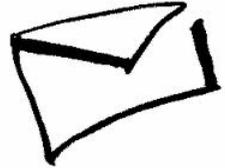




# BISHOPS POST

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In John 17 Jesus says a few times that his disciples are not of the world. At the same time he does not want to take them out of the world (v 15) but rather sends them into the world (v18). “In the world, but not of the world!” - This is how that discourse running from Chapter 15 to 17, can be summed up.

There are two ways in which this can be interpreted.

The first one is to see us Christians and our congregations as Islands in this world, insulated against it, isolated from it. Throughout Church history this interpretation has appealed to many. Monasteries were established in deserts and isolated regions where dedicated Christians could withdraw and live a life not of this world.

In our own history many of our congregations became “Islands of withdrawal” - where Lutheran Christians gathered amongst themselves - there, in the safe space of our congregation we could blossom, live our faith. But to “the world” we were “those Germans”, “those Lutherans”. Our Sunday services, to many were “no go areas” with strange traditions and languages.

The second way of interpreting this “in, but not of” is to see Christians, congregations, the Church as different, being guided by a Lord who is not of this world, but living and existing in this world and making a difference in this world.

Actually many monasteries were established with precisely this in mind: Believers would gather there, be equipped to go out and make a difference. Many Catholic mission stations and monasteries in South Africa were founded with this in mind.

The same applies to many of our own mission stations and mission communities - little settlements which were the home base from which the Christians then moved and worked into the communities around them. So, the same monastery, the same congregation, might be for some the escape from the world, the island onto which I withdraw and isolate myself from the world, and to others the base station where I am equipped to go out and live my life as a Christian.

Jesus prays that his followers will take that second route. That they will not withdraw out of this world, but go into it. Actually, he does not only pray for that, he sends us!

Our Sunday services, Bible Study and other groups can become such places

of being equipped to live as Christians in this world.

From 27 December to 1 January our Church is hosting “eQuip” - a retreat which has the same purpose: to provide a time of fellowship and learning, retreating, in order to be equipped to go out and live in this world - in, but not of - people being guided by values, priorities that are “out of this world”, so that this world may hear, see and experience Christ’s kingdom. May God grant that we will not remove ourselves from this world, but rather allow him to send us into it!

Yours sincerely  
Horst Müller

## News from the Church

The **Cape Church** at it's Synod in June elected Dean **Gilbert Filter** from Hillcrest as their next bishop. Although he was inducted during the closing service of Synod, he will continue as pastor of Hillcrest till the end of this year, and as dean till our Synod in October. The relocation to the Cape Church will happen in January. Bishop Nils Rohwer will then retire after serving as bishop for 28 years.

As a result of this election **Hillcrest** will become vacant in January and has started the process of filling the vacancy.

Our sister Church in **Nambia**, ELCIN GELC (German Evangelical Lutheran Church) is holding its synod from 12 to 15 September and will elect the successor to Bishop Erich Hertel. Please remember them in your prayers.

Currently we as **ELCSA (NT)** are preparing for our **Synod** to be held from 24 to 27 October in Piet Retief. **Preparation meetings** are planned as follows, and anybody interested can attend: 24 August Eastern Circuit; 7 September Central and Northern Circuit; 14 September Southern Circuit.

Retired Pastors **Hans and Adelheid Mikosch** helped out in Pretoria St Peters since February and are returning to Germany in August. We thank them for their assistance in the congregation and also for the many interesting talks they gave on their experiences as pastors in Eastern Germany. We wish them many happy returns!

If all goes well, on 1 September Pastor **Heike Jakubeit** will commence her 6 year contract as EKD seconded pastor in St Peters Pretoria. We trust that the winding up of things in Germany and the relocation to Pretoria will go smoothly.

As announced previously, the first **eQuip** is planned for the end of this year. For more information and registration please visit [www.elcsant.org.za/equip](http://www.elcsant.org.za/equip)