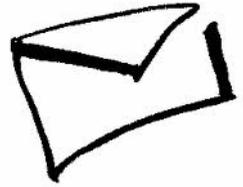




BISHOPS POST



Dear sisters and brothers in our ELCSA (N-T) congregations.



The Thunderbolt Cross

It was an enormous thunderbolt. Did it strike the house? All lights were off. Yet, fortunately, a few moments later electricity was back, and it seemed that all appliances were still working. The house had been spared.

The next morning, on our way to Church, we saw where the bolt had struck: just down the street pieces of branches, wood and leaves lay strewn around. A huge cedar had been broken off, meters above the ground, as if it was a thin match. The power of the bolt had caused it to explode, torn apart.

I stopped, picked up a large chunk of wood. The bark had been stripped off completely, and although it was one piece, it was shattered, splintered, broken in itself.

I knew: This piece of wood must become a cross - the thunderbolt cross. Did Christ not experience the same as this tree?

He had drawn upon himself the full force of our disobedience against God, self-centeredness, hate against others.

The lightning of our sin struck him with full force: When the crowds shouted: Away with him, crucify him! When the soldiers mocked and brutally tortured him. When he was nailed to the cross, ridiculed by the bystanders? When he cried: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? All this was like a massive thunderbolt that struck him directly.

Like the tree, he did not survive. He died on that cross-
But God raised him from death - the Christ, still bearing the fatal wounds, was raised. "I live, and you too shall live" (John 14,19) he proclaims.

The Thunderbolt Cross reminds me: Because he bore the brunt, the full force of our wrongs, I am alive. Because he died, I may live!
Thank you, Lord!

Personnel news from the Church

After the service of Pastor B Kreft has ended prematurely the Trinity Zululand congregation is vacant.

Pastor H Dedekind retires at the end of July. The Northrand Congregation post will be filled by a delegate of the EKD. Dean K Schauf und Pastor K Appelo return to Germany in May. Since there were no applications received for the pastor's post in the Church of Peace and Midrand/Kelvin from UELCSA, the post has been advertised through the EKD in Germany.

We thank Pastor i.R. Burkhard Hecklau, who is standing in, in St Peters Pretoria.

Pastor i.R Herbert Meissner, is also thanked for standing in for 3 months in the Northern Parish and Midrand/Kelvin.

Pastor Coll Udo Lütge began his service on 1st February in Wartburg. He will still serve as youth pastor KZN in a 25% capacity.

In April Vikar Rolf Schmidt will absolve the second and students Frank Schütte and Grant Böttcher the first theological exam. We will remember them in our intercession.

In May HP von Fintel will start his second internship year in Germany.

Yours in Christ,
Horst Müller (Bishop)
March 2011