

# Farewell and Welcome Celebration

## in the Neumühle, 9 October 2022

On Sunday 9. October, over 100 members from all over Germany gathered in the Neumühle Seminar House to bid farewell to Dieter und Ana Schmidt as German national leaders and to welcome their successors, Christian and Glenys Claus. Guests of honour were Michael and Fumiko Balcomb, who in their position as the regional leaders of the EUME (Europe and Middle East), handed over the official certificate as well as sharing the latest information.



The programme began at 10:00 am with an hour-long meeting of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU), whereby a new committee was to be elected. Dieter relinquished his office as chairman and Christian Claus was elected to this position with an overwhelming majority. In a power-point presentation outlining his activities, Dieter highly praised the excellent cooperation within the committee, the work in the ten communities and with children and young people, HARP and the family department, the management of the Neumühle as well as the fruitful cooperation with UPF, CARP, YSP, WFWP and WCLC.

Then followed the festive change of leadership ceremony, enriched by the wonderful music of the youth band 'Intune', impressive flower decorations styled by Margaret Staudinger, the three-tier cake baked by Maria Spari, and Karl-Heinz Kunde's technical support which enabled many to follow the event via zoom. Claus Dubisz officiated as mc with his usual circumspection and eloquence.



The first speaker was former national leader Karl-Christian Hausmann who honoured seventeen years of activity from Dieter and Ana Schmidt on the national level, going back to 2005 when Fritz Piepenburg was the national leader. With great humour, he depicted the confrontation with the then European leader President Song in summer of 2006, which led to the establishment of the legendary German leadership trinity with Dieter as national leader. In their address, Michael and Fumiko Balcomb thanked Dieter und Ana, with whom they have established an especially good relationship which will naturally continue since Dieter and Ana remain leaders of the Central European region. Hildegard Piepenburg had put together a photographic review, in which many meetings and events of these years were captured: from the Schengen victory to CheonBo and UPF events, leaders' meetings, Divine Principle workshops and many more.



Dieter and Ana then very movingly shared how they felt and named many of those who had accompanied them along the way; people with whom they had not only worked but had also made lasting friendships. As a special gesture of thanks, Ana sang the song „I still have faith in you“, accompanied by Celina and Intune.



Stefan and Jae-Sook Schmid, representing all the community leaders, praised Dieter and Ana's great work and presented them with a glass of kimchi. Sarah Zimmermann added her appreciation on behalf of the Blessed Family Department and Magda Haugen, as representative of the Women's Federation spoke with great respect about their exemplary leadership style. Elisabeth Heil acknowledged their unfailing support for the work with Christian pastors, and Gabriel Lindemann expressed thanks on behalf on the second generation. They all agreed that Dieter and Ana had done a remarkable job as national leaders and had given their very best wholeheartedly for this country, God and the movement.

In closing, Michael and Fumiko handed over the certificate, and Sarah a gift from all the communities, a token for Wonse Trade and Travel as well as some pocket money. Mathias and Begoña Monzebe did not lose the opportunity to express their gratitude, in the name of the Berlin community, for the special attention the national leaders had given to the capital city, by presenting them with a 'Berlin bear'. Those who were not able to publicly express their appreciation had the opportunity to do so by writing in a book which will be given to Dieter and Ana.



After a short break, Christian und Glenys Claus, already for many years Gießen community leaders, were inaugurated as national leaders. Dieter and Ana expressed great delight that these two had accepted this position after an intensive three-year search for a successor, and they appreciated already many years of cooperation. Michael Balcomb gave them the words of Joshua (Joshua 1: 6-9) to accompany them on their way: „Be strong and courageous and keep the word of God in your mind!“ and presented, with Fumiko, the certificate of appointment. The two daughters Stefanie (CARP committee) and Julia (HARP committee), along with Gabriel und Eugen (FFWPU committee) assisted in the cutting of the cake.



In his inaugural address, Christian made reference to the centenary poster depicting True Father's calling by Jesus on which is written: „between fear and inspiration“. He himself had finally accepted the calling after much hesitation. He could not say no to the inheritance of even such a huge task, because he had joined this movement to do something for the Messiah. God has always had a problem to find people willing to take responsibility. More than anything we should work together, especially with many young people to utilise our great potential so that something wonderful can happen in this country.

Glenys assured him of her support. During her last visit to Korea, she realised yet once more just how wonderful our movement is. Although many things have gone wrong, there is no reason to give up. Our motto should be „Team Germany“. Although they could not be quite the same as Dieter and Ana, they have much hope, and expressed thanks for the trust placed in them.

Claus Dubisz then asked everybody to come forwards to ask for God’s blessing on Christian and Glenys by the laying-on of hands. Dieter Schmidt and Mathias Monzebe offered representative prayers and Michael Balcomb closed with three ‘Ok Manseis.’



Following a wonderful Korean lunch, prepared by Setsuko Wöllmer and her team, the members assembled again in the main hall to hear what Michael Balcomb had to say about three topics: the crisis in Japan, the 40-day condition to reach resting / inactive members, and the acquisition of a Peace Embassy in Berlin.

On the topic of Berlin, Michael gave a powerful reminder that Germany, England and France are the providential nations in Europe, prepared by God for centuries to receive the Messiah. It was in Berlin that True Father had delivered his final official speech in Europe; True Mother assured Michael that it is not too late for Germany to fulfil its God-given responsibility. After a passionate plea for the Peace Embassy as a visible base for God in the capital city, he promised to contribute a large sum of money, if the members present would also commit their financial support. This is the time for a new beginning and to consider how this place can serve God and the people of Germany.

Everyone was moved by the warmth and depth of this special meeting and that the change of leadership could be celebrated in such a dignified manner.



Whoever would like to contribute a donation for the Berlin Peace Embassy, should contact Christian and Glenys Claus ([cgclaus@gmx.de](mailto:cgclaus@gmx.de)) for further information.

*Report: Hildegard Piepenburg, Translation: Catriona Valenta, Photos: C. Schmitt*