Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche

Ich bete für meine Kirche 2014

2–8 February **Bethanien-Bethesda Verbund**

The dove came back to him in the evening grasping a torn olive leaf in its beak. (CEB)
(Genesis 8,11)

Late but not too late

At the end of the Great Flood Noah let a second dove fly from the arch. It returned with a fresh olive leaf in its beak and this indicated new life. And so the dove with the olive leaf became a symbol of hope and peace.
The importance of the dove as a worldwide symbol of peace was emphasized by Pablo Picasso's picture entitled "The Dove" which he painted for the Peace Congress in Paris (1949). The olive leaf is another peace symbol. Two olive sprigs embracing the Earth indicate this idea in the flag of the United Nations.

Noah's story confronts us in a unique way with doom and survival. Because humanity "had become thoroughly evil", the first world perished in the Great Flood. But despite of all evil God remembers men and animals, therefore, we hold on to hope in all diseases, in all catastrophes, in all evils, and in all wars men wage against each other. The dove came back in the evening – late but not too late.
The third dove does not return to Noah from its flight. It leaves for good and is now proclaiming peace throughout the world. Paul Eluard wrote about Picasso's dove paintings: "I know all the places where doves live. And the most natural location is in people's heads." Let us take the dove into our heads and our hearts as a token of hope for survival, and a reminder of peace.

In Marc 1,10 we are told that the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus during his baptism "like a dove" coming from heaven. The Holy Spirit as the dove of peace and hope continues to fly on.

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I give thanks

- For the blessed ministry of the deaconesses and the great internal and external values they pass on to us.
- For the commitment of some 5000 employees in nursing, therapy and administration serving in our institutions.
- For all who help to tie the network of charity for all people.

It is my prayer

- That patients who have to suffer pains and deficiencies of life will find healing, comfort, and care.
- That all old people will find a home of Christian values in our institutions.
- That our employees and management personnel will be able to cope with the problems of our health system and implement our diaconal goals.

The Bethanien-Bethesda Verbund is the main joint partner of the Agaplesion gAG and the edia con gGmbH and manages together with them nine hospitals and 15 retirement facilities throughout Germany. Bethanien deaconesses are located in Hamburg, Berlin, and Frankfurt/Main. At present, new projects for addict help are initiated.

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