

## 6. WCLC-Germany Zoom-Conference Report

On Saturday November 7, the sixth zoom conference of the World Clergy Leadership Conference Germany took place with twenty-eight participants. The topic was based on the words from the Gospel of Matthew: „And if you salute only your brethren, what more are you doing than the others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? You therefore must be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect!“ (Matthew 5:47-48)



Bernhard Leyer opened the conference with a very moving prayer which was followed by a contribution by Pastor George Okoro from Bremen. He told us that in Cameroon and Nigeria, Christmas is still celebrated in the true spirit and his voice expressed a disappointment that here in Germany the message of Jesus is often ignored or overlooked. Mathias Monzebe from Berlin explained that in his home in central Africa it is only the children who receive presents when the birth of Jesus is celebrated. Several speakers had memories of earlier days in country areas, for example in Bavaria, when many good traditions were followed.

The question was raised as to what our African pastors thought about the discussion about the figure of the Three Kings in Ulm where they are represented as being black. Should it be removed? Is that racism? Pastor Lolowengo Botembe had a clear answer: „This is of no relevance to me. Such discussions divert us from what is essential, that is from our path to God. Being a Christian has nothing to do with the color of one’s skin.’



Claus Dubisz then proposed a project for the World Clergy Leadership Conference Germany: to try to love our ‘worst enemy’ in the true spirit of the biblical verse in Matthew. But the biblical term ,enemy’ should be understood in the broadest sense of showing charity even to those who have not earned it, whom we do not like or who have treated us badly in other ways.



The musical contribution by Lauren Mobo reminded us that it is not always possible to immediately recognise where forgiveness, love, let alone love of the enemy is especially called for. But as the title of her song says: „He who seeks will find “.

The point is to follow the example of Jesus, who in his lifetime forgave those who opposed and crucified him. Or as Father Moon wrote in his poem „Crown of Glory “: *Even though we are deceived, still believe. Though we are betrayed still forgive. Love completely even those who hate you. Wipe your tears*

*away and welcome with a smile those who know nothing but deceit and those who betray without regret.*

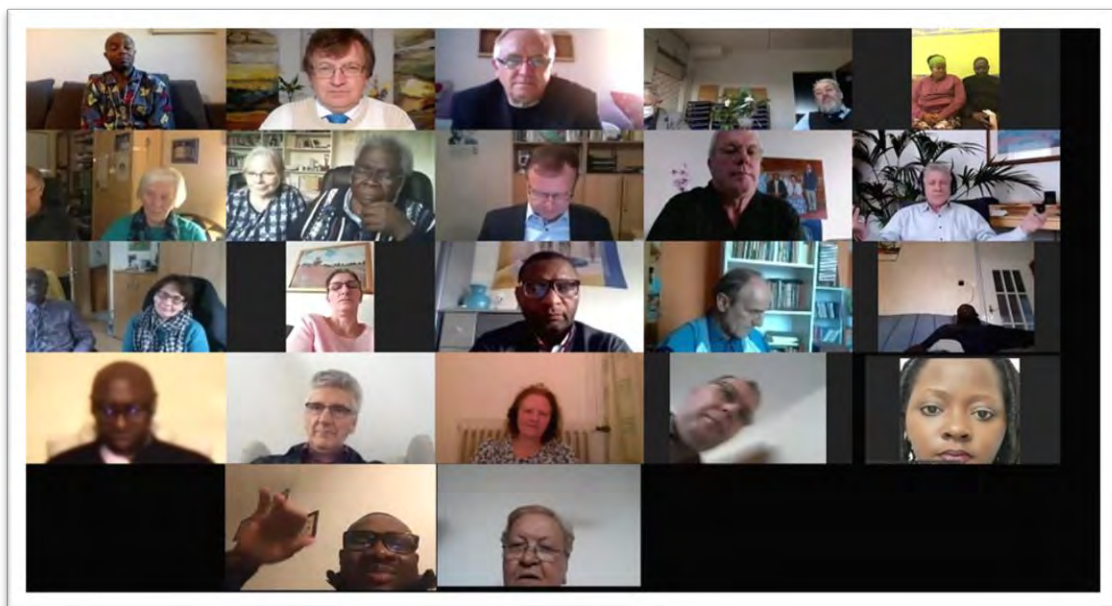


If African and German pastors and their congregations can demonstrate this attitude, especially at Christmas time, then something can change in this country. Pastor Lucas again stressed the importance of cooperation beyond one's own community. Our elder sister Elisabeth Heil and Herbert Beyer both suggested to hold a weekly prayer meeting in these times of corona, where in smaller circles we can have discussions and encourage each other. Let us be guided by the Holy Spirit so that we can glow with the love of Jesus in this Christmas season and outshine the spirit of consumerism, loneliness and fear.



In closing, Dieter Schmidt related a personal experience with Jesus that was deepened by an understanding of the teachings of Father Moon. He reported about the leaders of the Family Federation in Armenia und Azerbaijan, who pray for each other and for peace just as does Mother Moon's „Heavenly Parents' Holy Community“. And he invited all the participants to the „Third Rally of Hope“ to be hosted by Mother Moon, the „Mother of Peace“, on 22 November.

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*By Claus Dubisz, English: Catriona Valenta*