

# INTERNATIONALE SCHLOSSKIRCHENGEMEINSCHAFT

*Dear members, dear friends of the International Castle Church Community,*

*I cordially greet you from the Castle Church in Lutherstadt Wittenberg!*

*For the feast of Pentecost the Good News resounds in many languages. The International Castle Church Community (ICCC) usually meets in Wittenberg to celebrate Pentecost in many languages, but this year it is not possible.*

*Therefore, a spiritual word as a sign of solidarity will reach you from the Castle Church.*

## *Word on Pentecost 2020*

*If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another comforter (advocate) to help you and be with you forever — the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. Jesus replied, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. (John 14, 15 - 17 + 23)*

*Pentecost in the year of the Lord 2020, the birthday celebration of the Church in times of Corona. No full churches. Participation with face masks. Distance to the neighbor. Which spirit has taken possession of us?*

*The spirit of fear, some say. The church has collapsed in the face of the state. It should not have put up with the restrictions.*

*The spirit of know-it-better, some say. There were sermons denying the existence of the virus. Appeals were signed warning of a world conspiracy.*

*The spirit of truth and love, that's my experience.*

*International seminars were held at the LWF center for years. This year all seminars had to be cancelled. Thank God we did not want to know better and thank God we were not in fear to cancel the first seminar in time. It was clear to us that we have a responsibility to the people from eighteen countries and to all who come into contact with them. We had to face this truth.*

*It was the spirit of love that guided the churches by not claiming exceptions. It was he who kindled a fire of creativity*



# INTERNATIONALE SCHLOSSKIRCHENGEMEINSCHAFT

*in the churches. Drafts for home worship services, online Bible stories for all age groups, devotions in the village with a loudspeaker van, countless telephone conversations and moving worship services on television.*

*About five hundred people from all over the world have participated in our seminars so far. We are still in contact with many of them. In the last few weeks we have been especially connected. In New York a relative of Rebecca got infected with Covid-19 and finally died. The other participants sent their consolation with words and with the promise: We pray for You! And they did so around the globe. Comforter is also called the Spirit of God! In South Africa a solidarity run was organized for congregations in financial need. Since nobody was allowed to leave their own property, Petra and Henning ran around their houses. 10 Kilometer and 15 Kilometer. Many others did the same. For every Kilometer there was a donation. In total 25.000.- Euro were collected. What a comfort and what a sign of love for the communities in need!*

*In India, Bishop Itzhak worked with a Muslim on the parish grounds during the lockdown. They repaired water pipes and the grass-covered roofs. The bishop was met with hostility: How could he let a Muslim get that close to him? They are the ones who are carrying the virus! He replied, "If we are the body of Christ, it is through love!*

*Pentecost in the year of the Lord 2020, the birthday celebration of the Church in times of Corona. No full churches. Participation with face masks. Distance to the neighbor. This feast of Pentecost points us to what is really necessary. What we cannot really do without. It is love. The love that comes close - despite the rule of distance. The love that goes around the world and comforts.*

*We don't know any better and therefore we ask without fear:*

*"Come, Holy Spirit, with your power, / which connects us and creates life.*

*Give us of your love, / which trusts and which forgives. / All speak one language / when one man loves another." (Songbook "Through high and low", Nr. 67)*

*Pastor Joachim Zirkler, Director of Studies at the LWF - Center Wittenberg  
Happy, blessed Pentecost!*

*God's blessings on you and your efforts.  
Blessed Pentecost!*

*Dr. Sabine Kramer  
Vice-Chairperson of ICCG*

*Evangelisches Predigerseminar Wittenberg, Direktorin  
Schlossplatz 1  
06886 Lutherstadt Wittenberg  
Tel: 03491-5069-321 | mail: [kramer@predigerseminar.de](mailto:kramer@predigerseminar.de)*