



Kirchen VolksBewegung

Reform Movement 'We Are Church', Germany

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We Are Church

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News update: Current work since autumn 2006:

We are Church on the visit of the German bishops for their Ad-limina-visit in Rome:

Pope Benedikt XVI visited Germany in September 2006 for the second time. In November 2006, the German bishops saw the German pope in Rome for the so-called Ad-limina-visit. The German movement *We are Church* monitored these visits and provided critical comments.

We are Church appealed to the German bishops before they left for the Ad-limina-visits in the Vatican to mention the urgent pastoral problems. However, during his visit to Germany the Pope made no reference to this issue. Unfortunately, the Ad-limina-visits did not break any new pastoral ground. Though the Pope treated the bishops much more kindly than the former Pope Johannes Paul II used to do, the attitudes of Pope Benedikt XVI were not different to those of his predecessor. The kindness and generosity that was evident in his first encyclical „Deus Caritas est“ was in no way reflected in the way this Pope put pressure on the bishops, admonished them and made requests and demands of them. The conference on celibacy in November in Rome demonstrated how Pope Benedikt XVI continues to insist on the leading position of priests in his church. There were no indications on how he intends to undertake the reforms in the church that he himself had talked about. The mistreatment of lay volunteer workers is especially disappointing.

→ For further details see: Documentation to Ad-limina-visit of the German bishops in November 2006
www.wir-sind-kirche.de/index.php?id=360

We are Church and the Third European Ecumenical Assembly (EEA3)

We are Church is disturbed by the fact that the majority of participants at the ongoing Ecumenical Assembly (January 2006 in Rome, February 2007 in Wittenberg/Germany and in September 2007 in Sibiu, Romania) are church officials and full-time employees of church organizations. They were selected by the bishops' conferences and management committees of the official churches and sent as delegates to these meetings. We see this as an attempt by church officials to control the vitality of grassroots movements within their organizations. As a result, the current ecumenical meetings are fundamentally different from former meetings in 1989 in Basel and 1997 in Graz, which were based on the Conciliatory Process (Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation, JPIC) and had strong participation from many grassroots organizations.

At the Ecumenical Assembly held from the February 15 to 18 in Wittenberg, ***We are Church* Germany welcomed the address by the President of Germany, Mr. Horst Koehler**, who demanded to re-activate the ecumenical process und not to squander existing opportunities. In his speech the German President, who is a member of the Lutheran Church, expressed what many Christians think. He emphasized the strong desire for a stronger community-based approach within the parishes. Among other things, he also mentioned the desire for mutual communion between different churches. The appeal of the German President highlights the importance of reconciliation between the different Christian Churches and between different religions for the continuing cultural and political integration in Europe.

We are Church also participated in drafting a new directions paper which was presented to the official representatives of the catholic, protestant and orthodox churches in Wittenberg. *We are Church* demanded to continue the reunification of the different churches following the theologically sound ideas of the „Charta Oecumenica“. A large majority of active Christians feel that real progress in the reunification process is long over-due.

→ For more information on the Third European Ecumenical Assembly see:
www.wir-sind-kirche.de/index.php?id=383

New Internet forum with liturgical texts and new ideas for worship.

We are Church offers a new Internet forum presenting liturgy texts and prayers based on the reforms established during the Second Vatican Council. We also offer experimental texts and new ideas for liturgy services, a selected bibliography and links to parishes and other groups that already put these ideas into practice. .

→ Please see: www.wir-sind-kirche.de/index.php?id=374

New editions:

„Who we are ... What we do...“ New concise information on 28 pages on the work and aspirations of *We are Church* Germany. → Please see: www.wir-sind-kirche.de/index.php?id=218

We are Church offers „Cards of Hope“ (15 aphorisms of hope on thick coloured paper, 10 cm to 20 cm, in an envelope). → Please see: www.wir-sind-kirche.de/files/283_HoffnungsKarten.pdf

Other activities of *We are Church* Germany since autumn 2006 (selection)

- Statement to the conference on celibacy in Rome: “The Vatican has finally recognized celibacy as a problem – but it provides no solutions” (Nov. 11, 2006)
- *We are Church* Advent Calendar, presenting texts from the „Bibel in gerechter Sprache“ (Bible in fair language). This Bible was edited in autumn 2006.
- We took part in the preparation meeting of the *Third Ecumenical Assembly* (EEA3) in Loccum.
- Statement on the change of the translation of „pro multis“ in the „Words of appointment“. - Rome had ordered to replace „for all“ by „for many“. This statement was made with the assistance of theologians and linguists. (Dec. 29, 2006).
- We participated in the 10-years anniversary of the first ordination of women to priest in Old-Catholic Church in Dec. 2006 in Bonn.
- Statement on the Wielgus case (Polish Bishop): This case is a clear warning sign to the Vatican (Jan. 8, 2007)
- The German Bishops' Conference had ordered a study about „the religious and clerical orientation“ (called „Sinus study“). *We are Church* has evaluated this study to utilize it for our future efforts.
- Statement on the call of Cardinal Friedrich Wetter as an apostolic administrator (Febr. 2, 2007)
- Statement on the decree of the Supreme Court of the Apostolic Signature concerning the withdrawal of the „missio canonica“ of Mr. Paul Winkler by the congregation for the clergy. Mr. Winkler is teacher of catholic religion and chairman of the regional group of *We are Church* in Regensburg. The decree is published on the pages of internet of the diocese of Regensburg.
- We have redesigned and improved our homepage on the Internet www.wir-sind-kirche.de which now includes information on the different local groups of the dioceses and on our study groups.
- There are many other activities of the study groups and the local groups in the dioceses.

Permanent services offered *We are Church* Germany

- six advice centres for pregnant women in the organisation Frauenwürde. → Please see: www-frauenwuerde.de
- Help-line „Zypresse“ supporting children and teens who are sexually abused by priests and other men in church.

International engagement of *We are Church* Germany

- participation in drafting the third letter to Pope Benedict XVI dated Nov. 25 2006 which also marks the 10th anniversary of the foundation of the *International Movement We are Church* in Rome.

Preview of dates and events for 2007 for *We are Church* Germany.

March 23 to 25:	21st National Meeting („Bundesversammlung“) in Dresden. „How to meet God outside the doors of our churches“.
March 25:	Dresden, outside the cathedral: Service as part of the World Day of Prayer for Women's Ordination
March 23 to 25:	Participation in the meeting of the Jonas Groups in Strasbourg (France)
April 28 and 29:	Appeal for a people's sermon (KirchenVolksPredigt) as a sermon held by lay women and men.
May 3 to 6:	participation in the 17th conference of the European Network “Church on the Move” in Lisboa, Portugal.
June 6 to 10:	large information display and „Talks at St. James Well“ at the German Protestant Church Convention in Cologne.
August 2 to 5:	Spiritual Meeting Days „Where do I find you, my God?“
Sept. 4 to 8:	We will be present to observe the Third European Ecumenical Assembly in Sibiu, Romania
October 26 to 28:	22nd National Meeting („Bundesversammlung“) in Schwarzach near Würzburg.

Donations: *Wir sind Kirche* Förderverein e.V. Konto 18 222 000 Darlehnskasse Münster e.G. (BLZ 400 602 65)

For money transfers from abroad: BIC: GENODEM1DKM IBAN: DE07 4006 0265 0018 2220 00

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