in German and English. The district apostles will decide on its translation into other languages as needed. We will also be publishing a special article on this subject on our Homepage in the near future.

Finally the participants turned their attention to the tsunami disaster in the South Indian Ocean. Enormous amounts of donations had been collected throughout the world. Many New Apostolic Christians also took part in this effort! Well over two million Euros have made their way into the aid accounts of the Church, and the donations have continued right up to the present. The District Apostle Meeting decided to let this relief effort come to a conclusion.

The District Apostle Meeting lasted an entire day, and then the chief apostle, all district apostles, and all district apostle helpers flew on to Jakarta (Indonesia), to take part in a festive divine service there on Sunday, 06.02.2005. This too was a first: never before have all district apostles of the world gathered for a divine service with the chief apostle in Indonesia. You can read our article on the subject at www.nak.org/news/20050207-107-gb.html.

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