



Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2021



The ACK in Germany held its central service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in Hamburg on Sunday, 24 January 2021, together with the ACK Hamburg in St. Peter's Church under the motto "Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit" (cf. John 15:8-9). The chairman of the ACK in Germany, Archpriest Radu Constantin Miron, preached the sermon.

The First Mayor, Dr Peter Tschentscher, could not attend in person due to the coronavirus situation, but sent a written greeting. The service was broadcast live on the internet and translated into sign language. Alongside Miron, three other board members, representatives of the regional and local level as well as numerous church leaders from the member churches of the ACK were involved in the service.

During the service, the Year of Ecumenism 2021/2022 was solemnly opened. For the first time, the Week of Prayer for Unity was linked to the Evangelical Alliance Week of Prayer; to mark this, a sculpture in the form of a fish and a cross was passed on as a symbolic relay baton. Thus the foundation was laid for closer cooperation in the years to come.

In 2022, the texts will come from a preparatory group from Lebanon under the motto: "We saw the star in the East, and we came to worship him" (Mt 2:2). The ACK will celebrate the central service together with the ACK in North Rhine-Westphalia and the ACK in Cologne on Sunday, 23 January 2021, at 3.30 p.m. in Cologne Cathedral. The translation of the texts into German is in progress and should be available by the end of May.



General Assembly

Because of the coronavirus pandemic, the General Assembly of the ACK in Germany had to be held on 24 March 2021 in digital form. Apart from the ongoing projects for the "Year of Ecumenism 2021/2022", such as the preparations for the 3rd Ecumenical Kirchentag, the pilgrimage app and the assembly of the World Council of Churches in 2022, the highlight was the admission of a new member of the ACK. After 73 years of guest membership, the Union of Free Evangelical

Churches (BFEG) gained full membership in the ACK with the approval of all member churches. This means that the ACK now encompasses 18 member churches and 7 guest members.

At the same time, Pastor Bernd Densky (BEFG), who had represented the free churches in the Ecumenical Center for many years, went into retirement. Pastor Dr. Jochen Wagner (BFEG) was appointed as his successor for five years.



Pilgrimage app

Between the 3rd Ecumenical Kirchentag in May 2021 and the Assembly of the World Council of Churches 2022, the app for the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace will be available in the main app stores. This app will give pilgrims the opportunity to have experiences with pilgrimage in everyday life, to connect with others on the

way, to deal with daily challenges, to find ideas for justice, peace and the integrity of creation, and to take a rest in hostels on weekends. People, church congregations and other institutions are still needed who are interested in taking care of such hostels and would enjoy being part of this innovative project.



Ecumenical Award 2021

Two prize winners were selected by the jury of the Ecumenical Award 2021 out of 35 applications. The main prize, worth 2,500 euros, goes to "With Luther to the Pope", a joint project of the Catholic diocese of Magdeburg, the Evangelical Church in Central Germany and the Evangelical Church of Anhalt. To mark the commemoration of the Reformation, an ecumenical pilgrimage had already been organised in 2016, leading from the Central German regions to Rome. The jury praised the fact that the project was particularly aimed at a target group of young people and that it offered the opportunity to share common experiences and talk about faith with others, even if they had no connections with the church.

The Innovation Prize, endowed with 1,000 euros, was awarded for the first time on the occasion of the Year of Ecumenism 2021/2022. It went to the

project of the urban ecumenical group in Elmshorn, which was entitled "hoffnungsfenster.de" (meaning "window of hope"). During the Advent season 2020, in spite of the Covid-19 pandemic, it brought together the town's local churches, civic society and citizens. The jury was convinced by the creative and innovative network combining the analogue and digital world, using both classic forms, such as a living Advent calendar, and new approaches.

Because of the coronavirus restrictions, the award ceremonies will be held at a later date. The projects will be presented as part of the digital programme of the 3rd Ecumenical Kirchentag on Saturday, 15 May 2021.

The jury was delighted by the numerous and creative applications, which demonstrated anew the vitality of ecumenism in many places in Germany.



3rd Ecumenical Kirchentag (ÖKT)

The 3rd ÖKT will take place from 13-16 May 2021 in Frankfurt am Main and throughout Germany. In order to enable an exchange of ideas for decentralised projects in the spirit of the Kirchentag and beyond it, the ACK has published a "treasure chest" of various suggestions: www.oekumene-schatzkiste.de. Further examples of successful ecumenism will be posted there successively.

On Friday, 14 May 2021, at 5.00 p.m. the ACK in Germany will celebrate an ecumenical worship service together with the ACK Hessen-Rhein Hessen and the ACK Frankfurt in St. Matthew's Church in Frankfurt. The service will be transmitted live on the YouTube channel of the Evangelical Hoffnungskirche Frankfurt and translated into sign language. (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_DAIpBLTqrgWwbyUfIYkrA)



Publications of the ACK

- ACK Leporello 2021
- Postcard advertising the treasure chest of the ACK
- Booklet with orders of service "Let streams of living water flow" for the Ecumenical Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation 2021

ACK Diary

- 18 April 2021, 10.15 a.m.: Ecumenical service in memory of the coronavirus victims, Berlin
- 22 April 2021: 20th anniversary of the Charta Oecumenica at European level
- 13-16 May 2021: 3rd Ecumenical Kirchentag, digital and decentralised; launch of the Pilgrimage app
- 14 May 2021, 5.00 p.m.: Ecumenical service of the ACK in Germany, ACK Hessen-Rhein Hessen and ACK

Frankfurt, Frankfurt am Main (streamed live)

- 9 June 2021: Joint conference of the ÖRBB and the ACK on the topic "Persecuted and oppressed Christians", Berlin
- 4 September 2021: Central service for the Ecumenical Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation at Lake Constance



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