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# SCHNELLER

MAGAZINE ON CHRISTIAN LIFE IN THE MIDDLE EAST



**LIFE IN ABUNDANCE —  
AGAINST A CULTURE OF DEATH**



**EVS Evangelical Association  
for the Schneller Schools**

## LIFE IN ABUNDANCE – AGAINST A CULTURE OF DEATH

<b>A stable on a mountain</b> Contemplation from Lebanon	2
<b>Colourful threads against the darkness</b> Women in Damascus create hope with a stitching project.	4
<b>Drops of hope on a Syrian evening</b> Thoughts about the Good Shepherd in the destroyed old city of Homs	7
<b>So that they may have a life in abundance</b> Lebanon, Schneller School, Saudi Arabia, USA – stations of a life	10
<b>Silent protest</b> When thieves steal happiness, life quality and future instead of goods	12
<b>The courage of devotion</b> Faith and gospel in the East German diaspora	14

## NEWS ABOUT WORK AT THE SCHNELLER SCHOOLS

<b>On the right course</b> The Schneller school in Amman is looking forward with confidence	16
<b>Drastic measures</b> New law brings schools in Lebanon in financial difficulties	18
<b>Federal Cross of Merit for a bridge builder</b> EVS Chairman Klaus Schmid was commended for his life's work	19
<b>George and "Bruder Schmid"</b> Reminiscences of the time when Klaus Schmid was educator at the JLSS	20
<b>Schneller festival of superlatives</b> Former UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion	23

## CHRISTIANS AND THE MIDDLE EAST

<b>The precious gift of Ecumenism</b> Historical meeting with four Oriental churches in Berlin	26
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<b>Imprint</b>	29
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Dear Reader,

*“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.”* These verses come from the Gospel of St John, Chapter 10, Verses 10 and 11 according to the New Revised Standard Version. In 2014, the international Mission Council of the Evangelical Mission in Solidarity (EMS), of which the Evangelical Association for the Schneller Schools (EVS) is a member, decided on the following thematic focus for the coming years: *“Life in abundance for all – Mission in Solidarity”*. This was the slogan of the symposium which took place in Bad Boll last June. Delegates from EMS member churches and societies came from all over the world to attend the symposium and contribute their observations on how other member churches understand their *“Mission in Solidarity”*.



It repeatedly emerged how far our present time is tainted by a culture of death. Large parts of Mosul, Aleppo, Rakka and Homs have been destroyed but hardly anyone counts the dead, the injured or the refugees. Murderous terrorist attacks in Paris, Brussels, London, Istanbul, Orlando, Nice, Jerusalem, St Petersburg, Berlin, Manchester and New York are increasingly defining the attitude to life in the West. There is hardly any mention of the refugees who drown every day in the Mediterranean.

Against this background, we asked our friends and our sisters and brothers in the Middle East this question: what does *“Life in abundance”* mean for you in view of the pervasive culture of death? The answers printed in this issue were astounding. Some concerned themselves with the *“thief”* in the Bible verse; others with the *“good shepherd”* – but in every case the focus was on life itself. Harrowing and moving observations are written in a humble, often almost fragile language which blur the borders between meditation and reporting.

But read the stories yourself. Also read about the changes that took place in our Schneller Association. Finally, I sincerely wish that you personally experience a *“life in abundance”*, especially during the Advent and Christmas season, when God became incarnation in Bethlehem on the threshold of the New Year.

With heartfelt blessings from the entire editorial team,

Yours

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Uwe Gräbe". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Rev. Dr Uwe Gräbe, EVS Executive Secretary

## A STABLE ON A MOUNTAIN

The story of Christmas is a very simple one. A woman, a man and a baby born in a stable. It is all about a young family and some guests visiting. There will be no luxury, just some cloth to wrap the baby in and that is it. That is the beginning of our Christian faith: a simple story about three people who do not need much. Jesus came that we may have life and have it abundantly, John writes. But what is a full life for us? How can we have life abundantly?

In Lebanon, I sometimes join the excursions of NEST on a Saturday. Recently, we went to a small monastery on a mountain. Eight Greek Orthodox monks are living there a very simple life, in very simple surroundings, almost a stable. The abbot, dressed in a crudely woven black cloth, took abundant time to tell us about their lives in this simple monastery.

Every day starts early, very early. At 2.30 everybody rises for private meditation. Then at 4 AM they come together for their morning service. They sit in church chanting and praying till 7 or 8 AM For the last hour or so, the people of the village join them. And then the monks start working. Some are in charge of the guests. They receive them and listen to their concerns. Others are visiting the sick people of the village to pray with them and encourage them. Others work on the land, growing vegetables and fruit, and they clean their compound. So they all work till lunch, their first meal.

As you will have guessed by now, this meal does not consist of meat or such luxury, but of vegetables and lentils. In the afternoon the monks rest a bit. Each monk

has a spiritual task assigned to him by his spiritual coach to work on. Maybe there is a part of his personality that needs spiritual growth. With help of the coach he tries to better himself, in order to grow towards Christ. And then after another light meal and a church service they go to bed at about 10 PM.

We were all impressed, especially by the lack of sleep, by this individual spiritual task and by the general simplicity of their lives. "You make life so difficult," the abbot said to us. "Why do you need all these things?" Most of us were carrying mobile phones.

"We don't have phones." "And Internet?" "No Internet either." "Television?" "No. You might say we live in the Stone Age," he added with a smile. And he was right. There was even no heating at all, on this cold mountain. The cells of the monks must be freezing in winter. The only really nice and beautiful part of the convent was the chapel.

"But how about money?" someone asked. "We really don't need money. Our expenditure is very low. And if we need something badly, most of the times it is given to us. We once needed a shed, for a hermit. One of the farmers nearby made it available to us. We have the essential thing. We love God, like a man loves his wife or a woman her husband. And that is enough for us."

"I admire you," someone in the group said. "You should not! Emphatically not!" the abbot exclaimed. "You should not admire us, for we are not better than you. No! If you admire us, you say that we are holy and you are not. But that is too easy

for us and for you. We are not holier than you. We are also living in this world, part of this world, just as you are. We have our calling and you have your own calling. You need to find your own holiness. Is one calling better than the other? No. Find your own calling, your own spiritual path in life. Listen and follow your heart. But always remember: life in abundance is not about having a nice mobile phone in your hand. It is about loving God and living from this love.”

What is life in abundance for us? Let's follow the example of that simple family and of the baby born in a stable. Quoting the words of this monk in the stable on

the mountains, we Christians all need to find our own spiritual path. We should not stand still and admire the calling of others, but we should listen carefully to hear our own calling. And act on it. Let's live in the love of God, following our own calling.

*Hedda Klip is a pastor and theologian from the Netherlands. She currently lectures on the Old Testament at the Near East School of Theology (NEST) in Beirut.*



Photo: EMS/Buck

**The abundance of life can also be found in the barren mountains of Lebanon.**



## COLOURFUL THREADS AGAINST THE DARKNESS

### Women in Damascus create hope with a stitching project

**Being the light for others – that’s a call from the Bible. In the midst of war and darkness, women in Damascus have taken this call seriously. Many refugee women today earn a living for their families from the “Hook and Thread” project.**

I grew up in a family where both my parents were evangelists – they spent most of their lives travelling from one village to another all over Syria, spreading the word of God. After their work was done in one village, my parents used to pack everything and move to another place, restarting a life there and of course trying to establish a church in their new destination. They had one child in each of these villages and in total they had seven children. One can imagine how difficult this lifestyle was. Every time my parents had to start from new in these small, closed communities.

I learned how my mum shared with other families the small and little things she had. She preached and taught the women to pray and even some household skills such as knitting, sewing, first aid, cooking and baking. I will never forget when once she gave her beautiful knitted blanket to a poor family when their room was destroyed in a fire. We were used to host the poor, needy, lonely, foreigner and ill people at our house.

During the last seven years of war and terror in Syria, everything I have learned from my family I have brought to practice. In deed it has been the time to be the LIGHT against the culture of death that has surrounded us – there is no more peace and safety in Syria, lots of shooting, kidnapping, bombing and random rockets and mortar shells falling frequently in our neighbourhoods.

In the midst of all this danger we were encouraged to go and reach to people in need and displaced families and in spite of our modest help and facilities we said little is better than nothing. In addition, we were trying to carry some words of hope, and of course that required lots of patience and love. Our help in the beginning during 2011 was small including only some



Opposing hopelessness together

used clothes, blankets and kitchenware. At that time, we thought the war would not last long and would end soon. But unfortunately, things became worse and in 2012 many more people fled to Damascus from affected areas such as Homs, Daraa and Damascus outskirts. However, the number of these people was huge and the need was much more than the capacity.

Most of those who came to ask for help were women. In our culture, men are generally too proud to ask for help. I was so sad that we had no more sources even when we have support from the churches, family members and even friends. Then it crossed my mind that my sister long time ago managed to help a lady by teaching her knitting and then my sister sold this woman's handiwork for her which gave her a regular income.

It hit me suddenly that we can maybe do something similar. This is how we started the "Hook and Thread" group with some leftover materials I had at home. We felt reminded of the Proverbs of Solomon about "A wife of noble character who can find? ... She selects wool and flax and works with eager hands. ... And does not eat the bread of idleness. These Syrian women were so close to those described in the bible, they were hard-working, unselfish, helpful, and full of love. The first working lady was a widow called Antoinet who had three children and no income at all. From this stitching work, she managed to support her family, in total she did more than 1500 coasters.

Actually, the handiwork was not our concept but our aim was beyond that. It was reaching these families through their mothers, and daughters, trying to support them in all means spiritually, physically,



Photo: Mary Jarjour

**Being together is at least as important as earnings from handiwork.**

economically and psychologically. After several months, this project became a beautiful group that meets once a week at my home, when I take the finished products from them and they choose new materials (different design patterns, coloured threads and cloths) for stitching. Some of the ladies come earlier, being super excited to show their beautiful handmade pieces and pick the nicest patterns to stitch more. Together we have coffee and sweets and then comes the most important part which is the bible study. Every week we choose one verse to memorise and encourage us.

These ladies became more interested and motivated to read in the bible. They found even more important support for their souls. Some of these ladies have lost in this war a family member or more. Each one of these ladies was given their own bible. One lady from a famous historical Aramaic Christian village called "Maaloula" told me it was her first time to read in the bible.

Now we have several groups in Hook and Thread and some are based in more popular areas in the outskirts of Damascus

and even one group in a village called “Fairouzeh” near Homs city. All of these participating ladies work hard with love and dignity at their homes. They are able to provide for their families and contribute to the community and raised their self-esteem.

One inspiring story is from a girl called Tahani, who is a displaced girl from a very poor uneducated background. Her father used to lock her chained in her room and accuse her of having mental problems. He was also complaining about his family’s living cost. Tahani’s mother shared her story with one of the Hook and Thread ladies. This woman then offered to teach Tahani to stitch. Tahani learned very quickly how to stitch and made very nice pieces and at the same time she earned some money which pleased her father and made him even allowing her to go out and come to our meetings and participate in our bible study. Against a culture of violence, Tahani has again a chance to live free and enjoy life like others. Indeed, she has discovered life in abundance.

As well from the income of Hook and Thread, we have managed to help other families in need by providing them with food portions, medications, health care, school needs and even fees for educational courses. At the same time, we have the chance and ability to celebrate occasions with them such as Christmas, Mother’s Day, and Easter. We hold special activities for the ladies and their kids in collaboration with different Christian charity groups in order to help them overcome the fear, despair, sadness, death and dark surrounding circumstances.



**Stitching in bright colours and happy patterns**

Of course, we continue to pray and hope for the situation in Syria to change for the better, encouraged with this great verse from Romans 5: 3-5: *But we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.”* (NRSV)

*Mary Jarjour is a member of the Evangelical congregation in Damascus.*



# DROPS OF HOPE ON A SYRIAN EVENING

Thoughts about the Good Shepherd in the destroyed old city of Homs

**The picture of a shepherd and his flock is very familiar to us in the Orient. The shepherd is one of us, he is no stranger even if he smells a little of sheep. People even discover that he does not abandon his animals, even in a war-torn Homs.**

This U-shaped shepherd's crook first shows the sheep what direction to go if they stray to the left or right. The shepherd can also use his crook to chase away intruders. And if a sheep falls into a ditch, he can use his crook to get it out. The parable of the Good Shepherd is the ultimate parable about our relationship to Jesus Christ and vice versa. It is a thread running through the entire bible up to the Last Judgement at the end of time. But this image does not remain cheerful, peaceful and idyllic. Thieves and robbers crop up every day.

I live in Homs, a major crossroad in Syria. During the war in Syria, Homs has become one of the first disaster areas. Nothing remains from the homely scene of the shepherd and his flock. For over seven years, we've had thieves and robbers here, robbers from our midst and robbers who come from afar. Very quietly, even in the name of God, they gorge themselves on our sheep.

I am writing this text in Hamidiyeh which is the destroyed old city centre of Homs. This afternoon, the Syrian national football team will play against Australia to qualify for the World Championships. We've put up a huge screen in the destroyed Hamidiyeh-Souk district to view

the football game. We are hoping. That's something the robbers can't take away from us.

When I came to Homs two years ago, it was very cold. It was just before Christmas 2015. But it was a real gift to celebrate this feast in Hamidiyeh. The simplest things can bring great joy. We were as happy as kids about the very simple Christmas illuminations. With brute force, the war liberated us from all our superfluous Christmas decorations and habits. All of a sudden, there is room for what is essential.

Even now, we have electricity for a maximum of two hours a day. Otherwise everything is pitch black. But at least this



Abuna Jihad Nassif with two women in Homs

blots out the ruins of buildings with their charred and plundered apartments from our sight. It was also rather dark in the Grotto of the Nativity. Sometimes it's a good thing when there is darkness.

On the other hand, we need to be very careful in the dark. We shouldn't forget our torches when we go out. Otherwise we

may bump into someone, get frightened or we cross a junction without noticing. Suddenly we may have gone much further than we actually intended.

The streets are as good as empty – no people, no cars. Other dangerous things still are pieces of concrete or satellite dishes which may suddenly fall from the ruined roofs of multi-storey buildings. What I haven't seen yet are dogs and cats which normally run around free in Syria. Even the birds and sparrows have disappeared. Where have all the flowers gone?! It's also very empty in our Grotto of the Nativity.

I've started a project with support from the United Nations – we install solar lamps in the streets of our district. We have to protect them against thieves and misuse but now we have light again.

In Hamidiyeh there are only five Maronite families left, all childless. On Sundays, some people also come to holy mass from our sister parish in the Armenian quarter. Then there are about 30 or 40 of us. But during the week, there are perhaps only three or four people at mass. None the less, I celebrate holy mass when there are still so few people. The Last Supper at this time, which is what we call a Syrian evening, takes on a deeper meaning. We are at war and nobody wants to break his bread. Communion is the only sign that we can set against death which is all around us and it is our daily answer to war: we share our bread, our meagre medicine, our worries and fears but also our Christian faith and our hope. And when I look at the faces of the people here, what appears unbearable and impossible for me becomes more bearable and possi-



Photo: Nassif

War damage in Homs is everywhere.

ble. Faces are the place where people meet at the deepest level.

In Homs you cannot look out very far – a mere six metres at the most. Then the plundered, burnt-out empty flats crowd in on you. But we’ve started to restore some of them. We’ve already finished seven of them. Of course, that is only a drop in the ocean.

But these drops for us mean a great deal of hope: at least we’ve started! Another drop of hope is our fellow Christians outside Syria who have not forgotten us. Personally, I’m a collector of drops of hope in Homs.

After two years here, I have come to realise that the shepherd was there all the time! He’s with us day and night. “I’m the good shepherd,” said Jesus about himself. He also said, “Only God is truly good.” And he is absolutely right. Jesus is more than a normal shepherd. He is the divine good shepherd. Who should we be afraid of?! We live and have the full abundance of the love of Christ. Nothing can separate us from this.

*Abuna Jihad Nassif is pastor of the Maronite congregation in Homs.*



Photo: Nassif

**Whoever has to walk through the streets of Homs at night should remember to take a torch with them.**

## SO THAT THEY MAY HAVE A LIFE IN ABUNDANCE

Lebanon, Schneller School, Saudi Arabia, USA – stations in this life

As a child, Aziz Shalaby lived at the Johann Ludwig Schneller School. Here was the foundation for a life of abundance and prosperity, he says. “I have three hearts beating in my breast: one is Lebanese, one German and the third is American.”

The place of my birth where my Lebanese heart started is Mashghara, a village in the Bekaa Valley, Lebanon. My dad worked in the tanneries, loved us unconditionally and believed in education. His life was too short. He passed away at 42, when I was 10 years old. With no family breadwinner and a mother, who had no skills and was close to illiterate, our life was very poor, relative to essential items. My two sisters, my mother and I slept on mattresses on the floor. We barely had enough to eat. We had just two outfits – one on our back and one in the laundry. At seventeen years of age I tasted chicken for the first time.

The German heart started at the Schneller Institute. Here was the foundation for a life of abundance and prosperity. As

a student I learned the love of peace, the value of forgiveness, the ability to accept others, no matter the race, religion or color. The school had Germans, Swiss, Lebanese, Palestinians, Jordanians, Syrians, and Bahrainis. Black and white. Hard work, honesty, and discipline were part of the values. This is the true Christian Schneller legacy that I carried with me throughout my life.

One is influenced by teachers and friends: Yousef Murad, my teacher in office procedures, is someone I will never forget. Schwester Else was the perfect girl: beautiful, tolerant and caring. George Naim was the best classmate with whom I learned negotiation and analysis. And Abdo Khanashat who was determined to teach me to play the flute accompanying him on the organ. Both are lifelong friends.

At Lufthansa in Beirut, my first job, I was transferred due to my honesty and following orders, to Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. In Dhahran my American heart started. I was exposed to that culture: bowling, T-bone steak, slot machines and the cafeteria. I visited my uncle in Boston who took me to the Library where I decided to get more education. I got my Associate of Arts from Glendale College, CA, my Bachelors from California State University in Los Angeles and my MBA from the University of Portland in Oregon. I was the first in my family to get a university education. Neither my father, nor my mother, nor my sisters had high school degrees.



Aziz Shalaby (left) as a young adult with his Schneller friends George Naim and Samy Haddad

While attending the university, whatever work was available that was the perfect job: washing dishes, cleaning floors, bartending, depositing money in the bank, buying supplies for the restaurant, carpentry, dry cleaning, answering the telephone and preparing food. My work after my bachelor's degree was mainly in finance, accounting and management. At my longest job I progressed from a Credit Manager to Vice President. Here I got truly enmeshed and grew to appreciate the American culture more.

I got married to Bernadette, a wonderful Irish girl, and have two children, a boy and a girl. Both have college degrees, and good jobs. They are married and have two boys each.

“From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required.” (Luke 12: 48, NRSV) Life in abundance has blessed me with wealth, knowledge, talent and time and I am using these well to glorify God and benefit others. I am with the Lions Club where we serve the community by working with school children, serving meals to the homeless, donating towels, mittens, and pyjama to the needy. I am the treasurer of the Lutheran Board for Mission Support, where our charity focuses on the two Schneller schools in Lebanon and Jordan. Nicolas Neaimi, Rashid Abou Fakhr and I founded Schneller Alumni and Friends Association for ourselves and our kids to remember and support the school. I love to establish a charitable family foundation focusing on education in the Middle East with the emphasis on the American University of Beirut, Lebanese American University and scholarships for Schneller students.

Threats to the life of abundance are cur-



Photo: privat

**Today, Aziz Shalaby can look back on a fulfilled life.**

rently present: terrorism, killings of innocents, racism, nationalism, us vs them, exclusion, anti-refugee, anti-immigrant and xenophobia. We need to be vigilant, the thief, guardian of this destructive culture, comes while we are unaware and tramples over our Christian values which I learned at Schneller School and practised in this blessed country.

*Aziz Shalaby is a former student at the Johann Ludwig Schneller School in Lebanon and today lives in the USA.*



## SILENT PROTEST

**When thieves steal happiness, life quality and future instead of goods**

As part of the Study Programme in the Middle East (SiMo), Maxie Rink studied for a whole year at the Near East School of Theology (NEST) in Beirut. When she heard the verses from John 10 about the abundance of life against the background of life in Lebanon, she wrote the following.

Beirut, on a sunny Saturday, walking along the promenade. Nabil studied architecture at the state university of Lebanon. Of the two jobs which allowed him to live well, only one is left and even this company is repeatedly thinking of closing down. He made the conscious decision not to go abroad after leaving university. Many graduates work for a few years elsewhere, on the Gulf where salaries are much better. Others leave for ever. Yes, he made the very conscious decision to stay but still the question arises time and again. When people speak about a thief nowadays, they usually mean a shop thief, a pick-pocket, or in a nutshell, a thief of material goods. But can a thief also be someone who steals more than that? Those thieves who steal happiness instead of goods, they steal life quality or future – the future of Nabil.

Lebanon, the small country on the Mediterranean, has had a turbulent political past, especially in the 20th century. Foreign powers which secured social influence during the civil war; a religious system of proportional representation which has favoured static family dynasties for decades; corrupt politicians which provide the population with neither a 24-hour power supply nor enough water from the

tap. Then there is the delicate geographical location: the war in Syria directly next door and the tense relationship and Israel.

Lebanon knows the stories of thieves who steal more than material goods very well. They are often loud stories, so loud that they hurt the ears. And then there are those who raise their voices against all this: the priests and bishops who selflessly look after their congregations; the Non-Governmental Organisation March which staged a joint theatre play with opposing groups in Lebanon's most northerly town of Tripoli; or the school of the Joint Christian Committee which provides Palestinian refugee children with education and a perspective for their otherwise bleak future.

But if you listen carefully in Beirut, you hear even more. An evening at the coastal village of Enfeh. Sitting at a long table on our right are local residents, young and old, enjoying an evening meal together. A little while later, two more chairs appear at the table. We are invited. Typical small talk and serious talks weave a bond between the guests and the hosts. Arak is poured out generously and fish are swallowed whole with heads and bones. Do we owe you anything? Certainly not! Come again soon, they call as we leave, while the sun inches closer to the horizon and we set off to return to Beirut.

He lived for 19 years in Switzerland, says the taxi driver to us smiling, in a slight dialect which is mixed with other accents. Why didn't he stay? He turns around to me, his hand points out of the car. Snapshot: taxis honking their horns,

hustle and bustle all around. I think back at the previous hours and understand what he means. A country teeming with life. The concrete echoes, lingering in the bones of Beirut. The streets groan under the endless stream of traffic. Urban children knock on tinted car windows with pleading eyes in search of small change. The neon light crackles – for the next three hours, there will only be power from generators. The noise of the city speaks about chaos, uncertainty and the joy of life; of sorrow, beauty and ability. It tells of loud thieves and of those who raise their voices against them.

But when you listen carefully, it also tells quiet stories that speak about the people who stay, went and came back. While others argue loudly about refugee quotas and Islamist terror, they live a little bit of normality in their country every day. While some act with blatant injustice and others argue unmistakably for what is right, they live by the rhythm of everyday life. And fight for Lebanon’s fragile silence. A silence that conceals life.



Photo: Katja Buck

**Who doesn't love the Corniche in Beirut?!**

*Maxie Rink studies theology and Islamic studies in Marburg.*

## THE COURAGE OF DEVOTION

### Faith and gospel in the East German diaspora

The image of the Good Shepherd is one of the strongest in the New Testament. It is one that empowers and keeps watch over life. It contradicts the everyday experience that the strongest prevails. It was Martin Luther's insight that unconditional trust in the Good Shepherd promotes the courage to change something in the world.

The whole summer long, Martin Luther and his wife Käthe stood in front of St Mary's Church in Anklam. The women of the church congregation made the dolls from large bales of straw, sewed a cassock and gown for them and shaped their eyes and mouths – as a tongue-in-cheek reminder of the reformer and his strong wife in the anniversary year. When a church neighbour met me for an evening walk, he mentioned them to me. "The dolls are great! Are you celebrating the harvest festival?" It's a little too early to celebrate harvest festival in July. Straw dolls are a common sight in the villages of our region, but they normally appear in autumn. "We're celebrating the anniversary of the Reformation," I say and when I see his questioning look, I add: "Martin Luther and his wife Katharina!" "Who are they?" asks the neighbour with genuine interest.

What is known as the "heartland of the Reformation" anywhere else is today one of the regions in Europe where religion, faith and knowledge about it is the least widespread.

Although churches are a predominant feature in every village in East Germany, there are fewer and fewer people who know why these buildings are there and what they stand for. A long tradition of secularisation, two dictatorships and profound upheaval as a result of reunification have resulted in a situation today where religion has become the private matter of a minority. The majority of people here are largely ignorant of what the Christian faith means, how it is lived and the deep



Photo: Petra Huse

Katharina and Martin Luther as straw dolls in front of St Mary's Church in Anklam

roots it has in our culture. Many people just cannot understand that faith can have a personal meaning.

The Christian faith speaks of a promised “life in abundance”. Therefore, the duty of the Christian community is to empower life and unfold its driving forces to their full potential. An environment rife with social upheavals, a critical demographic situation and economic hopelessness are in particular need of something life-enhancing. The everyday lives of many people are beset with worries and fears that are justified. Those who cannot sell themselves very well on the labour market or who have insufficient qualifications, income or flexibility in line with today’s standards are literally standing in second line. It is not uncommon that places in East Germany act as a national scapegoat because that is apparently where people live who are not prepared or who are unable to accept the social consensus. The great duty of Christian congregations here is to bring up alternatives for discussion.

How do you talk about the “Good Shepherd” when your experience tells you that only the strong can prevail? How can you talk about trusting God without demeaning the life concepts of people who apparently get by very well without faith? This is the daily challenge in Anklam. It would be easy to paint the world in black and white, to promise simple answers or make a distinction between “us here” and “them there”. The feeling of marginalisation in an extremely complex world is a fertile breeding ground for any type of extremism. At the same time, the danger is often not taken seriously enough even in the Evangelical Church. We cultivate the pain of shrinkage and

spend a lot of money on reflection and short-term projects instead of sinking our funds into strengthening long-term examples to prove the opposite at local level. For us as a church, the primary aim should not be about effect or boundaries. What we need is a long-persevering witness, clarity in our words, open arms and the courage of devotion.

In Anklam, we attempt to invest as much of our meagre resources as possible in educational work and job opportunities and to meet people where they live instead of waiting for them to come to us. This year, Martin Luther’s life is a good example for answering the question of what a life in abundance means. Luther’s understanding that unconditional trust in the Good Shepherd offers a liberating perspective is tremendously relevant for us at this time. If people can confide their own weaknesses to God, they can unleash forces to not accept the rules of the world, to open their eyes to the worries of their fellow humans, to share in carrying their burdens and accompanying them part of their way, and not to conceal what our hope is.

*Petra Huse is Pastor at St Mary’s Church in Anklam. During her studies in theology, she went on a one-year course of study to the Near East School of Theology (NEST) in Beirut as part of the EMS Study Programme in the Middle East (SiMO).*

## ON THE RIGHT COURSE

**The Schneller school in Amman is looking forward with confidence**

**Erwin Ritte spent six months at the Theodor Schneller School (TSS) in Amman assisting the Director with administrative matters. The administration expert from Kassel returned from Jordan with many positive impressions and presented a detailed report at the EVS General Meeting in Stuttgart in October.**

The Theodor Schneller School has weathered the storm. The institution was plunged into a crisis since the post of director was vacant for several years. Many basic problems were not addressed and renovations and reforms had accumulated. When Khaled Freij was appointed the new Director in the summer of 2016, it was obvious that he needed someone to support him in administration and restructuring matters. The Evangelical Association for the Schneller Schools (EVS) found the right assistant for a fixed period in Erwin Ritte. Before he retired, Ritte had worked in managerial posts for the Evangelical Church of Kurhessen-Waldeck for 35 years, at a partner church in South Africa for several years and had known the TSS for many years as he had sat on committees of the Evangelical Mission in Solidarity (EMS).

“The new sign at the entrance and a new coat of paint are visible indications that the Theodor Schneller School is serious about its new beginning,” said Erwin Ritte at the EVS General Meeting in Stuttgart. The new start under the new Director Dr Khaled Freij can clearly be felt. “The TSS intends to continue its important mission in Jordanian society.”

It is true that the building and the entire infrastructure including water, sewage and electricity need modernisation since they are over 60 years old and it often requires enormous expenditure and effort, even for temporary repairs when something breaks down. But there are also other things which have already been completely modernised and will now last for quite some time. “With support from the Kirchentag collection in Stuttgart in 2015, we were able to start installing the solar system in summer this year,” said Ritte. “This is an enormous step forward since the school can save up to 12,000 euros a month in electricity bills after the system is up and running.” It will take less than two years to achieve a return on investment.



**This summer, boys, girls and young men were happily at their state recognised school-leaving and vocational tra**



Security for the building and the plot of land has long been a problem owing to the school's location on the outskirts of Amman right next door to a Palestinian refugee camp. Meanwhile, a professional surveillance and security service and the installation of video cameras have improved the situation, said Ritte and also mentioned a major problem which had so far remained unresolved: the 60-year-old water supply and sewage systems at the school are dilapidated and are in urgent need of complete refurbishment.

On the other hand, there have been many improvements inside the building itself. "We have renovated many classrooms, dormitories and social rooms in the boarding home and its sanitary facilities," said Ritte in his report. "Things are improving step by step." The 85 children living at the boarding home now enjoy more cleanliness and order as a result of

the renovations. "The children at the boarding home regularly collect rubbish. That's one way of putting environmental education into practice."

There's also a lot happening in the day school where 230 pupils from grades one to ten are taught at primary school level and the two secondary school levels. For example, children with mental and physical disabilities are integrated in the same classes. "One father was overjoyed that the TSS was the first school where his child could finally receive the right type of help," said Ritte.

An outstanding topic at the moment was vocational training at the TSS, said Ritte. There are currently three vocational specialisations: carpentry, car mechanics and metal-working. "The problem is that all three specialisations are under review." In future, there are also plans to offer a course of training in hairdressing for girls. "The only problem is that the whole situation regarding vocational training is under review in Jordan. The TSS is now sounding out where it stands with state and other authorities."

Jordan was certainly not an island of bliss surrounded by an Arab-Islamic environment full of war and subversion and the Jewish state in the west, said Ritte in the closing statements to his speech. Despite the high number of refugees, the country was still an island of hope. "The TSS can make its contribution to this Islamic country and its society by providing education and acting as a model to maintain hope based on Christian faith, thus offering perspectives for the future."



and boisterously celebrating their success at passing vocational examinations.

*Katja Dorothea Buck*

## DRASTIC MEASURES

### New law brings schools in Lebanon in financial difficulties

**Lebanon's teachers are supposed to receive 30 per cent more salary. This almost brought private schools such as the Johann Ludwig Schneller School (JLSS) to the brink of insolvency. Meanwhile, a solution has been found for the new school year.**

**F**or many years, plans for the new law hung over all the schools in Lebanon like a Sword of Damocles. After five years of debating, the Lebanese parliament finally reached a majority decision this summer. All teachers will receive 30 per cent more salary, including backdated payments for the last two years. Now many institutions are considering who should foot the additional costs, not only on the state side but also many institutions on the church side. About two thirds of the one million pupils in Lebanon attend private schools, the majority of which are sponsored by churches.

The new salary scale hits some schools particularly hard, such as the JLSS which is not financed by high tuition fees but provides children from poor families with a good education for charitable reasons. They are unable to simply raise parents' fees to compensate for the rising costs. Tuition fees that parents pay for their children's schooling only represent 14 per cent of the total income at JLSS. The rest is financed by donations. Of course, it is probably wishful thinking to expect donations to increase by 30 per cent overnight and stay at that level. This is why the school has dismissed teachers and closed some of its classes. During the current school year, the boarding home children

in Grades 7, 8 and 9 will go to the government school in the neighbouring town of Kifrayya. The JLSS will organise and finance daily transportation there and back. "We apologize to the parents of students for this decision which was forced upon us," writes Director George Haddad on the school website. "The JLSS depends on the major financial support it receives from the German churches and other partners to continue its ministry to needy and disadvantaged children."

Many schools in Lebanon have not yet found a solution to bypass the new law. The fact that higher personnel costs cannot simply be passed on to parents appears to have enormous consequences for many schools. The Maronite Church, which sponsors the majority of private schools, has therefore requested the Lebanese state to share some of the additional costs. However, the state itself has difficulties in paying the higher salaries for its own employees. All proposals for tax increases to finance the new teachers' salaries were finally rejected by the constitutional court.

*Katja Dorothea Buck*

# FEDERAL CROSS OF MERIT FOR THE BRIDGE BUILDER

EVS Chairman Klaus Schmid was commended for his life's work



State Secretary Friedlinde Gurr-Hirsch and Reverend Klaus Schmid

At the General Meeting of the Evangelical Association for the Schneller Schools (EVS), the Reverend Klaus Schmid received the Federal Cross of Merit for over 50 years of work on behalf of the Schneller schools.

“We need people like this more than ever,” said Baden-Württemberg State Secretary Friedlinde Gurr-Hirsch in her laudatory speech at the Nikodemuskirche in Stuttgart on 22 October 2017. Klaus Schmid, Mrs Gurr-Hirsch continued, spent his entire life building bridges in societies and between religions. There is hardly a more befitting reason for this honour in view of developments in the world today. “You were able to inspire people by your unconditional commitment, by setting an example as volunteer, head of education, Middle East Secretary and Chairman of the Association. Your choice of profession

and your commitment to volunteer work were always directed to Schneller work.” Promoting interfaith education is a laudable approach. “You accompanied and brought up children. That is the best way and foreign policy at its best. You have rendered great service to our country,” said Gurr-Hirsch and pinned the highest award of the Federal Republic of Germany to the lapel of the long-standing Chairman of the EVS.

He would be honoured to accept the award, said Schmid and added, “The award of the Federal Republic of Germany also goes to the many volunteers of the EVS and co-workers in Jordan, Lebanon and the Secretariat in Stuttgart.”

Klaus Schmid first made contact with the Schneller schools as a young man. He worked at the Lebanese school as volunteer in the 1960s and later returned as head of education and deputy director. He brought the Evangelical churches in the Middle East to the EMS when he was Middle East Liaison Secretary at the EMS and Executive Secretary of the EVS and they are now members of the EMS today. He was Chairman of the Schneller Association and untiringly informed the public of the work of the schools, raised money for them and advised the national sponsor associations on continuing developments at the schools in Jordan and in the Bekaa Valley in Lebanon.

*Reverend Jürgen Reichel, General Secretary of the Evangelical Mission in Solidarity*

## GEORGE AND “BRUDER SCHMID”

**Reminiscences of the time when Klaus Schmid was educator at the JLSS**

The present Director of the Johann Ludwig Schneller School (JLSS) in Lebanon, George Haddad, was once a pupil at Schneller himself and grew up at the boarding school there. His educator at that time was Klaus Schmid, or “Bruder Schmid”, as the long-standing EVS Chairman was called then. Below, George Haddad relates how formative this time was for him.

It was October 1969, forty-eight years ago, when I first heard of Bruder Klaus Schmid. It was my first day at the Johann Ludwig Schneller School (JLSS) and when the boys knew I was placed in Family 5 they told me: “NIYYALAK!” (How lucky you are). You are now with Bruder Schmid. He is the best educator in the school. In the afternoon, I met Bruder Schmid for the first time. He was kind and

welcoming. He showed me my bed and my cupboard and welcomed me to Family 5.

Family 5 was very nice, but it was Bruder Schmid who made it a real heaven. No bullying from older boys. Under Bruder Schmid all boys were equal in duties and privileges. The fear of the older boys had no place in his family. Work in Family 5 was fairly distributed on all students. Every month Bruder Schmid would hang the work-plan on the bulletin board.

Life with Bruder Schmid was much more than studying and working. Time after school was great fun. There were plenty of activities. He introduced me to photography in the darkroom of Family 5. I learnt how to take photos, develop negatives, and make prints. The thing that amazed me was how much he trusted us, his students. I remember the time he placed the expensive German camera in

my hands loaded with black and white film saying: “Take it wherever you like and take all the photos you want, then come back to learn to develop the film and make the prints.”

There was also music. We had harmonium and recorder lessons arranged by Bruder Schmid with Rev. Jabra Zabaneh, or Mr. Carl Schankweiler or Herr Krauze. Bruder



In the 1960s: Klaus Schmid (the young man in the middle wearing a tie) and “his” boys from Family 5. The photo was taken before George Haddad attended the Schneller school but it was developed in the darkroom of the school in Khirbet Kanafar.

Schmid himself was teaching the boys how to play brass instruments. I remember asking him to join the brass band. It was then when I learnt how Bruder Schmid acts when he is upset: a sudden tilt of the head, a firm gaze in your eyes, and then he calls you by name. "George" he said, "you are learning to play the harmonium and the recorder, you must leave room for others."

He once brought a ceramics oven from Germany, and amazed us how the powder that was placed on brass transformed into amazing colorful keyholders or bracelets. Every Saturday afternoon we enjoyed the long walk with Bruder Schmid, and once a year the walk up to the Schneller spring, and of course the yearly school trip.

We worked with him for hours arranging the stone foundation of many of the internal roads of JLSS and planting the trees that make the JLSS campus such a nice place today. He worked much harder than any of us, and this made us give our best in doing the job which we also enjoyed.

One night when I was just falling asleep not realizing that I still had my hand on the ladder of the upper bed, it was the hand of Bruder Schmid gently removing my hand from the ladder and warning me that if Fawzi my friend needed to walk down from his bed he will be standing on my hand and hurting me.

During harvest season the danger of fire was always threatening the crops of the Schneller fields. Especially vulnerable was the wheat field. When the bell of Family 3 was rung continuously it meant there was a fire in the fields. The older boys had to leave class immediately and run down with shovels and branches with the teachers and Brüder to put the fire out. We

would all stand in a wide line working together slowly in the direction of the fire to put it out.

On one of those days, I was working side by side with my friend Salim Saggi. We got very excited doing the job not realizing we were moving much faster than the other boys in the line. Suddenly, we both realized we were surrounded with fire. We heard our friends shouting in a distance that we were surrounded with fire. We were both terrified, but suddenly we saw Bruder Schmid and the older boys appearing in the smoke and leading us by their rhythmic and energetic work through the path they created for us to get out safely. He then placed us next to him in the line and we all continued working until the fire was put out.

He provided amazingly calm but disciplined care. He was fair, friendly, protective but allowing a margin of freedom to teach students to be responsible. At times he cared for two families with 45 to 50 students. Amazingly, through all that time, I never heard Bruder Schmid shout or raise his voice.

He also led evening chapel and preached often during the Sunday services. Advent and Christmas were very special seasons in his family, and we always had a wonderful time. He worked around the clock, through the years, school days and holidays, as the boys who stayed in JLSS at Christmas, Easter, and in summer, were also his responsibility. All this, and we never ever heard him complain.

I know that my years in the care of Bruder Schmid molded my personality and character as they did for many others. I could do my work as director of JLSS



since 2006 because of those years with him. What also amazes me is that I never had a disagreement with him in his capacity as EVS chairman on any issue relating to Schneller work, since my appointment as director of JLSS in 2006.

The award he received today is well deserved, but nothing on earth can repay him for his wonderful work. May his work be an inspiration to our churches today, so that his model of unlimited dedication and service be restored to the Schneller mission, without which there really is no hope for our schools in the future.

The only thing that we, as Arabs and Lebanese, would like to erase from the memory of Bruder Schmid is the sad theft of his flute in Amman. I have a donation from one of his students in Lebanon which I will pass on to Uwe Gräbe to buy him a new flute in gratitude to his wonderful work.

*Reverend George D. Haddad  
at the EVS General Meeting  
in Stuttgart on 22 October 2017.*



**More than fifty years later: Klaus Schmid with Schneller Directors George Haddad and Khaled Freij (left) and Habib Badr (right), Senior Pastor of the National Evangelical Church in Beirut and Chairman of the Administrative Board of the JLSS in Lebanon.**

# SCHNELLER FESTIVAL OF SUPERLATIVES

Former UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion

It is seldom that the agenda of an EVS General Meeting is as full as this year. In addition to a worship service, association business and a keynote speech, the agenda this time included the election of the Executive Board and the award of the Federal Cross of Merit to Klaus Schmid. So, it's no wonder that many Schneller friends did not hesitate to travel even long journeys to come to Stuttgart.

It is seldom that we can welcome three partners from the Middle East at a General Meeting. In the person of Habib Badr, Senior Pastor of the National Evangelical Church in Beirut (NECB), the Evangelical Association for the Schneller Schools (EVS) found a clever and competent preacher for the worship service at the Nikodemus-Kirche in Stuttgart-Botnang. Badr has been connected to both the Evangelical Mission in Solidarity (EMS) and the Johann Ludwig Schneller School (JLSS) in Lebanon for many years. The NECB is the sponsor church of the school and Badr is chairman of the school administrative board.

Reverend George Haddad, Director of the JLSS, also came from Lebanon. Nobody could have thanked former EVS Chairman Klaus Schmid better since Schmid was committed to Schneller work both as in a voluntary capacity and in full-time posts for over 50 years. Haddad was also a former pupil at the JLSS and lived in a family there when Klaus Schmid was educator at the time (see p20). It was not the first EVS General Meeting which Haddad's Jordanian colleague, the Reverend Khaled



More than a hundred members and friends of the Schneller work attended.

Freij, attended but it was the first time in his capacity as Director of the Theodor Schneller School (TSS) in Amman. In the summer of 2016, he assumed responsibility for the entire institution. The fact that there were many difficult tasks to tackle was described by Erwin Ritte in his speech (see p16). The administration expert from Kassel was Freij's assistant for six months. At the General Meeting, the new director convinced many Schneller friends by his amiable and open manner and justifiably raised hopes that the school was now back on the right track.

## New Executive Board elected

The main item on the agenda of the association meeting was to elect the new Executive Board. Fortunately, 19 candidates had been nominated for the ten seats – more than ever before. The average age was also pleasingly low since some students had been nominated. They had become acquainted with the Schneller schools during periods of voluntary service or on journeys to the two countries. The fact that the younger generation has found interest in Schneller work is a sign of great hope for the Association.

The following members were (re-) elected to the new Executive Board with a mandate of five years: Bernd Apel, Silvan Eppinger (new), Susanne Gölz (new), Christian Kissling (new), Anselm Kreh, Christian Kurzke, Musa Al-Munaizel (new), Reinhold Schaal, Kerstin Sommer and Martina Waiblinger (new). The following members were dismissed and warmly congratulated for their many years of work on the EVS Executive Board: Johanna Hagen, Johannes Lähne-mann, Basil Rish-mawi, Klaus Schmid and Regina Schoch. Due to the many new-comers, the board members decided to wait until their meeting in January to elect a chair-person from their own midst. They made this decision during their constituent meeting which took place immediately after the General Meeting.

Due to the full agenda, the previous EVS Chairman, Klaus Schmid, had sent a written report to the members before the General Meeting. His report describes the developments at the two schools in Lebanon and Amman. Last year, several projects were successfully completed at the Johann Ludwig Schneller School (JLSS), such as renovations to the heating system and the construction of a football pitch. Work on integrating Syrian refugee children in the school and the training programmes for Syrian refugee women are

continuing well. However, the new law represents a major challenge to the JLSS since teachers' salaries must be increased by 30 per cent (see page 18).

When it came to the Theodor Schneller School (TSS), which also has to struggle with various challenges, Schmid indicated



The new and old Executive Boards of the EVS

in his report that it was certainly fortunate that co-operation with the local sponsor church, the Anglican Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East, was working well. However, the EVS had reduced its sponsorship to the school due to structural and personnel problems at the TSS. Only 20 per cent of the total budget now came from the EMS and EVS, whereas the EMS and EVS assumed 50 per cent of the annual budget of the JLSS.

The Syrian project was running encouragingly well, wrote Schmid. 75 children from internally displaced families were looked after and taught at the preschool in Wadi Nasara. Meanwhile, the sponsor-

ship had been handed over to a local non-government organisation and co-operation was running well with this organisation. The Schneller Foundation was also in good shape, ten years after it was established. In 2016, its total assets amounted to 2,180,841 euros, wrote Schmid.

Reinhold Schaal, Treasurer of the EVS, also presented a written report due to the shortage of time. He reported that the EVS had recorded a significant increase in donations in 2016. The Association had received a total of 1,066,311 euros. In 2015, this was only 736,037 euros. One of the main reasons for this is a single large donation of 145,000 euros.

### Freedom of religion for all

The EVS found none less than the former United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, Professor Heiner Bielefeldt from the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, to hold the keynote speech in the afternoon. In his speech entitled "A disputed human right: Religious freedom within the context of the United Nations", Bielefeldt pointed out that a distinction must be made between genuine religious freedom which allowed conversion and a traditional understanding of tolerance, such as Islam which accepts and protects religious minorities but sanctions a change from the majority religion to a minority religion.

Religious freedom was violated for various reasons, continued Bielefeldt. This was the case, for example, when a group claimed to represent the sole religious truth. Religious identity is also often exploited whenever it undermines the idea of a uniform nation. It can be used to define who belongs to the nation and who does not. One-party systems also violate



**Professor Heiner Bielefeldt spoke about the human right of religious freedom.**

religious freedom because they "need to nurture the illusion that the people and the party are one," said Bielefeldt and mentioned the example of China where Buddhists and Muslims are currently enduring conditions of severe repression.

"The human right to religious freedom applies to both the devout and the critics," said Bielefeldt and explained that strictly speaking this human right is not only a matter of religion alone but also an issue of the freedom of thought, conscience and belief. "All people should be respected for their orientations. Every individual has the freedom to search for meaning and every individual is allowed to change their religion."

*Katja Dorothea Buck*

## THE PRECIOUS GIFT OF ECUMENISM

### Historical meeting with four Oriental churches in Berlin

**Largely ignored by the German media, a historical meeting took place in Berlin on 18 to 21 October. The meeting was convened by the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) which invited the Patriarchs of the Coptic Orthodox, Syrian Orthodox, Armenian Apostolic and Indian Orthodox Churches to Germany to bring attention to the Christians in the Middle East.**

Originally the invitation merely intended to revive the theological dialogue between the Oriental churches and the Evangelical Church in Germany. However, the EKD Chamber for Orthodoxy organising the meeting soon realised that it would not be sufficient in itself to hold an ordinary conference. The challenges which Christians in the Middle East are forced to face were too urgent. Added to this are the many hopes of our brothers and sisters in the Middle East resting on the shoulders of Germany, which is a political heavy-weight on the international and European scene. This was the reason why all the Patriarchs of the participating churches accepted the invitation to come to Berlin and use the time during the two-day conference to meet politicians and church representatives and to discuss the alarming developments in their home countries.

But discussions and working sessions are not everything. At the end of the four-day visit, a joint prayer service was held in Berlin Dome for the oppressed Christians in the Middle East. The service could not have been more ecumenical since

prayers, readings and hymns were spoken in Aramaic, Syrian, Coptic, English and German. Choirs from the Ethiopian, Armenian, Syrian Orthodox and Coptic church communities in Berlin made the colourful diversity of Christianity audible and visible through their traditional liturgical music. What joins them all together despite their diversity finally became clear when the bishops and patriarchs made their entrance: the procession of Eminences and Holinesses was led by a deacon bearing a golden crucifix.

Patriarch Ignatius Afrem II from the Syrian Orthodox Church, who had travelled from Damascus, thanked the EKD for the invitation to come to Berlin. “Thousands of people were killed in the Middle East. Many people had to endure martyrdom. Hundreds of churches were destroyed. We are grateful that we were able to tell our story,” he said and reminded the 800 people in the Cathedral of the fate of the two Syrian bishops who were kidnapped in April 2014 and had not been seen since.

His Holiness Karekin II, Catholicos of all Armenians, had come to Berlin from Armenia. In his address, he emphasised the guidance that the Beatitudes give in times of uncertainty and confusion. “When the destruction of religious cultural values that are thousands of years old and the forced expulsion of people from places which are the cradle of Christianity are justified by falsified and corrupted religious messages, the Beatitudes give us the occasion to renew our readiness to tread together the path of bliss and holiness that



our Lord Jesus Christ showed us.”

His Holiness Baselius Marthoma Paulose II, Catholicos of the Malankara Indian Orthodox Church, had travelled from Kerala, so not directly from the Middle East. He remembered the common tradition dating back almost two thousand years that his church shared with the Oriental churches in the Middle East. These common roots gave Christians in South India the feeling of standing by the side of their sisters and brothers in the Middle East.

For health reasons, Pope Tawadros II from the Coptic Orthodox Church had to cancel his participation at the ecumenical prayer service. Bishop Damian from the Coptic diocese in Germany spoke in his place and admitted that a dream had been

fulfilled that evening: “It’s a personal joy for me to see the Oriental churches join together, to listen to the wonderful language of the Syrian Orthodox church, to see the impressive dances of the Ethiopian Christians and to listen to the moving chants of the Armenians,” he said and asked the EKD to host more ecumenical gatherings of this kind. “It’s good to talk with us instead of talking about us,” he said and closed his key-note with a quotation from Pope Tawadros: “If one day there were no Christians any more in the countries around the Mediterranean, peace and stability in the region and in the whole world would be in danger.”

*Katja Dorothea Buck*



**Ecumenical diversity at a glance: Catholicos Baselius Marthoma Paulose II from Kerala, Pope Tawadros II from Cairo, Catholicos Karekin II from Armenia and Patriarch Ignatius Afrem II (from right to left) are welcomed by EKD Chairperson Heinrich Bedford-Strohm. The only woman in the Talar: Petra Bosse-Huber, EKD Bishop for Ecumenical Relations and Ministries Abroad.**





## We bid farewell



The Evangelical Association for the Schneller Schools (EVS) and the *Schneller Foundation – Education for Peace* mourn the loss of Margit Rupp who died at the age of 62 years on 18 September 2017. The former Director of the Ecclesiastical Council of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Stuttgart made a major contribution in the establishment of the Schneller Foundation. “If many ordinary people make many small steps, they can change the face of the world,” she said at the official constitutive act of the Foundation ten years ago. The profound truth in these words soon became apparent when the Foundation yielded its first revenues to allow the financing of important projects at the two schools. This is also thanks to Margit Rupp and to her committed work as deputy chairperson of the Foundation Executive Board for many years. The EVS and the Schneller Foundation will preserve the memory of Margit Rupp in gratitude and respect.

*Klaus Schmid on behalf of the  
EVS and the Schneller Foundation*

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# SCHNELLER

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Please visit us on the Internet at [www.evs-online.org](http://www.evs-online.org)



For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my spirit on upon your descendants, and my blessing on your offspring.

Isaiah 44: 3



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for the Schneller Schools