



FELSISA Witness VELSISA Boodskapper

Newsletter of the Free Evangelical Lutheran Synod in South Africa
Nuusbrief van die Vrye Evangelies-Lutherse Sinode in Suid-Afrika



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Title page: On the 4th and 5th May 2010 the Synodical Convention was held in Durban. A new Synodical Council was elected, as well as a new Bishop and Deputy Bishop. The title of „Bishop“ will be used in stead of the title „President“, as was decided during the Synodical Convention.

On the Title page, f.l.t.r.:

Pastor Rüdiger Gevers, Mr Herbert Schulz, Bishop Dr. Dieter Reinstorf,
Mr Manfred Johannes, Deputy Bishop Dieter Schnackenberg.

FELSISA Witness / VELSISA Boodskapper

Commissioned by the Synodical Council of the FELSISA

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*Please send your contributions, remarks and questions to the editor.
All contributions for the next edition to be submitted by **9. August 2010.***

Laat U koninkryk kom!

(Matt 6,10)

Deur Pastoor Rüdiger Gevers, Panbult

Laat u koninkryk kom. So bid ons by elke Onse Vader. Maar hierdie bede blyk met die eerste oogopslag niks in gemeen te hê met dit wat ons belewe. In baie dele van die wêreld is die kerk aan die afneem, is daar skanddade, wat die kerk van Jesus Christus 'n slegte naam gee en sodoende God se Naam onder ons onheilig.

Iets moet anders gedoen word, daar moet beter gepreek word, sodat die kerk weer kan groei, word geëis. Dikwels word so gemaak asof God se koninkryk van ons doen en late afhanklik is.

Maar is die koms van die koninkryk van God van ons doen en late afhanklik? Martin Luther stel dit baie duidelik in sy verduideliking van die 2de bede: *“Die koninkryk van God kom, ongeag of ons vir die koms daarvan bid of nie.”* God se koninkryk is nie afhanklik van dit wat mense doen nie, maar berus op dit wat God die **Vader** deur sy **Seun** Jesus Christus in die krag van die **Heilige Gees** gedoen het.

Dis nie deur ons eie verdienste dat ons verdien om in God se koninkryk ingelaat te word nie. Dis in waarheid die **drie-enige God**, wat Hom oor ons ontferm en ons uit die boeie van die bose magte bevry.

Hoe gebeur dit? vra Luther. Nie anders as deur die prediking van die evangelie. Waar die evangelie van ons verlossing deur die offerdood van Jesus Christus verkondig word, daar is God sy koninkryk te vinde. Waar die vergiffenis van ons sondes om Jesus Christus ontwil aan ons verkondig word, ontstaan geloof, kom God se koninkryk van genade na ons toe.

Die koms van die koninkryk van God is dus

ook nie van die kwaliteit van die predikante afhanklik nie, maar van die boodskap van ons verlossing in Jesus Christus, wat in die geloof aanvaar word.

Dit geskied, skryf Luther, *wanneer die hemelse Vader ons sy Heilige Gees gee sodat ons uit genade sy woord glo en godsalig daarvolgens lewe, hier en nou, maar ook in die ewige hiernamaals.*

Daarom bid ons God vir sy Heilige Gees, sodat die evangelie van Jesus Christus suiwer en onvervals verkondig en in die geloof aanvaar word, sodat ons self in die geloof mag bly en in liefdesdade mag toeneem, sodat sy koninkryk van genade oor die hele wêreld uitgebrei en die mag van die duiwel vernietig word en ons aan die einde saam met alle gelowiges in God se ewige koninkryk sal leef in volkome geregtigheid en saligheid.

Dis 'n geweldige gebed. Kan mens in jou eie kamer vir so iets groots bid? As ons op die kleine krag van ons kerk kyk, op die swakheid van die mense wat die Woord verkondig, op ons eie sonde en teleurstellings in die verlede, dan mag dit wees, dat ons begin twyfel. Daarom wil ons Luther in sy Groot Kategisme te woord laat kom: Dit is “...veels te groot as dat 'n mensehart ooit sou kon waag om dit te begeer as Hy (God) nie self **gebied** het, dat ons daarom moet bid nie. Maar omdat Hy God is, wil Hy ook die eer hê dat Hy veel meer en oorvloediger gee as wat enigeen kan begryp ... en van ons begeer Hy niks meer as dat ons baie en groot dinge van Hom moet bid nie, en daarteenoor toorn Hy as ons nie met vrymoedigheid bid en opeis nie:

Dis soos wanneer die rykste, magtigste koning 'n arm bedelaar sou uitnooi om te vra net wat hy begeer en bereid is om 'n groot, koninklike geskenk te gee, en daardie dwaas sou niks meer vra as 'n

bietjie aalmoessop nie ...

So beteken dit vir God 'n belediging en oneer as ons, aan wie Hy soveel onuitspreeklike gawes bied en toesê, sy vrygewigheid minag en geen vertrouwe het om te ontvang en dit skaars waag om 'n stukkie brood te vra. Dit kom alles deur die skandelige ongelooft, wat niks goeds van God verwag nie."

Met hierdie versekering, dat God ons gebed om sy koninkryk te laat kom, nie minag nie,

maar dit gebied en belowe het om te verhoor, sluit ons nou af met 'n gebed, wat Luther in oorstemming met die derde bede van Onse Vader gedig het.

Gebed: *Ons Vader in die hemel hoog, gee dat u koninkryk mag kom, / in Christenland en heidendom; / die Heilige Gees kom by ons woon / met al sy gawes velerlei / die duiwel en sy groot misbruik / verbreek, voor hom u kerk bewaar. Amen.*

57. Synodical Convention 4-5 May 2010, in Durban

by Pastor Helmut Straeuli, Durban

The theme of the Synodical Convention, which took place in the hall of the St Peter's Congregation in Westville, Durban, this year was titled, 'Works of Kindness'.

As Lutherans we may at times get a bit nervous around the term 'works' -after all we confess that we are saved by grace and not by works.

Yet, a faith which does not express itself in works - in 'deeds of kindness' - is an empty faith. What are these 'works of kindness',



what do these deeds refer to.

As far as the convention was concerned they may be found in the fact that for the first time in the history of the Free Evangelical-Lutheran Church in South Africa (FELSISA) the official language used was English.

For those who know the history of our church that is a great step indeed. For those members of Synod who have not kept up with developments, it may be difficult to swallow that German is no longer the official means of communication at Synodical level. In spite of misgivings on the part of some, it maybe stated here that proceedings went very smoothly.

Those who chose to speak in German or even in Afrikaans were free to do so, and their contributions were then translated into English.

'Deeds of kindness', as I shall render the theme - perhaps that is also a reference to the spirit in which the convention took place. It was one of the notable aspects of the convention that delegates dealt with one another with respect, and with a sense of the fact that we live from the love, which our Lord 'did' to us.

'Deeds of kindness' - these became visible in what was probably the most difficult decision of the convention, of whether to accept the congregation at Diepkloof. For many the question is, whether this congregation which is made up of only black members, will be able to be integrated into the - mostly white membership - of FELSISA. The fact that the convention voted to accept the application for membership - albeit as 'associate' members of Synod to begin with -, is an indication that our identity as church is not determined by culture and language. Rather we live from the fact that our Lord 'calls and gathers' us as his church in this country of ours by the work of His Spirit.

'Deeds of kindness' - that is something we experienced also in the meals prepared for us, in (filter) coffee and cake. We would like to thank all who helped in this regard from the bottom of our 'stomachs'. Included in the 'deeds of kindness' may be the calling to pray for all people - specifically for those elected at the convention to



carry out the decisions passed by the meeting.

'Deeds of kindness' - should they not characterise all we do, especially as the people who belong to Christ; as people who wish to observe His Word and Commission.

What characterises the church, however, is not what we teach or preach, but that our life bears witness to the love for one another (John 13:35).



Bishop Dr. Dieter Reinstorf

At the 57th Synodical Convention of the FELSISA, on 5 May in Durban, a new bishop of Synod was elected, Dr. Dieter Reinstorf .

Presently Dieter Reinstorf and his family live in Cape Town, where he is the pastor of the St Thomas congregation since 2003. He was born and grew up near Wittenberg congregation (Mpumalanga), on the farm of his parents. He initially attended the primary school at Wittenberg, and later on for his secondary education at Treverton College near Mooiriver in Kwazulu-Natal. After school in preparation for studying theology he enrolled at the University of Pretoria to study the ancient languages of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, as well as German, Zulu, and Philosophy. In 1987 he completed his 2nd Theological Exam and was ordained and installed as the pastor of St Paul's Congregation in Pretoria. In 1992

the Synodical Council of the FELSISA commissioned Dieter Reinstorf to continue with post-graduate studies in theology as he was earmarked for a teaching position at the Lutheran Theological Seminary. As a result he enrolled in a Masters course at the University of Pretoria, majoring in New Testament studies, with Practical and Systematic Theology as secondary subjects. In 1994 he accepted a call to the St Peter's Congregation in Greytown.

In 1997 Dieter Reinstorf completed his Masters' Degree. In 2002 he obtained his Doctorate, the topic of his dissertation being *Metaphorical stories in Luke's narrative world: a challenge to a conventional world-view*. This topic was motivated by the realisation that a society facing changes is often characterised by the setting up of boundaries. In the works of Luke (Gospel and Acts of the Apostles) Dieter Reinstorf recognises a society in crises. In this tense situation Luke promotes reconciliation. Reconciliation is, among other, achieved by the retelling of Jesus' parables. The parables challenge the listeners to view their past conventional and exclusive perceptions in a new way. In his narratives Luke depicts a world (the Kingdom of God) in which everybody is welcome.

In an interview with Bishop Dr. Reinstorf, assistant editor of the FELSISA Witness/Boodskapper, Ute Johannes, asked him a few questions:

The terms "conflict and reconciliation" are keywords in your dissertation. In the introduction you write that this study wishes to promote reconciliation in South Africa and the world. How did you mean this?

I am well aware that wherever humans are, in each society, there will always be conflict. The congregations that feature in the works of Luke were no exceptions. There was conflict between the law-abiding Jews



and those who didn't observe the law, between the Jewish Christians and the Gentile Christians, between Christians and the Jewish and Roman authorities. Within these conflicts Luke acts in a conciliatory manner. He does it by means of his stories (in my studies I focussed on the parables of Jesus), with which he confronts the conflicting parties. These stories challenge them to view reality differently. The new reality (Kingdom of God) is rooted in the unmerited mercy of God, which he shares freely with all people. As a church we act in a conciliatory manner if we draw attention to this Kingdom, confess our own sins, and resist being drawn into the vicious circle of hate or self-enrichment.

In the concluding paragraph of your dissertation you write: "In the Lucan manner, the story I would like to tell, is that of a God who has mercy on all, who crosses any conventional boundaries that define the identity specific to an ethnic group or a 'social class', and creates a world, a family in which divergent people find their identity in God, who loves them all..." How can we learn to view our neighbour through the eyes of God?

God shows no favouritism. This is something which touched Peter in the house of the centurion Cornelius (Acts 10). But we human beings tend to set boundaries. With boundaries we usually try to exclude somebody. Christ always crossed these man-made boundaries, and he did so, because his heart is one of mercy. We begin to see the other person with the eyes of God, as the realisation of the divine mercy we have received affects us, and we allow God's mercy to determine our actions.

Applied to the context of our farming communities, how can we as Christians be conciliatory towards those who hate us and incite violence? Where does reconciliation begin in everyday practical life?

I am aware that many members of our Synod in the farming community faces deeds of severe injustice. But first of all we should guard against stereotyping. Usually the hatred is stirred up by individuals. But even towards these individuals I can act in a conciliatory manner. Christ encourages us to love our enemies and to pray for those who persecute us (Luke 6:27). These words are not to be understood as a "new law", but these conciliatory actions are the fruit of justification, which Christ works within us. In acts of peace and reconciliation it becomes apparent that we belong to the Father in heaven. Having said that, this does not exonerate the state of its responsibility to promote peace and justice. As a Christian I may also call on the state to fulfil its God-given mandate.

Can we as Christians help prevent the obvious moral and economic degeneration of our country? What role should we as Christians play?

God has given every one of us a place in this world. Wherever we have been placed, we should let our light shine. We can not withdraw from society. And it serves no purpose to stand on the sidelines and complain. As Christians we may and can play a positive and constructive role within our country. Even if we have - based on the payment of our taxes - certain "rights", an attitude of constantly making demands is not very helpful. It is this very attitude, which we as Christians may counter. We can do so, because we realise that we have received everything from and are cared for by a God who loves us.

What must happen that reconciliation becomes a lifestyle of a permanent nature, and not just a short-lived fashionable act that comes and goes?

The "heart" needs to change. This is worked by the Holy Spirit through the divine

means of grace, not only once, but continuously.

Is there a German translation of your dissertation for the German readers within our church?

Unfortunately not. And I wouldn't expect anybody to undertake such a task.

What is your future vision for the FELSISA?

It is important to me that the message of the crucified Christ remains the centre of our proclamation. Over and above that I wish to see that the FELSISA becomes a truly South African church, where "everybody" is welcomed and also feels at home. In order to achieve this we should, as Christ himself did, reach out beyond

our own boundaries and joyfully give witness of the Gospel.

Is there a key thought, or a motto, such as a Bible verse, that has had special meaning for your work?

Not really, although the Word of the Cross (1 Cor.2:2) is important to me: "For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified."

You are married and have three children. What does your family mean to you?

I see my family as a gift from God.

Bishop Reinstorf, thank you for the interview.



Family Reinstorf: v.l.n.r: Ulrike, Peter, Dieter, Mechthild and Martina

In dialogue with the Emmanuel parish of Diepkloof, Johannesburg

The Evangelical Lutheran Emmanuel parish in Diepkloof, Johannesburg, is a totally independent Lutheran parish in Soweto.

In 2007 talks were held between representatives of the *Emmanuel parish* in Diepkloof, Soweto, and some members of the Synodical Council of the Free Evangelical-Lutheran Synod in South Africa (FELSISA). Representatives of the *Emmanuel parish* declared the wish to become part of a Lutheran Church in South Africa.

At the Synod in Durban, on the 5th May 2010, it was decided that the Emmanuel parish could become an associate member of the FELSISA.

Assistant editor of the FELSISA Witness/Boodskapper, Ute Johannes asked Pastor Mabe of the Emmanuel parish a few questions:

During the Synod in Durban, it was decided that the Diepkloof Emmanuel Parish would become an associate member of the FELSISA. What does this mean to you?

The Emmanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church was established in 1992. Since then, we have been operating on our own without having any relationship with any Lutheran body. These have been 18 years of absolute isolation, which in a way affected our spiritual growth. No Church of God can exist on its own because we are all children of God, making up His body and Christ being the Head.

We have always anticipated with eagerness but patience being united to one of

the Lutheran Churches. We thank God that He made this possible for us on 5 May 2010 when the convention with an overwhelming majority voted in favour of the EELC joining the FELSISA. For me as the Pastor and the congregation, it feels like a rebirth. God making things in us through His people. We are pleased and feel blessed and favoured by the Almighty.

You attended a Synodical Convention of the FELSISA for the first time. What was your impression? What struck you the most?

The convention is truly a decision-making body for the Church. All members who attended had the freedom to express their views without fear of reproach. I was impressed with the robust but honest discussions which prevailed during the two days. I look forward to the next convention where I will participate freely as a member.

How many members belong to your congregation? How many children (i.e. unconfirmed members) do you have?

We are presently in the process of compiling our final membership list. We can, however, declare with confidence that our membership comprises of an estimated 1000 active members and 500 inactive members. Since 1992 we have baptised 329 children and therefore we can estimate a number which exceeds this, as new families are joining our congregation at a fast rate. I can also confirm that since 1992 through the grace of the Lord, we have confirmed 721 people 32 of them being adults who had joined our congregation from other Churches.

What is important to you about walking with Jesus?

'As for me to live is Christ'. Christ is the Author, the Master and the Sustainer of Life. He is the beginning and the end. My



**Pastor George Mabe and Mr Hlako Kenneth Rachidi
of the Emmanuel parish in Diepkloof.**

life and that of the congregation depends entirely on His providence. I believe that in Him all things are possible. In Him people are saved, sins are forgiven, the old things become new. In Him I have a guarantee to eternal and perfect life. In Him wounds have been healed, boundaries have been removed, the Church has been made one true Holy body.

Do you have a favourite Bible verse that carries you through hardships, or that serves as a motto for your congregation?
The Holy Scriptures, both the Old and the New Testaments are the true, authentic Word of God. I subscribe to the entire message of the Gospel, however a few verses in the Bible do serve as pillars of strength both for the congregation and me. The motto for the congregation is found in Phillipians 2 verse 11: "And all will openly proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Personally, Psalm 23 is my shield in times of trouble

and tribulations especially verse 4 which says "Even if I go through the deepest darkness, I will not be afraid, Lord, for you are with me. Your shepherd's rod and staff protect me".

What is your future vision for a co-operation between the Diepkloof congregation and the FELSISA?

I envisage a future with the Lord. A future which is paved by the Lord of the Church. A future where I together with my fellow brothers and sisters in the FELSISA family, will worship and serve God together. I believe with this relationship our faith will be strengthened and that through what will transpire in what we do many will be called to Christ and be saved.

To God be the glory and the honour.
Amen.

Pastor Mabe, thank you for this interview.

Upcoming events in 2010:

16.-18. August Pastor's Convent
10. October Song Festival in Greytown
5.- 6. November Church Elder's Conference

Our Webseite www.felsisa.org.za
will to be updated.

Please share news of upcoming events in your congregations as well as photographs.
Send them to: ute.johannes@telkomsa.net.

Veertig Jaar St.Paulusgemeente in Pretoria

deur Mnr. Baldur Koch, Pretoria

Die geskiedenis van die St.Paulusgemeente in Pretoria dateer terug tot 1899, toe Pastoor Hellberg en later Pastoor Reusch van die gemeente Uelzen, met lang onderbrekings die handjiewol lede van die sinode in Johannesburg en Pretoria bedien het. Amper vyftig jaar later, op 11. Februarie 1950, is die filiaalgemeente Johannesburg amptelik gestig, en vanaf 1954 is die eerste eredienste in Pretoria gehou.

Op 28 Julie 1968 het die grondsteenlegging van die nuwe kerkgebou in Pretoria plaasgevind, onder die leiding van die destydse Präsas Ludwig Wiesinger, en op 2 Maart 1969 is die kerkgebou ingewy. Nie lank daarna nie, op 6 Junie 1970, het die gemeente 'n selfstandige sinodale filiaal geword, en ses jaar later, in 1976, 'n selfstandige gemeente. Die gemeentes in Johannesburg en Pretoria dra dieselfde naam, en verskil net deur hul onderskeie geografiese ligging.

Die groei en ontwikkeling van die gemeente was oor die daaropvolgende jare baie gesëend. Ons rig 'n besondere dank aan die pastore wat die gemeente sedertdien met oorgawe en liefde bedien het: Pastore Herbert Böhmer, Eckart Schroeder, Helmut Neddens, Ernst-August Albers, Friedrich Dierks, Helmut Strauli, Dieter Reinstorf, Klaus-Eckart Damaske, Adriano Littig, Peter Ahlers en Matthias Albers. Uit hierdie gemeente het die Afrikaanse gemeente ontstaan. Die Lutherse Teologiese Seminarium word ondersteun, so ook die later bygekome „Arcadian Lutheran Ministries“ (ALM) en die „Evangelical Lutheran Congregation“.

'n Groot hoeveelheid jongmense vanuit ons landelike gemeentes studeer in



Pretoria, en word deur die Arcadiageemeente ondersteun. Omrede die toekoms van ons gemeente en van die FELSISA belê word in die jongmense van vandag, sien ons as gemeente in hierdie taak 'n groot verantwoordelikheid, en ons vra die Sëen van Bo daarvoor.

Die geskiedenis van die gemeente is opgeskryf en verskyn as 'n boek van rondom 50 bladsye, onder die titel “'n Gedenkskrif van die Evangelies-Lutherse Paulus-gemeente Pretoria: 'n Wandeling deur die Gemeentegeskiedenis tot 2010”. Om die toeganklikheid daarvan te vergroot is dit in Afrikaans geskryf. Die gedenkskrif is geïllustreer en maklik leesbaar, en is bekombaar teen 'n prys van R50 per eksemplaar.



Die wins daaruit is bestem vir die projek „Arcadia Lutheran Partnership“ wat 'n uitbou van studente-geriewe in terme van moontlikhede en infrastruktuur nastreef. Bestellings kann geplaas word by Mnr. Baldur Koch:
Posadres: P.O.Box 71261, Die WILGERS, 0041.

Telefoon: 012 8077926

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Wittenberg Congregation

by Mr Friedhold Niebuhr and Pastor Peter Ahlers, Wittenberg

The roots of the Wittenberg congregation can be traced further back in time than the day of it's constitution on 8th December 1902 would indicate.

When certain members of the Lüneburg congregation (founded 1869) started settling further north of Lüneburg, the distance that they had to travel by ox-wagon to church every Sunday just became too great. This led to the foundation of the Bergen congregation in 1884.

During the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) Bergen was completely destroyed by the British. At that time Christoph Johannes, who was serving as pastor of Bergen, would faithfully visit and care for members of the congregation in the concentration

camp in Volksrust.

After the war everything had to be rebuilt from scratch. Some members now asked whether the church could not be built in a more central area. Unfortunately, though, the congregation could not agree on this point and so on 8th December 1902, twelve families amicably left the Bergen congregation to found their own congregation.

On the 29th December they held their first general meeting under the chairmanship of Pastor Johannes. At this meeting the official name of the congregation was accepted to be: **Wittenberg Congregation at Piet Re-tief**. At the same meeting Pastor Johannes was called to be the pastor of the congregation and thus became the first pastor of Wittenberg. His salary was laid down at 100 Pounds per annum. Within three weeks a small chapel with living quarters for the pastor was built. The floor was made of clay – the roof constructed of round timber.



In 1914 the congregation decided to build a new church and began with the preliminary work. The First World War, though, halted construction until 1920. The new church was dedicated on the 16th of December 1921. All construction had been done by members of the congregation. The cost of the church – originally budgeted at 1500 Pounds – amounted to 4000 Pounds (excluding voluntary labour).

In 1925 Pastor Johannes Schnackenberg was called to succeed Pastor Johannes. He served the congregation for almost 42 years until his retirement in 1967. During his time of service the south wing was added to the church (ca. 1938/39). A few years afterwards (1946) the congregation decided to build a hall, which was extended in 1952 by a spacious kitchen. Today this hall is used by the youth.

Apart from the above mentioned building projects, work (extensions, renovations and repairs) also continued on the parsonage as well as the school hostel.

In 1947 it was decided to replace the church harmonium with an electronic organ. This meant that the congregation also had to acquire a generator to produce electricity for the organ. With this the church, the hostel and the parsonage could also now be electrified.

Upon retirement in 1967 Pastor Schnackenberg moved to live with his son in Pretoria. He passed away and was buried there in 1974 but was then re-interred in the Wittenberg cemetery along with his wife in 2003.

His successor was Pastor Wolfgang Krause, who served Wittenberg congregation for 20 years. During his tenure the north wing was added to the church (1967). Since then the church is symmetrically balanced – the floor plan assuming the shape of a cross. By the time that the electronic

“Hammond” organ became antiquated and was no longer functioning properly, the congregation finally decided to acquire a new pipe organ. This was installed in the years 1975-76 and dedicated with great thankfulness towards the Lord of the church. Toward the end of Pastor Krause's tenure the church council considered asking the congregation to build a new parsonage, as the old house had been by considerably damaged by termites. Pastor Krause, though, asked the council to wait for the arrival of his successor as he did not feel up to the exertions associated with such an undertaking.

Pastor Krause passed away four years after his retirement on 13 March 1991. He was laid to rest at Wittenberg cemetery in a service conducted by his successor (since 1987) Pastor Werner Köhne.

In 1987 the new parsonage was then finally built. It was dedicated on the 8th of May 1988 by President Günter Scharlach.

Pastor Köhne was well loved by the congregation but unfortunately the pressures relating to the work within the congregation became too great for him, so that he accepted a call to the Pietermaritzburg congregation after just four years.

A period of almost a year followed, in which the congregation had no pastor. In this time, though, Ex-President Scharlach helped the congregation out until his son-in-law, who had in the meantime been called as pastor, could be installed.

After his ordination and installation Pastor Wilhelm Weber went to work with great zeal and full of energy. He had vigour, energy and joy for many tasks. He started immediately with Afrikaans services in Piet Retief. The seeds that were sown there have in the mean time grown to a small Afrikaans Lutheran congregation.



During Pastor Weber's tenure it was decided to build a new hall. With the exception of the roof and the walls the work was largely completed by unpaid labour of members of the congregation – as with the building of the church 90 years previously.

When Pastor Weber accepted a call to the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane, Pretoria, at the end of 2000, his successor was Pastor Gerald Paul. During this time the congregation celebrated its Centenary in 2002 with great thankfulness. It was an unforgettably wonderful day, to which many former members were invited. When "Oh, that I had a thousand voices" was sung at the end of the church service many a tear was shed in gratitude. After the service the congregation gathered in the hall where speeches and words of greetings were heard.

In November 2005 Pastor Paul informed the congregation that he had accepted a call to the USA. He departed in July 2006.

When the pursuing calls for a new pastor were unsuccessful, the President of the FELSISA, Peter Ahlers, – after consultation with the synodical council – was delegated

to serve the congregation as of December 2006.

One can hardly imagine a Lutheran congregation without choirs. This is especially true for the Wittenberg congregation, in which a brass choir, a mixed choir and a men's choir play music to the glory of God and as a great blessing to the congregation. The brass choir was able to celebrate its Centenary in 2009.

From its very beginnings the Wittenberg congregation has had a keen interest in mission work and outreach. To this day this interest is expressed in regular offerings toward mission work and general assistance of the neighbouring Salem congregation of the Lutheran Church in Southern Africa.

To improve the outward appearance of our church complex and to give it a more friendly appeal, various improvements have been made to it in the last few years. In this year the path from the main road leading to the church was paved after entrances to the property had been built the previous year. Most recently a more powerful generator has been installed that supplies adequate electricity for the church, the hall, the par-

sonage as well as the school hostel. The school and hostel have been closely associated with the congregation from the very beginnings, when Pastor Johannes was also principal of the school. In later years his son Theodor Johannes as well as his grandson Chris Johannes would serve as principals. His granddaughters also taught for many years in our school.

Religions instruction and confirmation classes as well as German language instruction and music form an integral and natural part of the curriculum. Although times and circumstances may have changed since its early days, the character of the school as well as the goal have remained the same, epitomised by the motto: ORA ET LABORA, i.e. pray and work.

Some info about the school:

On average we have around 100 pupils in our school, of which 66% are of German background. The other 34% are able to speak German, without German being their

mother tongue. Nine staff members work at the school, of which 4 are employed and paid for by the government. The others are paid in part by the congregation. To cover the ever-rising costs the congregation resorts to various fund-raising efforts. Through the support of the congregation and the parents, the governing body is able to also make improvements and renovations to the school every year. Greater than the financial demands looking toward the future are the challenges of finding staff. Together with the other German schools and congregations we need to address this problem, so that we may motivate young people in choosing teaching as a profession.

This short depiction of the Wittenberg congregation would like to give some insight into the circumstances regarding the heritage of our forefathers that we would like to preserve. In this we give glory to Him, whom alone glory is due: *“Not to us, O Lord, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness.” (Psalm 115:1)*



Eeufeesviering van die Wittenbergse Koperblaasorkes

deur Mev. Renate Conrad, Wittenberg

2009 was vir ons blaasorkeslede 'n besondere jaar. Reeds vroeg in die jaar het ons dirigente die koor attend gemaak op die eeufeesviering van die blaasorkes. Deur die loop van die jaar is ons eredienste telkemale verfraai met pragtige trompetmusiek, veral op feesdae, waarvoor besondere werke ingestudeer en opgevoer is.

Op 13. November 2009 het ons die hoogtepunt van die eeufeesvieringe gehou: die „Bläserabend“. Hierdie verrigtinge is gehou met 'n veelvoud van pragtige musiekstukke. Almal het deelgeneem, die jong blasers sowel as die ervarenes, in 'n groot koor sowel as in groepies, met of sonder orrel- of fluitbegeleiding.

Dr. Deon Böhmer het aan ons die geskiedenis van die blaasorkes vertel. Ten spyte van die maer tye na die Boereoorlog het die gemeente mekaar gedra, 'n kerkgebou en die blaasorkes gestig. Dit is ook verblydend om te sein dat die nasate van die stigters van die koor, Karl Niebuhr en August Böhmer, steeds aktief deelneem aan die Koor.

Die kerkmusiek is vir ons 'n waardevolle skat wat ons vir die toekoms wil bewaar: dit

bestaan nie net uit note en klanke nie, maar ook uit godsdienste en taal. Dit is wonderlik om te sein hoe hierdie waardes in ons musiek verbind word.

Aan die einde van die blaasorkesfees is almal deur die vroulike gades van die Blaasorkeslede bedien met 'n voortreflike maaltyd – duisend dankies daarvoor. En hoewel die fees nie ten doel gehad het om geld in te samel nie, maar om 'n eeu van Blaasorkesmusiek te vier, het die aand vir ons 'n bedrag geld besorg waarmee nuwe musiekinstrumente en ander benodighede vir die blaaskoor gekoop kan word.

Vir Mev Edel Hohls (86 jaar) was dit 'n besondere aand, aangesien sy 'n paar note op die groot Helikon kon speel.

Hierdie instrument is deur haar pa, August Böhmer, in sy jong dae bespeel. Haar gedagtes het teruggegaan na die ou dae, toe haar pa elke aand na werk op die stoep se trappies gaan sit het en geoefen het. Na sy afsterwe het sy neef Johannes Böhmer (die „Wyse“) die instrument bespeel. Daarna is dit geleen aan die gemeente in Durban. Nou is die instrument terug in Wittenberg, waar baie ander blasers hul nog aan hierdie instrument kan verwonder.



Uit die geskiedenis van die Wittenbergse Koperblaasorkes

deur Dr. Deon Böhmer, Wittenberg

„Loof Hom met basuingeklank, loof Hom met harp en siter; loof Hom met tamboeryn en koordans, loof Hom met snarespel en fluit...”
Hierdie verse uit Psalm 150 vorm die grondslag van ons blaasorkes.

Ons koperblaasorkes is in 1909 deur die inisiatief van Meneer August Böhmer in die lewe geroep. Hy was destyds, in sy jong dae, nog lid van die Lüneburgse blaasorkes, wat reeds 1883 gestig is. Die Lüneburgse blaasorkes het reeds vroeër in 1883, tydens die inwyding van die kapel in Bergen, opgetree. Die sendeling Christoph Johannes was die stigter van daardie blaasorkes. Hy het later pastoor van die gemeente in Bergen geword, en nog later van die gemeente in Wittenberg.

Meneer August Böhmer het destyds 'n hele jaar lank gepoog om geld in te samel, om die blaasorkes te kan stig, totdat hy eendag 'n skenking van twintig Pond ontvang het. Toe kon hy begin om koperblaasinstrumente te koop. Hy het sy ou vriend van die Lüneburgse blaasorkes, meneer Carl Niebuhr, gevra om die leiding van die nuwe blaasorkes oor te neem.

Op 15 Desember 1909 is die koperblaasorkes deur Pastoor Johannes amtelik gestig, na gebed en 'n skriflesing uit Psalm 150. Volgens die statute van die gemeente is die koperblaasorkes 'n onafhanklike koor binne die gemeente Wittenberg, om tot ere van God, besieling van die gemeente en samehorigheid onder die lede te speel. Die instrumente het aan die koor behoort. Jaarlikse finansiële bydraes moes gemaak word, en as daar stampe of duike aan die instrument gekom het, moes vir hulle ook 'n „boete“ betaal word.

“Loof Hom met basuingeklank” uit Psalm 150 is die rede waarom ons onself 'n “Posaunenchor” noem, letterlik 'n koor van basuine, oftewel 'n koperblaasorkes, en nie net 'n „Brass band” nie. In die Ou Testament was basuine heilige instrumente, wat net deur piesters geblaas is. Die eerste basuinblasers was ook net uitverkose jong godsdienstige mans. Intussen het hierdie bepaling egter verander. Baie dames is reeds deel van ons koor, elf in getal.

Maar hoekom hierdie groot liefde vir ons „Posaunenchor“, ons koperblaasorkes? Waar kom dit vandaan, en wat was die doel daarvan?

Met die ontwikkeling en algaande verbetering van koperblaasinstrumente se kleppe („Ventile“) in die negentiende eeu, het in Europa veelvuldige amateur-musiekverenigings soos paddastoel opgeskiet. In Duitsland het koperblasers se deelname in kerkkore, veral in die Evangeliese Kerk, aan betekenis gewen, waar hulle mettertyd as „Posaunenchor“ beskou is.

Die koperblaasorkeste het hul oorsprong hoofsaaklik in die godsdienstige herlewings van die negentiende eeu in Duitsland. Dit het veral tydens buitelig-eredienste of sendingveldtogte gebeur, omrede kerke te klein geword het om aan al die mense wat gekom het, plek te bied. Die koperblaasorkeste was ideale aandagtrekkers vir die feestelikhede, sowel as musikale begeleiers van hierdie buitelig-eredienste. Hulle was beskou as „mobiele orrels“, hard genoeg om almal deur dik mure deur en oor groot velde heen bewus te maak van die herlewings-eredienste.

Sodoende het in 1843 eers in Oos-Wesfale en in die gebied van Minden-Ravensberg in Duitsland, die eerste koperblaasorkeste in gemeentes ontstaan, as „taakmag“ vir die godsdienstige herlewings. Eduard Kuhlo en

sy seun, die latere „Koperblaasgeneraal en Ryks-koperblaas-wyksmeester“ Karl Friedel Johannes Kuhlo, word vandag nog beskou as die vaders van die Wesfaalse Koperblaas-orkeste. Van Wesfale af het die koperblaas-orkeste oor die hele Duitsland versprei. Kuhlo se klankideaal het gestreef na die n-aming van 'n vokale koorklank. Om die rede is horings van elke maak en soort verkies, terwyl trompette en basuine effens tersyde gestel is.

Vandag speel ons die volgende reeks instrumente in ons koor:
Sopraan: Trompet, Kuhlo-horing, Kornet
Alt: Trompet, Kuhlo-horing, Flügelhorn, Kornet. Tenoor: Wald-horing, Posaune, Tenoor-horing. Bass: Posaune, Bariton-horing, Tuba, Eufonium.

Enemaal jaarliks is by ons 'n fees gehou op die berge rondom ons, met sang, koperblaasmusiek en 'n gesamentlike feesmaal. Aanvanklik is oefensessies by Mnr. Niebuhr se huis gehou, bokant die ou kerkgebou. Koorlede het te voet, te perd of met 'n fiets gekom om te oefen. Meestal het lede tuis ge oefen, eers saans by kerslig en later met olielampe. Die eerste lied wat hulle saam kon speel, was “*Schönster Herr Jesu*”.

Die oefensessies was in die begindae met groot moeite verbonde: soos om na 'n dag se harde werk nog tien kilometer of meer te voet te loop, heen-en-weer, met 'n koperblaasinstrument onder die arm, en daarbenevens nog telkemale verras te word van 'n donderstorm.



Die Wittenbergse Blaasorkes in 1912

Voor sittend: Fr. Paul, Johannes Niebuhr, Carl Niebuhr, Gustav Meyer.

Middel: Georg Paul, Bernhard Paul, Johannes Böhmer, Heini Meyer, August Böhmer, Eduard Hohls, August Meyer, Otto Meyer, Christoph Paul.

Agter: Johannes Kastern, Otto Johannes, Bernhard Böhmer, Karl Niebuhr.

Die koor het egter in die hele omgewing bekend geraak vir hulle musiek. By elke kerkfees het hulle opgetree. Die lede is uitgenooi na troues toe, en daarvoor is spesiaal volksliedere en marse ingestudeer.

Die koor het egter ook buite kerkverband aktief geraak, en is byvoorbeeld uitgenooi om op te tree tydens die opening van die Ermelo-Piet Retief treinspoor. Almal het destyds met die trein na Paulpietersburg toe gereis, waar die feestelikhede gehou is. By die openingstoespraak van die minister het die koor telkemale opgetree.

So voorspoediglik die beginjare ook was, het die ledetal egter gedaal. So was daar in die jaar 1924, tydens die eerste „Posaunenfest“ in Uelzen, net nog ses lede aktief. Maar die nuwe jaarlikse instelling, die „Posaunenfest“, het van toe af nuwe belangstelling gewek, en talle jongmense is in die koor opgeneem, sodat reeds in 1925 die tweede Posaunenfest in Wittenberg gehou is. Van toe af het die koor elke Saterdag op die plaas Breitenstein, by Mnr Carl Niebuhr se huis saam geoefen. Sedertdien het die koor by elke Posaunenfest opgetree, en die reise per trein na die verskillende gemeentes toe was altyd groot avonture.

In 1934 is die koperblaasorkes selfs uitgenooi om tydens die destydse Dingaansdag op te tree. In 1938 het die koor saam met ander kore in die omgewing opgetree, onder andere by die Gedenkdien van Bloedrivier, waar die Grondsteenlegging van die monument plaasgevind het. Tydens hierdie gedenkdien is ons musiek vir die eerste keer oor die radio uitgesaai.

Meneer Carl Niebuhr was tot 1936 die koorleier gewees. Vir 'n rukkie daarna het sy seun Carl Niebuhr die leiding oorgeneem, en sedert 1937 was meneer Chris Johannes die leier. Toe het hulle in Mnr Meyer se kamer geoefen, later in 'n

klaskamer van die skool, wat op sy beurt ook mettertyd vir die groeiende ledetal te klein geword het. Toe besluit die gemeente om 'n kerksaal te bou. Die ledetal het nou al op vyftig gestaan.

Toe die naburige gemeente Panbult, die destydse filiaal van Wittenberg, hulle eie koor gestig het, het die getal lede effens gedaal. Die verhouding met Panbult is tot vandag toe baie lewendig, omrede Mev. Heidrun Johannes van die gemeente Panbult tans ons jong orkeslede onderrig, en ons aan haar baie dank verskuldig is daarvoor.

In 1959 het die koor sy vyftigjarige bestaansjaar gevier, met 'n pragtige kantate („Lobe den Herren“) vir koperblasers, orrel en sang, deur Helmut Walcha.

In 1984 het meneer Chris Johannes sy amp as koorleier neergelê, en Meneer Gilbert Böhmer het hom opgevolg tot 1993. Daarna het meneer Erwin Paul die amp oorgeneem tot en met 2004, en Meneer Heimo Böhmer ná hom vir 'n verdere vier jaar. Tans het nog drie dirigente by die leierskorps aangesluit, en hulle wissel mekaar gedurende die loop van die jaar af.

Vroeër het ek die metaforiese uitdrukking van 'n mobiele orrel gebruik, dat 'n *Posaunenchor* net soos 'n pyporrel verskeie registers bevat om 'n gepaste klank voort te bring. Net so kan ons vasstel, dat in ons koperblasorkes nuwe registers bygekom het: die klarinet en die fluit. Daar is nog verskeie ander nuwe registers. Die lof van die Here is nie beperk tot die koperblaasinstrumente nie, soos die Vers in Psalm 150 dit aandui nie. Daar is steeds registers in ons „*mobiele orrel*“ wat wag om bespeel te word. Kom sluit by ons aan, om die Lof van die Here te besing!

Soli Deo Gloria

Official notice

On Pentecost Sunday – May 23, 2010 – the Immanuel Congregation, Pietermaritzburg (KwaZulu-Natal), confirmed the call it had extended to Dr. Dieter Reinstorf at the end of 2009 to become their pastor. The call was accepted on Trinity Sunday. The move of Bishop Dr. Reinstorf and his family will in all probability take place in December 2010. As of 2011, the Immanuel Congregation will thus also be the new bishop's seat of the FELSISA.

Reading Sermons (German)

At www.predigtkasten.de you can find a selection of downloadable German sermons by Pastor Matthias Krieser of the Independent Evangelical Lutheran Church (SELK) in Germany.

The sermons are very appropriate for reading services or personal use.

Wartburg-Kirchdorf Hostel

The Wartburg-Kirchdorf Hostel is looking for new hostel parents as of January 2011.

Interested persons can fax their applications and CV's to: **086 658 5249**.

Candidates will then be invited to an interview.
Closing Date: 31 August 2010.

Danksegging:

Sonja Meyer

14. Juli 1960 † 30. März 2010

Ons hartlike dank vir alle besoeke, oproepe, Sms'e, deelname, Blomme en kaartjies, na die heengaan van my geliefde eggenoot, ons ma en ouma.

'n Opregte dank aan Pastoor S.Köhne, wat haar so gereeld in die hospital besoek het, ook aan die Pastors R. Küsel, G. Scriba, D. Schnackenberg, L. Engelbrecht vir hulle besoeke en trooswoorde tydens die begrafnis.

'n Besondere Woord van dank aan Erich Niebuhr, Mark Meyer, Dieter en Ronelie Prigge, Friedhild Meyer, Ruth Beneke en Angelika Ringelmann, wat 'n hele vakansiedag opgeoffer het, om vir Sonja te gaan sing. Sy het dit baie waardeer. Ook 'n besondere dank aan die Paulpietersburgse kring vir die pragtige kranse, vir die ondersteuning tydens die begrafnis en oor die algemeen, En aan die vrouekring vir die onthaal, en die blaasorkes en sangkoor vir die musiek tydens die begrafnis.

Harald, Deon en Martin Meyer, Gerald, Nicolette en Phillip Niebuhr.