Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche

Ich bete für meine Kirche 2014

12 to 18 October **Educational Department (Bildungswerk)**

Tolerate each other with love.
(Ephesians 4,2 CEB)

Unity – Freedom – Love

„Not exactly words for a memory card" these admonitions in the letter to the Ephesians that remind us of our obligation to maintain unity. The words "tolerate" and "love" don't match. When I have to tolerate someone, my feelings are quite different from love. Anger, disappointment, frustration, and misunderstanding burden our relations ships. When love connects persons, it comes along with openness, curiosity, trust, happiness and longing. Love is the only possibility for people to stay together despite their different opinions and habits. The letter to the Ephesians tries to describe that. It speaks about humbleness, tenderness and patience, and about trust that God's spirit will provide such unity despite all differences.
And the demand has a practical side: Do we tolerate each other with love, when the generations wish to express their Christian faith in different ways? Do we tolerate each other with love, when different opinions in case of building construction and financing problems are causing stress? Are we tolerating each other in love, when different theological opinions become obvious – as with the subject of homosexuality?
The next debate in the congregation will come! Why not plan to start it with this text from the Bible. We could practice a training in tolerance, and at the end of the discussion pass a little card around which says: "Mainly unity, otherwise freedom, and in everything love."

Wilfried Röcker

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I give thanks

- For Christ who encourages us to make our way reconciled in unity together.
- For persons who took up education as mediators and can now help in conflicts.
- For the counseling of congregations.
- For the peaceful revolution which stated in Plauen and Leipzig 25 years ago.

It is my prayer

- For consultations in the Forum fuer sozialdiakonische Ethik (Forum for social diaconal ethics) how to deal with the different aspects of homosexuality in our congregations.
- For the weekend workshop for lay preachers in Stuttgart, and for the meeting of lecturers of the theological basic training at Wuerzburg in Mid-October.
- For all who are internationally active to mediate between hostile groups.
- For peace in our time of hatred and for the thousands of traumatized refugees.

The EmK-Bildungswerk supports the education of adults in congregations, parent-child groups, prayer groups in private homes, seniors' meetings and congregation workshops by providing education materials and training for volunteers. The Bildungswerk assists congregations in conflict, and development processes in congregations and educates lay volunteers for preaching, spiritual welfare and management.

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