

The self image of the New Apostolic Church

- Notes on the seven points -

Introductory thoughts

A study on the degree of public awareness of the New Apostolic Church undertaken in 2001 revealed that the New Apostolic Church and the manner in which it conceives of itself were relatively unfamiliar. A self image of the Church is thus of particular importance, especially when Church members seek to explain, in concise and simple terms, the essential features of their faith and Church in conversation with people who are not New Apostolic.

The self image thus provides a basis for internationally uniform statements about the New Apostolic Church for public relations work.

On the relationship between the self image and the Articles of Faith

The text of the self image is intentionally concise and general in nature. It does not make use of complex and theologically precise formulations. These functions are served by the Articles of Faith of the New Apostolic Church.

On the text of the self image

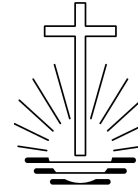
The self image of the New Apostolic Church – the path to salvation in our time, established by Jesus Christ

The subtitle “the path to salvation in our time, established by Jesus Christ” expresses an important fundamental of New Apostolic doctrine: the activity of the Apostle ministry, and thus the charge of the New Apostolic Church, extends throughout the time period preceding the return of Christ.

Salvation is imparted in other ways during other periods of the divine plan of salvation. This coincides with the words of Apostle Paul, according to which God wishes to help all mankind.

1. The New Apostolic Church is led by Jesus Christ through living Apostles. Its doctrine is based on the Holy Scripture.

Point number 1 expresses the conviction of faith that the New Apostolic Church is led by Jesus Christ. Accordingly the Apostles consider themselves to be tools in His hand. In addition, this point expresses that New Apostolic doctrinal statements have their foundation in the Holy Scripture.



2. The Apostle ministry is the ministry authorised by Jesus Christ to convey salvation.

Point number 2 describes the special profile of the New Apostolic Church as an Apostolic Church. The policy paper of 24 January 2006 entitled "The necessity of the Apostle ministry for salvation" explains further details on this topic. In short, this is a matter of imparting salvation in our time, particularly in view of the return of Christ.

3. Apostles are essential to prepare His church for His promised return.

Point number 3 complements point number 2. Further explanations can be found in the policy paper entitled "The necessity of the Apostle ministry for salvation" of 24 January 2006.

The formulation "His church" is intended to be read in the context of point number 1: The New Apostolic Church is led by Jesus Christ through living Apostles." The self image does not express doctrinal statements on the New Apostolic Church's conception of the church.

4. The New Apostolic Church recognises three sacraments: Holy Baptism with water, Holy Sealing, and Holy Communion.

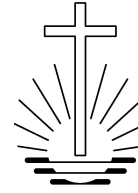
The statements in point number 4 are already sufficiently familiar, and are described in greater detail in the Articles of Faith of the New Apostolic Church.

5. The dispensation of Holy Sealing and Holy Communion, as well as forgiveness of sins, is bound to the Apostle ministry.

Point number 5 describes the convictions of faith already stated during the information evening of 24 January 2006 in Uster and in the policy papers "Understanding of Baptism and Sealing" and "The necessity of the Apostle ministry for salvation". The sacrament of Holy Baptism with water is not mentioned here because the New Apostolic Church recognises Holy Baptisms of other Christian denominations if they are properly performed and dispensed in the name of the Trinity.

6. New Apostolic Christians have received the gift of the Holy Spirit through Holy Sealing.

The formulation of point number 6 is also rooted in statements of the policy papers of the frequently mentioned Uster information evening of 24 January 2006, as well as in the supplementary treatise on "The Holy Spirit and its diverse forms of activity".



- 7. Jesus Christ, of whom the Holy Scripture bears witness, is central to the faith life of New Apostolic Christians. He is active in His church today and He will return. The goal of faith of New Apostolic Christians is to be united with Christ when He returns.**

The statements in point number 7 are of central importance for the self image of the New Apostolic Church. Jesus Christ is central to the faith life of New Apostolic Christians. The subordinate clause “of whom the Holy Scripture bears witness,” is to make it clear that we believe in Jesus Christ in the manner in which the Holy Scripture testifies of Him.

Point number 7 also demonstrates that Jesus Christ is not only significant in terms of His return. Already today He is to define the faith life of New Apostolic Christians. This also means that the way in which He treated people is also to be our example in daily life. Hence the New Apostolic Church also professes general Christian core values. The individual is assigned the task of loving God above all things and his neighbour as himself. Here the term “neighbour” is not only understood as a reference to fellow members of the New Apostolic Church, but rather to all people with whom we come into contact in whatever manner.

Point number 7 also expresses the conviction that Jesus Christ is already active today in the New Apostolic Church. In particular, we have fellowship with Him in Holy Communion. The New Apostolic conviction of faith that Jesus Christ will come again remains unchanged. To prepare for this moment remains an important element of our life of faith. We already endeavour to grow into the nature of Christ today.

Concluding comments

The self image of the New Apostolic Church purposely restricts itself to describing our church exclusively. For example, it does not contain statements on whether non-sealed individuals can be accepted at the return of Christ, on the activity of the Holy Spirit outside the New Apostolic Church, or on the New Apostolic Church’s conception of other denominations. In these questions, the statements made during the Uster information evening of 24 January 2006, formulated under the key words “Salvation”, “Exclusivity” and “The necessity of the Apostle ministry for salvation” and published both in the “Our Family” Church magazine and on the internet, continue to apply unchanged and without restriction.

Zurich, 04.12.2007