Festive divine service in Kitchener

Kitchener. Nearly a year after the funeral of the retired District Apostle Kraus in November of last year, Chief Apostle Richard Fehr once again found himself in Kitchener, that distinguished congregation of rich traditions in south eastern Canada. In a festive divine service on 31 October 2004 he retired District Apostle Helper Harold Eckhardt and Apostle Edward Deppner.

Harold Walter Eckhardt (68) became a sub-deacon in 1955, and can thus look back on 49 years of ministerial activity in the New Apostolic Church. Over the last eleven years he served as an apostle, and of these he served nine years as a district apostle helper. In his thank-you address, Chief Apostle Fehr characterised him as a man with a "kind and loving heart". District Apostle Helper Eckhardt worked "tirelessly and with great wisdom in eleven countries", said the chief apostle.

Edward Deppner (67) was born in Hamilton, Canada but today lives in the Democratic Republic of Congo. For a total of 52 years he served as a minister of the Church, having been ordained a sub-deacon at the early age of 15! His ordination to the apostle ministry took place in 1981. The chief apostle lauded him for his "extraordinary missionary activity", and for having "contributed in great blessing toward the development of the Church in many countries of the world".

In the same divine service, two couples - Apostle Reinhard and Sister Sylvia Jabs, and Bishop Michael and Sister Angela Wagner - received a blessing on their silver wedding anniversary.

The festive divine service was based on a passage from Luke 21: 36: "Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man." The chief apostle also recalled the familiar passage from Matthew 26: 41: "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." In this connection he said: "The weak flesh can be overcome through faith, love, and hope! Our spirit is willing, because it allows itself to be led and guided by the Holy Spirit."

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