Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche

Ich bete für meine Kirche 2014

December 28-January 3 **Bishop Rosemarie Wenner**

Accept one another as Christ accepted us, to the glory of God.
(Romans 15,7 NEB)

Praise to God is always polyphonic

"Jesus within me greets Jesus within you. It's that easy!" When two years ago, I stayed in the Philippines for the preparation of the General Conference of our church in Manila, I learned a song with this simple text. It was easy to sing. But it caused me to think deeply. I knew very little about the life and faith of the people I was meeting. I knew their country only from visits some 25 years before. Now we were talking about a conference which would be concerned with tensions. Because we all knew that the General Conference would again discuss with intensity the attitude of the church towards homosexuality. Only marginal attention was given during that meeting in Manila to the tremendous economic and cultural differences between the regions in which our church is active. Can tensions be eased by making an appeal to our common faith in Jesus? That does neither work at international conferences nor in our congregations in Germany. Here as well as there we must accept our differences as God's gifts and make them productive. And it helps me, when I can accept the reminder, that Jesus lives in each one of his male and female disciples. Therefore, if I want to stay in contact with Jesus, I cannot separate from those who are Christians with me. The sister or brother in Christ may be annoying and remain strange to me once in a while. But they challenge me to come to a deeper understanding of God. And they add to what I can contribute to building God's kingdom. And that is an addition to the praise to God which is always polyphonic.

Bischöfin Rosemarie Wenner

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ICH DANKE

- For the any different people who belong to the United Methodist Church, and for the wealth of gifts and experiences in faith they bring.
- For people from other countries and cultures I meet in the congregations in Germany.
- For all who became members of our church within the last months and are willing to add to the praise of God.

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- For courage to take steps towards reconciliation where controversies are.
- That our congregations will start initiatives in the coming year to share faith and life with people who have been strange to us so far.
- For the preparations of the meting of the international bishops' council in Berlin in May, that this meeting may help to see differences in our church as a fortune.

Rosemarie Wenner has been Bishop of the United Methodist Church and supervises the three Annual Confrences in Germany. She has the presidency in these synods and commissions, represents the UMC in ecumenical committees, and after consultation with male and female pastors decides about their places of employment. The bishop's duty is to promote the unity of Christianity, and to encouorage the church in its missionary efficiency to fulfill the commission of the church: "Win people as disciples for Jesus Christ that through them the world will be improved.

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