

REPORTS FROM THE REGIONS

EVENTS – FINANCES – FUTURE PLANS

NO. 95 EASTER 2022

Bavaria

From Bavaria there are very warm and peaceful Easter greetings.

Dorothea Humérez

Great Britain-Ireland

One of the striking experiences that many of us had in the first, long lockdown was how it was possible to take part in the service spiritually from afar. It would often happen in those first, early days, that I would take a service in the church which was outwardly empty. Afterwards I would speak to someone on the phone or read an email, where they told me how powerful the service had been for them. I doubt if any of us started to think that we could dispense with attending the service in person, but it was reassuring to realize that a different kind of ‘being there’ was still possible.

Many of us gained experiences in another realm during the last two years, as well: we were forced to come to grips with zoom and other ways of meeting ‘virtually’. Some priests – myself included – made modest attempts at using these technologies for delivering talks or conducting conferences. We all had the chance of experiencing the benefits that these technologies could bring, as well as their limitations.

In some churches and other groups, it seemed obvious that ‘live-streaming’ services would be a good way of helping people to attend them, who could not otherwise be there. In the meantime, it has become an almost automatic assumption that a funeral service will be live-streamed, and some of my colleagues have told me that, like me, they have faced some awkward situations when we have had to explain that we have an undertaking amongst the priests of The Christian Community that we will not record or transmit any of our services.

This undertaking is rooted in our understanding of the reality of the ritual word, which is an event that unfolds in the living connection of voice to ear and heart to heart. However, this does not mean that we cannot be part of the service if we are not able to be present in person. As we experienced in the long lockdown, we can still participate: we might light a candle, think of the person who has died and even accompany the stages of the funeral service. Priests can offer help here: we can share the thoughts that will flow into the eulogy, perhaps even before the funeral; we can give an orientation about the structure of the service and what is happening there. All of this can help when we want to join in the stream of life that flows into the world whenever a true ritual is celebrated. Having taken part in funerals held by other groups via a video stream, as well as Christian Community funerals in which I participated while sitting quietly at home, I can say from my own experience that the connecting to what was going on through inner participation was far more powerful than watching a ceremony on my laptop.

These thoughts are intended as a help in a situation where our practice may seem counterintuitive and out of touch with modern life. I sense there is an opportunity here for deepening the discovery that the last two years, with all their problematic sides, made possible: we can be connected to each other from afar without any need for technological assistance.

We are delighted to be able to plan an Annual Meeting this year, the centenary year of the founding of The Christian Community. This will take place in Forest Row from 10th-12th June, with the theme “Creating Sacred Spaces – Where Present and Future meet”.

Tom Ravetz

Middle Europe and Switzerland, Southwest Europe

nothing new to report

Christine Jost

Netherlands and Flanders

In the Netherlands and Flanders Region we are preparing for the celebrations of the 100th anniversary of the Christian Community. Together with the Anthroposophical Society in the Netherlands, a conference will be held in Zeist on Saturday 14 May. On this day we will look back as well as forward. Peter Selg has been researching the impulses underlying the Christian Community for years. He will speak about this in two lectures and also about his books *Menschen-Weihehandlung*, *Rudolf Steiner and the Priestly Community of the Christian Renewal and Second Coming*, and *Becoming and Being of the Christian Community* which have recently been translated into Dutch.

A series of workshops and discussion groups will take place on the day to explore possibilities for fruitful collaboration between the two movements of Anthroposophy and the Christian Community. The day will be rounded off with an interview with Peter Selg.

The event will be partly in German (the two lectures) and in English (the interview) and can be followed from abroad via a livestream. Go to: www.100jaarchristengemeenschap.org for more information,

Karin de Leeuw

North America

Correction: the priestly ordinations were celebrated on Ascension weekend 2021. Otherwise there is nothing new to report.

Craig Wiggins

no message from:

Australia and New Zealand

Central-Germany **Japan**

Nordic Countries

North- and Northwest Germany

Russia

Southern Africa

West Germany

South America

Our big region, full of life and, after the pandemic, with a desire for new activities, is experiencing something special: At the moment we are only eight active priests in South America and we are waiting with enthusiasm for new colleagues.

We are preparing for a South American celebration for the 100th anniversary, ‘Stand Up!’ which will take place in July in four places at the same time. Because of current circumstances, it is not possible to meet all together in one place.

Telma Dave

Carlos Maranhão returned to Brazil from Colombia in January and will work mainly in the congregations there. South America is preparing its 100th anniversary celebrations for July. There will be meetings in Buenos Aires, São Paulo, Lima and Cali from 20 to 24 July. In November 2021, An-

dreas Loos visited two groups in Mexico who want to build a Christian community in Mexico City and Colima. There is also interest in Guadalajara and Cuernavaca.

Andreas Loos

Proseminar Latin America semi-virtual

For some years now, priests in South America have seen the need to start a seminary initiative in Spanish and Portuguese. Renato Gomes, while working in Botucatu, started such an initiative, in which various colleagues in our region participated with courses and also support in other ways. When Renato had to retire from most of his priestly duties, this first pro-seminary returned to the realm of dreams and desires that we all shared in South America but found no way back to reality at the time. With the pandemic, new possibilities opened up for us, and with the use of Zoom, we began to think anew about a pro-seminary.

The Synod in South America meets once a month, also through Zoom, and last year we discussed the need to revive what Renato had started. The Synod commissioned Telma Dave, Carlos Maranhão and Pablo Corman to look at the possibilities and come up with a programme and plan to restart a seminary initiative in our region. After presenting a rough draft, the Synod made proposals and an invitation went out to all congregations, branches and all our other contacts in Latin America and Spain. More than 50 people responded to this first invitation and expressed their interest in participating in a pro-seminary.

We developed some criteria in order to select the most suitable candidates for this first trimester and on the evening of 10 March we held our first Welcome Zoom meeting with 30 participants and priests who could be present. From now until St John's there will be weekly presentations every Thursday for an hour and a half. One colleague will look at a specific season, its corresponding epistles and gospel readings with the participants for three weeks. One colleague will begin with Passiontide, then the course will progress gradually with other colleagues through Holy Week, Easter, Ascension and Pentecost. Participants will additionally liaise with a local priest or a remote tutor if the participant does not live near an existing congregation. Each "seminarian" will develop a plan for participating in the congregational life, engage in an artistic activity and choose a theme that he or she will develop and present to everyone at the end of the term. Participants will also form groups to share with each other their course work without a priest being present.

A meeting between participants and priests during our regional conference for the 100th anniversary "Levántate" (stand up) is also being planned. Depending on travel restrictions, this meeting will take place in person with all or for some virtual. Telma, Carlos and Pablo will follow the process and its progress during the first trimester. At the end of this trimester there will be an evaluation among the priests and with the students as a group and individually before deciding if, when and how to continue. In this way, we hope and expect to be in a position to welcome new and much needed colleagues to our Spanish/Portuguese region sooner rather than later.

Paul Corman

There are currently three priests working in Brazil. Carlos Maranhão looks after the various congregations in Brasília, Belo Horizonte, Campinas, Curitiba and Florianópolis. Viviane Trunkle and I live and work in São Paulo and from here we also look after the congregation in Botucatu, for which Viviane continues to be responsible. One of us travels to Botucatu every fortnight. Brazil is holding elections this year that will be decisive for Brazil's further development after four long years under Bolsonaro's presidency.

Julian Rögge

Southwest Germany

With the year 2022, a process of change also began in our region. In several congregations a change of priest is imminent: In Mannheim, Mrs Kristina Parow said goodbye on 20 March after four years. On 10 April her successor, Mrs Barbara Peter-Schult, will be inducted and welcomed there – both

by the new lenker of our region, Mrs Irma Beridze-Gössler, who will continue to be involved in the congregation in Karlsruhe. The change of lenker was carried out by our Erzoberlenker João Torunsky on 4 April at the Regional Synod.

Even before that, on 3 April, in Überlingen, as the last act of the previous lenker Hellmut Voigt, Mrs. Ines Kolb was inducted and welcomed into the congregation. She had been ordained in Berlin on 12 March and will now complement the group of colleagues in Überlingen. On 10 April, Georg Schaar will leave this congregation. For almost nine years he has been responsible for essential parts of the congregational work – including the care of the congregation in Villingen-Schwenningen – and is now moving to share responsibility for the seminary in Stuttgart.

However, since Mrs Beridze-Gössler can only dedicate half of her time to the congregation in Karlsruhe due to her lenker responsibility, reinforcement for the colleagues there is needed. This support will be provided by Mrs Gisela Hübner, who has been working in Erfurt until now, from Whitsun onwards.

Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine and the resulting stream of people who have had to leave their homes, there has been a great willingness to help in several of our congregations, which is expressed both in donations and in the provision of material goods and housing. For example, the first people from Ukraine have arrived in the congregations of Konstanz/Kreuzlingen and Wahlwies, as well as in the congregation of Saarbrücken, where our colleague Tatjana Maydanyuk – herself Ukrainian – works tirelessly for incoming refugees.

In several congregations, peace devotions were organised immediately after the outbreak of the war, in which many people took part. The common stream of prayer cannot directly intervene outwardly, but it sends strengthening forces of the heart to the spiritual powers that are effective worldwide through thoughts and feelings.

In the run-up to the big international conference on the 100th anniversary of the Christian Community in Dortmund in October, the subject of the sacraments is beginning to trigger activities in the pastoral circle. In so-called sacrament labs, each of the German regions, in cooperation with a non-German region, will focus on one of the seven sacraments. The Southwest German region, together with the Swiss and Southwest European region, will turn to the sacrament of confession (or perhaps better: the accompaniment of destiny). Now we hope that also from the congregations of the regions kindred spirits will be won in order to find new approaches regarding this experience.

Hellmut Voigt

Wuerttemberg

There are reports in Württemberg that the congregation in Murrhardt has had to cope with great worries regarding the electricity supply and other infrastructure. At a congregational meeting on 8 January 2022, the decision was made to leave the beautiful Hohenstein House with our Michael Church. A date for the final service of the Consecration of Man is being planned for the second half of May. We will keep you updated.

In Nürtingen and Bietigheim we have been able to set up interim arrangements with substitute priests because of time off and to relieve the priests.

Martin Merckens

Foundation

Change in Substanzenversand (substance shipping)

After many years of well-proven work, Anett Knabe has handed over the dispatch of substances. In the future Ruth Deryckere from Berlin will take care of the shipping. Please pass on this information in your regions and congregations. From now on, please send your orders to the following address:

Stiftung Die Christengemeinschaft (Foundation)
Substanzenversand

Ruth Deryckere
Gubener Str. 47 a
10243 Berlin
E-Mail: substanzenversand@christengemeinschaft.org
Tel.-Nr. +49-179-4245120

Thomas Nayda

Verband der Sozialwerke

After a break of two years, we are happy to be able to run our helpers training course (youth leader course) again and the Easter camp for children this year. It is almost like a new start. And we are very excited about how it will be! The camps for children and young people are very popular, but there are still places available in some camps.

Last year, we received a large earmarked inheritance which was to be used for facilities for the care of the elderly. Since we do not operate any such facilities ourselves, we have supported and made possible projects and renovations with a total volume of € 200,000 in three facilities that are closely connected to the Christian Community.

For children and young people who have fled from Ukraine, we are providing eighteen places this year, two in each camp. If the need should be greater and it seems pedagogically sensible, the number of places can be increased. The costs are covered by us, the Association of Social Work of the Christian Community.

Please contact Dietmar Schwarz directly if you know children and/or young people for whom such a recreational time could be considered: d.schwarz@cg-sozialwerke.de or 040-41 33 02 72. We hope to be able to contribute something to the promotion of resilience and salutogenesis of the often traumatised children and young people.

Dietmar Schwarz

Haus auf dem Berge

Dear friends!

The Haus auf dem Berge in Hauteroda has already been “on the brink” twice. In 1990 and 2009, those responsible at the time (the region/association) had to decide whether to discontinue operations.

Now the board of the Sozialwerk der Christengemeinschaft in Ostdeutschland e.V. as the sole shareholder of the “Haus auf dem Berge gGmbH” has had to decide, after detailed and repeated consultations also with the regional council of the Central Germany Region and with the involvement of the priesthood of the region, that the operation of the house will be discontinued on 31 December 2021. The main reasons for this certainly very painful decision were

- the financial situation of the house, which has been precarious for a long time and has been exacerbated by the Corona-related closures over several months in each of the past two years;
- the growing drinking water problem. The water supply via the in-house well has not been guaranteed in terms of quantity for years. Now the pumped water also no longer complies with the latest drinking water regulations. The transitional approval by the relevant authority for continued use as drinking water expires this summer. An investment in a desalination plant or the development of a new water vein or the connection to the municipal water supply would be necessary. Financing through public subsidies is not possible;
- the acute serious illness of the long-standing Managing Director and the associated great uncertainty as to whether his strength will be sufficient for the responsible tasks after recovery.

Furthermore, the board has decided to explore possibilities for the sale of the property if no initiative can be found to resume operations in the current form or even in a completely new form.

The liquidation of the company will stretch until early summer 2023. The fixed costs of the house will remain largely unchanged, which will lead to a great burden for the Sozialwerk. Financial help is welcome!

If you have any ideas or questions, please contact the board

sozialwerk.ost@christengemeinschaft.org or Reichenbachstr. 30, 01069 Dresden).

Dresden, 22 February 2022 Armin Knabe

Meetings/Conferences

LOGOS - Consecrating Humanity

Next autumn we are finally there: Our Christian Community will be 100 years old and wants to give an impulse for the start into its second century with the big worldwide Michaelmas Conference.

After the strenuous restrictions on contact due to the Corona measures, and now even more so due to the war in Ukraine, it has become clearer than ever to me how important genuine encounters between people are. Between people who want to fill their time together with meaning and value, with what is true and good. With regard to our conference, this means for me: now more than ever. In autumn we will try and realise what is possible and what is in our power.

A rich programme of lectures, discussion groups, workshops, concerts and other cultural events awaits us in autumn. A very special focus will be the ordinations of priests, which will take place during the conference. In addition, there will be separate series of events for each of the seven sacraments. And there will also be many opportunities to meet and for exchange. Details of the conference programme will be published on our website (www.logos-2022.org) from Easter. In the meantime, registration is open for the conference. You can register online or in writing; registration forms are available in the congregations, or if required we can post one out to you.

We are often asked about possible Corona regulations. We are working on that. Our goal is clear: there should be no restrictions from our side regarding participation in the conference. What might be required at the conference will probably only be clarified in August or even September. We will keep you informed on our website. It is important that you do not wait with your registration until all this has been clarified. We can handle a few cancellations much better than 1,000 registrations during the last four weeks prior to the conference. We will of course make allowances in the event of cancellations with regards the reimbursement of participant fees.

Conference office: Hainallee 40, 44139 Dortmund, info@logos-2022.org, Tel. +49-2104-14 56 82

Ulrich Goebel, priest in the Christian Community

no message from:

Körperschaftsverband (KV) **Haus Freudenberg**
Treuhandverwaltung zur Förderung der Christengemeinschaft e.V.

Translated by Gabriele Kuhn – many thanks to her!

****END****