

REPORTS FROM THE REGIONS

EVENTS – FINANCES – FUTURE PLANS

NO. 81

MICHAELMAS 2018

Australia and New Zealand

no message

Central Germany

no message

Japan

no message

Bavaria

Nothing new to report.

Dorothea Humérez

Great Britain-Ireland

I have been much occupied with questions of the future of our movement in the last year. Whilst The Christian Community is independent of the Anthroposophical Society, many people find their way to us through some contact with the anthroposophical movement – whether that be in Camp-hill, a Steiner school, or other activity. Many Camphill places have changed beyond recognition in the last five years, and we were shocked this year by the closure of the Steiner School in Kings Langley, one of our oldest schools.

With all this, there is surely an opportunity as well as a threat. Where in years gone by, we could rely on people understanding our message on our terms, we may now be challenged to reach out to people who don't know our language. This raises the question of mission, which makes many people uneasy. Perhaps when we realise that true Christian mission begins with listening rather than telling, we may overcome this fear. Truly listening to the thoughts of the other as if they were our own – this is the key to experiencing the mystery expressed in the words: 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am in their midst.' Learning to listen in this way might be the key to finding words that will reach people's hearts.

After many years of planning, building work has started in **Stroud**. The project has evolved considerably over the years, and we feel confident that the church in its final form will provide a wonderful home for the congregation, which will allow it to grow. We are however grappling with a serious problem with the funding: We were relying on bridging finance for about half the building costs, and we found out too late that an old agreement to provide this could no longer be honoured. We are working hard with the local priests and members to find finance on terms we can afford. The Council of Management will decide in September whether it is responsible to go ahead on these terms.

We had a number of **priests' moves** this summer. Peter Holman joined us from South Africa. He has started work in Edinburgh. Willem Boonstoppel left Forest Row for Aberdeen, and Luke

Barr moved to Forest Row from Aberdeen. We hope that these changes will bring new opportunities for them and for their congregations.

Perspectives: Our quarterly magazine, Perspectives, continues to reach people in the UK and around the world, supplementing what people can experience in the congregations and in some cases providing a living link to The Christian Community for people who live further afield. In the last year we made two big changes. We chose to start offering e-Subscriptions, whereby we send a digital copy of the magazine to subscribers via email. It took some soul-searching to make this decision, as we do believe that there is a different quality to reading something that is embodied than reading on the screen. Nevertheless, there has been a good uptake of this offer and it means that many people who could not afford to pay the combined costs of printing and posting the magazine around the world are now able to read it.

The second decision was forced on us when our printers discovered that they had been undercharging us and put up the price by 20%. We were unable to find another printer that could offer us a competitive price without changing the format of the magazine to A5. This brought the unexpected bonus that we can use colour throughout the magazine. It has also reduced our printing and postage costs. Details of how to subscribe are available through our website at perspectives-magazine.co.uk

Tom Ravetz

Middle Europe

As already announced in Reports no. 78, the region formed last year including the countries Austria, Czech Republic and Hungary, has now been named: Middle Europe. Romania will join the region in November at which point Ms. Robert will hand over her post as lenker to Mr Giezendanner. In addition, there are connections with Slovakia, Slovenia and Croatia, where the work is in its pioneer phase. 15 priests and priestesses are currently living and working in those four countries; additionally the work is supported by priests from other regions. The financial situation remains a major challenge – especially in the former socialist areas. There are many people drawn to the Christian community. However, they often already contribute financially to the Waldorf schools. Moreover, the concept of a movement living exclusively from free donations, is still new and wants to be practiced...

Christine Jost

Netherlands and Belgium

no message

North- and Northwest Germany

Nothing new to report.

Thomas Nayda

North-America

The upcoming move of the North American seminary to Toronto and priests entering retirement have demanded that we make changes that will ultimately affect 11 of our 14 congregations. These changes will happen in multiple phases over the coming year, and inevitably there will be periods where one or the other congregation will be without a priest for a time.

Beginning in early 2019, Susan Locey will enter retirement and move from her congregation in Vancouver to Toronto. Ann Burfeind will begin work in Vancouver at that time, leaving the Chicago congregation, where she worked for six-and-a-half years. We will be able to announce further priest moves in the region in the next edition of this newsletter.

We are entering a challenging two to four years, stretching to keep all of our altars open and strong, but we also anticipate, through our seminary, to be in a much fuller place soon. In this final year of the seminary's presence in Spring Valley, New York, there are ten first-year students and an ordination preparation group, a so-called fourth year, consisting of three students. Meanwhile, four interns are working at various congregations throughout North America. We look forward to holding an ordination in Spring Valley the weekend of March 29-31, 2019.

Oliver Steinrueck

Northern Countries

no message

Romania

no message

South America

no message

Southern Africa

no message

South-West Germany

no message

West Germany

no message

Switzerland/Southwest Europe

Switzerland/Geneva: The development described in the penultimate letter that a residential building with community rooms is to be built on the community plot has finally been clarified. The large garden and the old, dilapidated villa will disappear in favor of a number of new apartments; the community will thus be able to reduce its long-standing debt.

Further development in **Italy**: Fourteen years after the founding of the Christian Community in Italy, we decided to "return to the pioneer phase" and terminated the lease on the rented premises of the Christian Community in Bologna. So from autumn onwards there will be no fixed altar in Italy anymore. The exact time depends on whether the landlord finds new tenants before the notice period expires. In future, the Act of Consecration of man will be celebrated once a month in Bologna – same as in other places in Italy. After our last fundraising efforts, contributions significantly increased but were still insufficient in order to keep up with the rental payments. In the early years, the deficit was repeatedly balanced by donations from abroad. For three years the Foundation supported us financially and in recent years, a large donation from Italy itself was used to cover the deficits. Now all funds are used up and we really hope that by the end of the year there will be enough to cover the living expenses of the two active priests, L. Testa and O. Meggiolaro.

However, this crisis seems to be slowly contributing to a growing awareness among members and friends. The interest in the Christian community is still unchanged, even growing in some places but in Italy people are used to the fact that the church is fully funded by the state. In addition, many families have to be more diligent with their finances due to the lack of a social security system. Nevertheless, there are of course loyal contributors and very dedicated members.

We believe Milan might be the most suitable place to work towards a new community centre. In the near future Luisa Testa is going to move to Milan and is planning to work towards this goal together with Orlando Meggiolaro.

Portugal:

For the work in Lisbon, we were able to win Helena Otterspeer as a priestess. By taking care of one of the long weekends once a year, a total of four multi-day meetings a year will be taking place du-

ring which the Act of Consecration of Man, the children's service as well as other sacraments can take place.

In **France**, we look forward to the consolidation of the two colleges in Alsace and Paris, each consisting of three priests. Not only for the community, but also for the care of the other branches in the country, a second apartment for the priest in Paris has turned out to be a necessity. Alas, the costs there are so high that a community alone cannot support it. Finding a flat to rent is almost impossible, so we are planning the purchase of a flat and are still looking for donors and lenders for this project.

For **Spain**, we are very pleased that a Spaniard is going to start with the preparations for the consecration in Spring Valley. The communities are growing and thriving and the support by a priest is long overdue.

Michael Bruhn

Wuerttemberg

You can find the flyer for the Michaelmas conference on:

<http://www.christengemeinschaft.de/gemeinden/9996/9996.txt/index.html>. The topic will be: Trans-humanism – the “improved” person. Michaelmas 2018 the community of Murrhardt is celebrating their 50th anniversary since the construction of the church. The event will be celebrated with a multi-faceted program. Since the future holds great challenges for the community, new impulses for the way forward will hopefully transpire. The inauguration of the new chapel in Schwäbisch Hall will take place at Epiphany (6.1.2019). In Reutlingen, the plans for the renovation of the community centre are well on their way. Members and friends help with donations and loans and the mood is positive and hopeful.

Martin Merckens

Foundation

The consolidated annual account 2017 of the whole movement were examined externally by the tax accountant Stefan Dieterich. There were no complaints. Due to an inheritance, the financial statements closed with a significant surplus of approximately € 275,000. At the proposal of the Executive Committee, € 250,000 was allocated to a reserve for the anniversary year 2022. At its meeting on September 9, 2018, the Council adopted the annual financial statements and the appropriation of reserves and unanimously approved the actions of the Executive Committee for the 2017 financial year while the involved abstained from voting.

Armin Knabe, Managing Director Foundation

all figures in €	budget 2018	2017	budget 2017	2016
current income				
gifts	1	27.871,29	1	16.470,48
contribution by regions	1.000.159	1.030.611,23	999.999	993.306,22
legacy		376.669,21		0,00
payout by German „Treuhand“	60.000	69.142,60	60.000	101.673,15
other income	33.000	34.709,70	15.000	32.118,07
for development		10.897,79		1.658,32
refunds		32.526,38		15.388,64
interest		15,51		2.534,16
sum	1.093.160	1.582.443,71	1.075.000	1.163.149,04
current expense				
development	147.800	99.907,92	100.800	94.516,98
seminaries	150.000	165.480,00	150.000	150.000,00
international retirement	70.000	59.341,44	70.000	54.813,58
emergency assistance	90.000	102.590,80	90.000	77.170,85
newly ordained	50.000	109.025,67	50.000	170.659,23
international removals	20.000	12.680,56	20.000	45.558,45
archive	40.000	32.708,53	40.000	35.622,27
academy/further training for priests	3.000	3.613,55	3.000	2.196,90
public relations	25.000	18.242,70	25.000	20.580,14
leadership of priesthood	540.000	581.146,93	537.000	512.301,49
other matters	7.000	9.950,00	7.000	
administration	145.000	148.825,49	145.000	137.203,80
sum	1.287.800	1.343.513,59	1.237.800	1.300.623,69
current result	-194.640	238.930,12	-162.800	-137.474,65
extraordinary income				
appropriated gifts		558.588,43		338.000,00
synod/congresses		78.703,42		11.331,98
further training fund		120,00		
antique gold and other funds		24.303,09		25.863,08
result retirement fund		6.693,94		
sum		668.408,88		375.195,06
extraordinary expense				
seminaries				27.424,22
antique gold and other funds		13.572,11		13.422,29
appropriated gifts		414.588,43		122.200,00
further training fund		1.313,50		18.138,00
synod		1.462,27		
Chr. Morgenstern edition		35.000,00		36.190,00
result vestment prod		2.312,98		15.905,52
result retirement fund				1.682,03
congresses		162.394,00		65.720,00
sum		630.643,29		300.682,06
extraordinary result		37.765,59		74.513,00
total	-194.640	276.695,71	-162.800	-62.961,65
from reserve	194.640	-276.695,71	162.800	62.961,65
	0	0	0	0

Körperschaftsverband (KV)

no message

Treuhandverwaltung

no message

Verband der Sozialwerke

The children and youth camps were well in demand this year and have all taken place. Our study trips have also been well received. Unfortunately we had to cancel our training for employees in geriatric care in March due to lack of registrations. This seems to be due to the difficult situation in nursing in general. For over 40 years this training has been running and never before had to be cancelled. Whether and how it will take place in the future has not yet been clarified.

However, it is certain that holiday camps and study trips will be offered again next year. Trips to Spiekeroog, Montsegur, Chartres, Ireland, Israel and Madrid will be on offer.

Dietmar Schwarz

Publishers

no message

Haus auf dem Berge

no message

Haus Freudenberg

no message

Seminaries/Stuttgart

no message

Seminaries/Hamburg

On 10.9. began the winter semester with the Greek Intensive Week under the guidance of Elsbeth Weymann for the currently six students in the full-time seminar. At Michaelmas, we expect the 15 participants of the “study for working people” to start with the final module of their part-time phase, before part of the group will be starting an internship in January 2019 followed by a full-time phase in the 3rd year of study.

At the beginning of the semester break the Circle of Seven gave us the go-ahead to invite a second group of part-time students to begin with their basic studies on 5./6. April 2019. This was due to the positive experiences with the first group taking to this new form of studying. From April 2019 until the end of 2021 another opportunity for up to 20 new students will open up to complete the basic studies alongside their profession. In the meantime, more than 60 people have expressed their interest in this program. With the preparatory work already in progress we now have to update the overall concept. We will inform you about the more precise time, content and methodical plans as soon as possible and contact the people who have shown interest.

We recently had a stimulating exchange of ideas with the management team of the neighboring Hamburg Music Seminar “MenschMusik”. Changes in the design of the curricula and the teaching methodology seem to be the way forward for them as well – similar to the changes we have developed and tested since the conceptual work for the part time studies. The main question seems to be, how individual learning through a stronger balance between the learning of contents and inspirations on the one hand and one’s own activity in testing and presenting what one has learned on the other hand, can lead to the achievement of competences that prove to be fruitful in professional practice. In this context, the constant exchange of experience with Prof. Michael Brater, who has scientifically supported the first training course of the “study for working people” with his pedagogical experience, has become a very important help in the further development of the seminar training.

Ulrich Meyer

Translated by Michaela Cramer – many thanks to her!

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