

The newsletter of the New Apostolic Church Cape

African

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Free issue

Joy



Divine service: Chief Apostle in New Zealand



Victory with Christ

Regional news

The Chief Apostle in New Zealand

Nearly 900 brothers and sisters participated in the divine service in Auckland, New Zealand on Sunday 13 September 2015. An additional 1,100 members in congregations on New Zealand's South Island, in Australia, Fiji, and Papua New Guinea received an audio-visual broadcast.



Dear brothers and sisters, God chose the people of Israel out of love and made a covenant with them. They were not the biggest, strongest, or most important nation at the time. There was actually no likely reason for God to elect this people, but He did, and made a covenant with them.

This election was made clear when God freed the Israelites from Egyptian slavery. He led them through the Red Sea and gave them a promise that they would enter a land of milk and honey. And as the third part of the covenant, God gave them the law and told them, "If you act according to this law you will be blessed."

Forty years later the generation who had witnessed this was dead. The generation to whom Moses was speaking knew all of this only from what they had been told. And when you only hear about something, and have not experienced it yourself, you wonder how much truth there is to the story and whether it has not been exaggerated a little.

Moses summoned the new generation and spoke to them. He wanted to assure them that the covenant God had made was still valid; to remind them of the promises God had given and to call on them to keep the divine commandments. He was aware of the dangers and that the contact with other nations might lead them to question the law of God. Other nations were as happy and successful as they were and did not live according to God's law.

Later in history God sent His Son. By sending His Son to the earth God made a new covenant. He elected Himself a new people and delivered them from the bondage of sin through the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus. He promised to lead them into His kingdom and gave them His commandments, which are a source of blessing for those who keep them.

This happened two thousand years ago. What about today?"



Today nobody can say: I have seen the Risen One. Even in Christianity you hear some say: who knows whether the story of Jesus' death and resurrection really happened that way. Maybe it has been exaggerated. That somebody had to die for our salvation, is that not a bit much? Many find this a little strange and disturbing today. That is a danger of our time!

The ministry of the new covenant, the Apostle ministry, was sent by the Lord to bear witness to Christ's sacrifice, death and resurrection. Believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, it is the truth. All of this happened for our sake, for our salvation: Jesus died for us, rose for us, and He will come back for us. This is the covenant God made with us."

Some think this message was for our ancestors. They had to struggle for survival, had to deal with poverty, sickness, war, and many dangers and crises. So they needed something that gave them hope: one day, you will be delivered and everything will be better.

Many people nowadays think they don't need God. They are quite happy without Him. Their goal is not eternal fellowship with God, but a pleasant life on earth. They think, "We have our life under control, there is peace in our country, and we can build ourselves a future. We no longer have to

hope for a better future in heaven." But the people of the new covenant are taught by the Holy Spirit and they long for eternal glory, which was promised by Christ.

It is the task of the Holy Spirit today to teach people who Christ is. The ministry of the new covenant, the Apostle ministry, has also received the commission to celebrate Holy Communion. Every time we celebrate it, we reinforce this covenant.

We do not need the gospel to become rich, successful and to prosper here on earth. There are many other ways to achieve that. But to experience the love of Christ, to experience His kindness and to know Him, there is only one way:

"The Lord did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us, those who are here today, all of us who are alive."

Deuteronomy 5:3

obedience to the gospel, and implementing it in our daily lives. This applied to our ancestors and it applies to us today. We do not practice the gospel to get more money, to be spared from illness, or to make sure that our children prosper. We obey the commandments of the Lord because we want to experience the love of Jesus Christ.

The new covenant is not for our ancestors. It is for us who are alive today. We believe that Christ died for us and that He will return and that is why divine services and Holy Communion are so important. (Shortened)

Victory with Christ

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

From the bottom of my heart I wish you God's blessing over the coming year.

- May you feel His nearness and support.
- May you feel His love carrying you.
- And may you experience His grace.

The turn of a year is always a good time to reflect and ask ourselves the question, "How far have I come on the way to my goal?"

There is a simple method. Imagine you are approaching a building from a distance. At first, the object appears very small and you can actually cover it with your finger. But the closer you come, the bigger the building appears and the better you can see it.

Our goal is to be forever with the Lord. Have we come any closer to Him in the past year? Has Jesus Christ become more important for us than He was a year ago? Are we better able to recognize His nature?

When it comes to moving forward, it helps to set interim goals for ourselves: "Labour in love", our 2014 motto, was one such goal. "Joy in Christ", our motto over the past year, was another stage along the way.

Now let us take the next step. Through word and sacrament, God gives us the strength to fight against those things that separate us from Him. He gives us the power to win this fight. With Christ we can gain the victory.

- Christ helps us to gain the victory over evil. He did not eradicate evil, but He rules over it. Nothing can prevent Christ from saving those who trust in Him.
- Christ helps us to gain the victory over fear. This year will not be any different: we will worry about the future. Perhaps there will be certain decisions that paralyze us because we do not know what we are getting into. But Jesus Christ is there to guide us.
- Christ helps us to gain the victory over ourselves, for example:
 - over our pride, which keeps us from reaching out for God's help;
 - over prejudices that prevent us from loving our neighbour.
 - over the urge to express our opinion regardless of the consequences and the peace that may be lost as a result.

And how can I gain the victory with Christ?

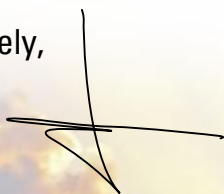
- By believing in the truth of Jesus.
- By loving as He loved.
- By remaining with Him no matter what happens.
- By seeking oneness in fellowship.

These are just a few initial thoughts on our new motto.

We have a whole year to delve into it and deepen it: a whole year for another big step on our way to the goal.

Let us make the year 2016 a year of Victory with Christ.

Yours sincerely,



Jean-Luc Schneider



Miracles in our time

Today we can share with you some interesting doctrinal information on the subject of miracles. These thoughts were recently directed to the ministers of the New Apostolic Church around the world.

The significance of Jesus' miracles

It is necessary to give some thought to what the gospels say about miracles and the function they have there. When the New Testament speaks of miracles it makes use of three Greek terms:

- **Dynamis**—this refers to mighty deeds which demonstrate the power of God (Mark 6: 2; Matthew 11: 20 et seq.);

- **Ergon**—this is a work that is to be done. Jesus had to do the work of God (Matthew 11: 2; John 9: 3);

- **Semeion**—this is a sign. A miracle is a sign of the effectiveness of the gospel.

- Jesus wanted to reveal that He is the Son of the living God and the Deliverer who can give eternal life.

- He showed His power over the elements by controlling the wind and the waves as only the Creator can.

- In order to show that He had been sent by God, Jesus performed similar miracles to those performed by the prophets: Elisha brought a dead child back to life and on another occasion fed a hundred people with twenty loaves of bread (2 Kings 4: 35, 42–44).

- Jesus raised the dead (the daughter of Jairus, the young man of Nain, and Lazarus) in order to demonstrate that He is the resurrection and the life.

- He drove out evil spirits in order to clearly show that He is mightier than the evil one: “But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you” (Matthew 12:28).

- He healed the sick in order to show His devotion to suffering human beings and His love for sinners. He wanted to make it clear that He had come to save those who believe in Him from the torment of sin.

- He fed the multitudes and provided people with an abundance of earthly gifts (wine at the wedding in Cana, feeding of the five thousand, the great catch of fish). Isaiah had already announced all of this when he mentioned that the Lord of hosts would “make for all people a feast of choice pieces, a feast of wines on the lees” (Isaiah 25: 6). This can also be understood as a reference to the abundance of spiritual gifts after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

It is very important that we note that Jesus did not heal all those who were sick, nor raise all those who were dead. He wanted to draw the attention to His mission and to His message. It is equally important to understand that the miracles related in the New Testament are not isolated. They are always connected to the preaching of the gospel. Jesus said to the disciples about John the Baptist, “the blind see and the lame walk ...the dead are raised and the poor have the gospel preached to them” (Matthew 11:5).

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We learn about

Chief Apostle Jean-Luc Schneider visited the Cape District Church from 10 December 2015 to 13 December 2015. He was accompanied by District Apostles P Mkhwanazi (South East Region) and J Ekhuya (East Africa) as well as District Apostle Helper R Nsamba (Zambia). During his stay the Chief Apostle held a divine service in the congregation of Somerset West 1819 on the Thursday, conducted a meeting for apostles and bishops on the Friday and attended a choral in Silvertown on the Saturday.

The highlight of the visit was the divine service that took place in Tafelsig church on Sunday 13 December 2015. This divine service was audio-visually transmitted to all congregations and those present, as well as those connected, eagerly awaited a timely message. The sermon was based on John 1:18 "No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him."





God through Jesus

The Chief Apostle mentioned that, although we have not seen God, we can learn about Him when we look at Jesus, listen to His teaching, and consider His life. We see God through Jesus. He then proceeded to expound on a number of aspects of God we learn to know through Jesus: Perfection, righteousness, eternal, love and grace.

After the celebration of Holy Communion for those present and those in the beyond, the Chief Apostle retired Apostle B de Vries who had served as an apostle for 25 years. He also ordained the Apostles P Lambert and R Worship and appointed a District Apostle Helper in the person of Apostle JL Kriel.

All too soon the time of blessing was over, but as could be heard from the conversations among those leaving the church they were spiritually well satisfied.



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Jesus also did not approve of those who believed in Him just because of His miracles, "Many believed in His name when they saw the signs which He did. But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men" (John 2:23 -24). As a matter of fact, only those who believed in Him as the Son of God followed Him until the end. They believed not because of the miracles, but on the basis of His teaching. The same applied for the Apostles; they performed the same miracles Jesus did to show that they were sent by Him.

Today we no longer need any miracles in order to believe that Jesus is the Son of God. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). The miracles that Jesus or the Apostles performed served only to demonstrate the power of God and not the power of any individual human being. This was just a matter of proclaiming the gospel.

The dangers of belief in miracles

The danger of an uncontrolled belief in miracles is that God is often tempted as a result. An example of this from the Old Testament can be found in Numbers 14:22–23: "... because all these men who have seen My glory and the signs which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have put Me to the test now these ten times, and have not heeded My voice, they certainly shall not see the land of which I swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who rejected Me see it."

The temptation of Jesus also speaks to the point. Satan wanted Jesus to ask God to perform great miracles in order to prove that He had been sent by God. Jesus answered, "You shall not tempt the Lord your God" (Matthew 4:7). The evil one did the same through those who said to Jesus, "If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross" (Matthew 27:40).

Despite the fact that Jesus did not perform any miracles while He was on the cross, the Roman centurion believed. He saw the be-

haviour of the Lord, the love He showed His own, but also the love He showed those who were to kill Him, and the love the Lord had for the criminals on the crosses beside Him.

Those who ask God for miracles often expect Him to do that which they want. Indeed, Jesus refused to perform miracles in such cases. An example of this is the Pharisees' demand for a sign (Mark 8:11). Paul implored the Lord three times to remove the thorn in his flesh, but Jesus Christ told him, "My grace is sufficient for you" (2 Corinthians 12:9). Let us pray in Jesus' name, remain modest, trust in God, and say, "Your will be done." We can always ask for help in our prayers, but we cannot force God to fulfil our pleas and wishes.

Miracle healers today

Many people claim to have received a gift that enables them to heal sicknesses through prayer and laying on of hands. From the Bible we know that such abilities are not necessarily signs of divine election. In the Old Testament, for example, the magicians and sorcerers of Pharaoh were able to perform the same miracles as Moses. It was no different in the time of Jesus and the early Apostles. There were people who were able to drive out evil spirits (Matthew 12:27), and even Simon the sorcerer performed great signs (Acts 8). However, they had not been chosen by God and did not serve Him.

What is the motivation of such healers? When we consider the healings that are done we should inquire after the purpose for which it is being done. Does it have a similar purpose to the one Jesus had? Unfortunately, it many times becomes clear that those performing the healings seek their own glorification, praise and recognition, rather than pointing to God to whom it is due. Sometimes these healers even ask for money and it becomes clear: They are working for themselves and not for God.



Retirement, ordinations, appointment

Prior to the conclusion of the divine service which Chief Apostle Schneider held in Tafelsig on Sunday 13 December 2015, he attended to a retirement, ordinations and the appointment of designated ministers.

A chapter in the history of the New Apostolic Church was closed with the retirement of Apostle De Vries (65) who received his first ministry in the Church in 1976. He was ordained as an Apostle on 13 April 1990. The Chief Apostle mentioned that he would be remembered as a conscientious person, who undertook many long journeys and did not shy away from the sacrifices that this required.

A new chapter was also opened with the ordination of Apostles Lambert and Worship and the appointment of a District Apostle Helper in the person of Apostle John Kriel.





Christmas in Cape Town

On Saturday 12 December 2015, Silvertown Auditorium was the venue for a festive concert held for the Chief Apostle. With close to 1600 members in attendance, the choir and orchestra presented themselves in their finest festive form. The programme began with "When He cometh" and this set the tone for the rest of the evening.

The items on the programme included traditional and classical pieces of music with some having been re-written for this special occasion. The children's choir also sang a special version of "Christmas in Cape Town". The sound and execution of the concert pieces were close to perfection.

The festive concert was concluded with the Chief Apostle thanking the choir and orchestra for their hard work and sacrifices. He had so much appreciation for the performance that after his closing prayer he spontaneously started another round of applause in which he was joined by the audience.



CAN 30 000 project

To celebrate Universal Children’s Day, the New Apostolic Church Cape embarked on a project called CAN 30 000 to collect 30 000 cans of non-perishable food for reputable accredited institutions that take care of children across the Cape District Apostle area.

The project was launched on 11 October 2015. The Sunday school children, Sunday school teachers, parents and members made every effort to ensure that the target of 30 000 cans

would be reached by 22 November, the cut-off date for collections. Due to the generosity of all participants the total of 45 650 cans were collected and more than 70 different credible organizations were the beneficiaries of these donations.



Elsies River



Mthatha



Oshakati



Uitenhage



Nobuhle



Delft



Easter Favourites

The New Apostolic Choir and Orchestra present Easter Favourites at the Silvertown Auditorium on Easter Sunday, 27 March 2016 at 17:00. The programme celebrates Passion Week with well-known arias and choruses, as well as rousing hymn arrangements.

Reminder

Members, have you received your Church calendar for 2016?

Priests, have you received your Soul Care Diary for the year?

Confirmation

On Sunday 10th of April confirmation services will take place in all areas of the Cape District Church. We wish our confirmands, their parents and extended family a most blessed time in preparation for this memorable occasion. May the blessing received continue to live on for a lifetime after the event.

Kimberley

The Chief Apostle will hold a divine service in Kimberley on Palm Sunday 20 March 2016. The Cape District Church will be audio-visually connected to this divine service.

NAC-TV

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