



# The Christian Community

Movement for Religious Renewal



New Year's 2024 No. 99

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## Greetings

**Thomas Nayda, Business Manager, Foundation**

Welcome to another edition of our newsletter, Christian Community Worldwide Reports! As the Foundation's Business Manager, I am delighted to present this new issue after a break of more than a year.

This past year was marked by several changes in The Christian Community's leadership: Irma Gössler has become a member of the Circle of Seven, and Stefan Meyer has stepped down from the Circle with his retirement. Joao Torunsky continues as the Erzoberlenker along with Christward Kröner and Oliver Steinrueck as Oberlenkers, and Gisela Thriemer, Susanne Gödecke and Jaroslaw Rolka completing the Circle of Seven. There have also been changes in the Foundation's management, and we are delighted to welcome Bettina Hinde

to our team. She will take on the task of supporting the Business Manager and the Oberlenkers and working on modernizing the administrative structure. This addition not only strengthens our team but will also help to make our structures more efficient and future-oriented. The team also includes Andrea Herrmann for Household, Ruth Deryckere for Catering and Substance Distribution, Michaela Cramer for Accounting, and Thomas Nayda as Business Manager.

In this issue you will find reports from some of the different regions of our movement. Although not all active regions are represented in this issue, in future issues we aim to provide you with a broad insight into all our global activities. In the future, there will also be more reports on projects for which donations have been made or can be made. There are many situations – large and small – that are very interesting and worth reporting on.

We invite you to discover the reports from the featured regions and learn more about the people who strengthen our community through their dedication and commitment.

***Thank you for your continued support and commitment to our Christian Community.***



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## Germany

### LOGOS Conference - Consecrating Humanity Recap and Conclusion

More than a year ago, the participants of our major conference, **LOGOS - Consecrating Humanity**, headed home after five eventful days and took their impressions, experiences and thoughts back to their congregations worldwide.

It is impossible to give a complete review of all the events in all their wonderful diversity and all the valuable encounters.

However, we have created several things that can serve as a joyful reminder for those who were there and give those unable to attend a glimpse into the wonderful event.

On our YouTube channel, you will find the conference film (with subtitles in different languages) and some lectures, interviews, and events as videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/@DieChristengemeinschaft/videos>

Ten of the presentations at the conference are available as podcasts on our SoundCloud channel. Also available are the twenty podcasts created in the run-up to the conference and an interview with Christopher Becker, who made the conference film:

<https://soundcloud.com/user-895241549>

Another treasure resulting from the conference is the Logos Edition series of lectures from the conference, published by Urachhaus, which has also been translated into other languages (usually English).

Seven of the twelve planned volumes have been published so far and can be ordered directly from the publisher:

<https://www.urachhaus.de/index.php?lang=0&cl=search&searchparam=logos-edition>

The eighth volume is due to be published at the beginning of February: Jean-Michael Florin "How do we develop a living relationship with the elements?" (in French translation: "Comment Développer une Relation Vivante avec les Éléments?")

The accounts for the conference have also been finalized and are very positive.

A total of €976,000 was spent. The largest items were the room costs at €238,700 (above all, of course, the huge tent on the sports field), catering at €265,800 and preparation at €269,400. In terms of preparation, it is particularly important to mention very useful and helpful staff position that was made available by the Foundation for several years.

These large sums were mainly based on three pillars: Contributions from conference participants amounted to €384,500; donations and foundation funds amounted to €307,300; and €252,800 from the Foundation's own earmarked funds.

Once again, our heartfelt thanks go to all donors, organizers, participants, contributors, and everyone who contributed to the success of this great event.

**THANK YOU!!!**

We can now bring this project to a close and hope that it will continue to bear fruit in the congregations.

We look forward to seeing to whom we can pass the baton to for the next big get-together.

*With warm greetings from the Logos team*  
*Tim Gottschalk*



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## Bavaria

In the spring 2023, a new generation took over in the region and Ms. Sarah Humérez (34 years old) took over as coordinator and managing director in Bavaria from Ms. Dorothea Humérez, who has now gone into her well-deserved retirement.

In addition to the impetus provided by the mutual debt relief of the congregation's loans, the region is also concerned with the maintenance of buildings and properties, as well as issues relating to thermal energy and the general (still) pending generational change in the congregations. On the latter point, an U50 meeting of members and friends of the Bavarian congregations took place for the first time in Augsburg in July.

*Sarah Humérez*

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## Central Germany

The state television station MDR reported on the 2023 Christian Community summer youth camp in Chemnitz in a friendly profile. The Chemnitzer Freie Presse also wrote about it in a detailed newspaper article in its July 25 edition. Under the direction of Nicole Gilabert (priest in Barcelona) and a local artist, Spanish teenagers created a work of art on the Sophiengrund for a project run by the town of Waldenburg (near Chemnitz). They helped with the renovation of the Sophiengrund, cooked and explored both the natural surroundings and the three large cities of Saxony in their distinctive characteristics.

*Ellinor Langen, Chemnitz*

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## Southwest Germany

The year 2023 brought some changes to our region. In April, we welcomed the newly ordained pastor Eline van den Muijsenberg to the congregation in Saarbrücken. We urgently needed support, as the branches in Kaiserslautern and Trier are also served from Saarbrücken. The space being used in Kaiserslautern was vacated on June 30 and the branch congregation has found new accommodation in the Waldorf School in Otterberg. This also changes the name of the branch to Congregation in Otterberg.

In the summer, Mr. Bernd Warczak left the congregation in Pforzheim and will now work 50% + in the congregation in Greifswald and enjoy 50% of his retirement. Dr. Christian Seiser was welcomed to Pforzheim from the congregation in Heidelberg. Christoph Handwerk was sent to the congregation in Heidelberg.

Our Lenker Irma Beridze-Gössler, was still working in the congregation in Karlsruhe. Since September 1, 2023, she has been working in the Circle of Seven as the successor to Stephan Meyer and has resigned from her position as one of the leaders in the Karlsruhe congregation.

Various events and meetings took place in many congregations this year. Among other things, St. John's Day was celebrated in nearby Alsace, and the camp for children in Constance was also possible again.

*Irma Beridze-Gössler, Jutta Rother*

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## House Freudenberg

Since last year, the administration and house management of the Christian Community's conference, study, and retreat center has been handed over to Christoph Pauer. In spring 2024, the following seminars and events will be offered at Haus Freudenberg: Biography Work, Miracles of Life, Couples Time, and Scenes from Faust I and II. Further seminars, workshops and conferences can be found on the website and in the program booklet for 2024.

The Meeting House in Söcking on Lake Starnberg. We invite you to seminars, events, retreats, intensive work and much more. Surrounded by nature, away from the daily hustle and bustle.

**Register and order the newsletter via Haus Freudenberg:: [info@hausfreudenberg.de](mailto:info@hausfreudenberg.de)**  
**Homepage: [www.hausfreudenberg.de](http://www.hausfreudenberg.de) | Phone: 08151-12379**

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## Australia and New Zealand

The 2023 annual August national conference, held in Melbourne, extended the theme from the 2022 centennial Christian Community Conference with the theme "Logos -- Life that is the Life of Humanity." This was very well attended, with over seventy people. We were grateful to receive, meet and hear Jonah Evans from the North American Seminary, who inspired us to re-look at how our sense of the word in life transforms into understanding and love.

Nathaniel Williams from the Youth Section of the Goetheanum hosted a meeting of young people.

Older people who are no longer able to undertake garden and building tasks are seeking younger volunteers to take these on. We have had some success with younger volunteers coming forward.

Our Australian priests doing chaplaincy work in Waldorf schools are greatly appreciated, and in Melbourne and regional towns, Interdisciplinary Seminars about End of Earthly Life Matters have also been greatly appreciated.

In New Zealand the Christchurch Community attendance remains stable. We have been gifted land in a prime position near the city of Christchurch, on which we can begin planning and fundraising for a permanent home.

A Hawke's Bay community process is underway beginning in 2022 until the end of 2024 to determine how to fund building renovations, property development and community outreach, with potentially a resident priest.

The local Wellington Waldorf school has offered our community free monthly use during 2024 of their eurythmy hall, kitchen, and purpose-built storage for the altar and vestments.

National Account: The cost-of-living increase and economic consequences of the pandemic have now impacted New Zealand. Throughout this year, our national account has an average monthly deficit of NZ\$4,000.00.

*Lisa Pearson, Cheryl Nekvapil*



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## Great Britain and Ireland

I am writing these lines in Tuamgraney, Co Clare (Ireland), in the community house that was bought in 2007 with help from the UK and the Foundation. This summer, Ute König was given a worthy send off in Tuamgraney and also in Kilkenny, where she has been visiting a group for the last few years. On July 30th, I was present for Siobhan Porter-Moora's Induction in County Clare. It was wonderful to experience a full chapel and the warmth of the welcome for Siobhan and her husband, Johannes.

This is a good moment to give an update on the life of The Christian Community in the Republic of Ireland. The house has served us well, although the chapel space was always intended to be provisional. The large kitchen is the heart of the community, where countless meetings, conversations, and meals have been shared. The house has space for a number of guests to stay, and there is a dedicated space for therapies, which we rent out.

A few years ago, a plot of land adjoining our garden came up for sale, and we were able to purchase it with a loan from one of the German regions. Since then, we have been working with a local architect to develop a plan to build a dwelling space that could provide housing for people connected to our life and work. The idea is that some of the units would be rented, thus providing an income for the maintenance of the whole estate. Perhaps more importantly, we see a potential for creating a body of warmth and interest around the church. The hope is that this will make it possible to build a new church in a next phase of development. There is much still to explore, not least finding the people who will carry the design and building practically and financially.

*Tom Ravetz*

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## North America

At the North American Synod in Denver in October 2023, the office of Regional Lenker passed from Craig Wiggins to Jonah Evans. Jonah was ordained in Wuppertal in 2008. He is currently working at the seminary in Toronto and will continue to do so. A new affiliate congregation growing in Austin, Texas led by Rafal Novak. A strong initiative is also burgeoning in Vermont and we are looking to send a priest(s) to the south in the coming year or two.

*Craig Wiggins and Jonah Evans*

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## South America

### Youth Conference Trip to Colombia 2023

The power that radiates from youth conferences is undeniable, and anyone who has taken part in one of these conferences knows their reality and their transformative potential. A moving example of this is the Dortmund conference "Consecrating Humanity" 2022. The young people's ability to carry the forces of change was evident to all those present.

There are now countless such gatherings all over the world: study groups and other meetings of young people who come together and want to experience their powers of change through encounters, whether in harmony or controversy.

The word encounter means both "agreement" and "clash," and in the encounters of young people, these two aspects are clearly evident: clashes do not separate or divide without the possibility of reconciliation, and commonalities are not taken for granted but valued.

This was the most important element during the youth meeting that took place in July and August 2023 with young people linked to The Christian Community congregations of Spain, Uruguay, Argentina, and Colombia.

Thirty young people of different nationalities and socio-economic and cultural backgrounds traveled with backpacks and tents through parts of the beautiful Colombian countryside – under a leitmotif that almost came naturally: "What is sacred?" Various experiences arose, guided by the invisible hand of the angels: contact with ancient Native American ceremonies, the celebration of the Consecration of the Human Being in an environment other than that of a church, the depth of the conversations with the priests, the reverence for the sacrament of consultation, the countless sacred moments in contact with nature and much more were the backbone of an encounter of young people that was essential in its depth.

The young people themselves were free to decide which experiences they wanted to have and which not. We adult guides only tried to build as broad and healthy a foundation as possible. This enabled the young people to tackle everyday tasks independently, such as cooking or cleaning as well as deeper issues, such as the relevance of karma or experiencing the sacred in everyday life. There was no structure set by the adults, no decisions were made in advance without the participation of the young people; they decided everything. Some of them had made the participation of low-income young people possible through fund-raising campaigns or jobs; and this contributed to an astonishing variety of experiences in encountering extremely diverse life realities.



Every conflict was resolved through dialog. There were no accidents or complications; no unnecessary pressure, dogma, or restrictions; agreements were made between and by all. All suggestions were listened to, and if no agreement was reached, everyone had the opportunity to organize their own time for a day. There was no obligation to do everything together. It was certainly not easy, and it took a lot of energy but it was possible and the results were wonderful: the young people themselves expressed the need to continue organizing such meetings.

The first Latin American meeting of young people from The Christian Community and anthroposophical environment could take place in 2024, parallel to the "International Youth Festival" in Constance. For the Latin American youth, a trip to Europe is a financial problem. They do not want to create a separate movement. "We remain united in spirit, even if we are separated by physical distance!" They aim to pool the power of youth in different regions of Latin America, where it is so urgently needed, instead of striving to shape the future only where economic conditions favor it.

The adults who accompanied the youth camp are still very committed to accompanying and supporting this new type of meeting organized by young people - because "where two or three are gathered in my name..."

Anyone who would like to join in or help is very welcome.

***Warmly . . . Manuel Toro (priest in Madrid) and Nicolás Martín (priest in Cali)***

This conference also resulted in a film, which is linked below on YouTube, and the preparation team is working hard to organize another youth meeting and a trip to Brazil in 2024.

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=aSxep8ZRA9s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aSxep8ZRA9s)





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## Southwest Europe

### Switzerland

In our Latin countries, we are still urgently waiting for new priests. The few priests working locally are in urgent need of support (France) and also younger colleagues (Italy, Spain). The new sendings in Switzerland last year are proving to be a blessing. However, in many congregations, especially smaller ones, inflation, and a lack of "rejuvenation" are making themselves painfully felt. The various vacation camps, family camps and similar events in all countries of the region are very popular. This is where community building takes place and can be experienced directly and intensively. The international, multilingual days of reflection on Ascension Day in Walkringen on the theme of "All will be well," the long road to the heavenly Jerusalem, were also wonderful.

*Christine Jost, Coordinator*



Haus in Walkringen

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## Encounter on Gotland

**"Behold, I make all things new!"**

**„Se, jag gör allting nytt!"**

**Baltic Sea Days July 2023**

Since 2015, various priests and other interested people have met every summer for an international Baltic Sea conference in Davide on Gotland. This year, around 85 people from Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Lithuania, and Germany came together to engage with the Revelation of John in various ways.

Various discussion groups took place, such as "Through fear to revelation – steps with the Son of Man," "SARDES, the epistle of our time;" "I saw heaven open – the revelation of hope and life destined for eternity;" "On the border between heaven and earth – a gospel work" and "The dying earthly existence: revitalization from Christian consciousness."

This discussion was accompanied by a wide range of artistic activities and excursions into the countryside and to notable churches and special historical sites and monuments.

This Baltic Sea conference was stimulating and, in many ways, gave each participant a new perspective on the Apocalypse. The international participation and associated multi-lingualism made the days exciting and gave them a special spark.

*Christoph Gehlhar, Christine Jost, Switzerland*



## Northern Europe (Nordic and Baltic countries)

### Lithuania

The first Consecration of the Human Being in Lithuania was celebrated in 2001. In 2005, the congregation in Vilnius was declared an affiliate of the Estonian Christian Community congregation. In the beginning the Estonian priest took care of the development of the Lithuanian congregation and later also priests from Estonia, the Nordic countries, the Czech Republic and Germany. In 2011 came legal registration, so the congregation became more open, and started to rent public spaces in Vilnius. Since 2018, it has had a website. In 2014, the ritual texts started to be translated into Lithuanian language. In 2019, the Lithuanian priest was sent to the congregation in Vilnius. Since then, The Christian Community in Lithuania has lived a rhythmic life, with the Consecration of the Human Being celebrated every week, Sunday Service for Children, Confirmation, seasonal festivals, youth camps, and soul care.

Since 2012, the congregation in Vilnius has been renting rooms in a Waldorf kindergarten, so up till now, they could only be used on weekends and holiday periods. In 2021, the congregation bought a property in Vilnius with an old house, which is now being renovated and rebuilt. This was made possible through donations and a loan from the Foundation. The purchase of the house brought the congregation to a new stage of life. Several consolidating clean-up initiatives took place. The contribution of the worldwide Christian Community can be felt in the construction of this congregation house.

Another important community event is coming, the second Lithuanian priest should be sent to Lithuania soon. The other practical questions and intentions of the congregation in Lithuania are to develop rhythmic financial resources for the congregation's daily life, human resources for community projects, and congregational growth through the young people.

*Rasa Kabalaite*



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## Estonia

The Christian Community in Estonia was formed underground at the end of the 1970s under the former Soviet occupation. Since 1999, it has even had its own resident priest. Since 2014, however, Estonia has only been served by visiting priests, mainly by two Estonian-speaking priests from Prague, partly by priests from Finland who celebrate in Finnish, and recently also by the priest from Vilnius.

The priests' visits usually include a congregation day with a celebration of the Consecration of the Human Being in Tartu and several days of events in Tallinn, where the congregation even has its own space. These take place roughly every month (with a break during the summer vacation). Once a year at Christmas, services are held in the Camphill village of Pakkla, and occasionally the priests also visit other towns. The biggest current challenge for the Estonian Christian Community is to find access to families with children, who have almost disappeared from both communities during the coronavirus period.



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## Latvia

Of the three Baltic countries, Latvia has the youngest Christian Community. There has been a congregation meeting regularly since 2010. The congregation is small, but usually more children come to the Sunday service than adults to the Consecration of the Human Being, so there is hope for the future. The congregation is currently visited by priests about four times a year (usually three times from Prague and once from Norrköping, Sweden).

The congregation's most urgent tasks at the moment are recovery from the coronavirus pandemic (Latvia introduced very harsh restrictions so that it was impossible for priests to visit for more than a year) and establishing itself in the physical world (e.g., setting up a website and establishing a legal entity).



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## Central Europe

### Czech Republic

The Czech Christian Community was founded as early as 1925, but several years of its history were periods of prohibition (1942-1945 by the Nazis, 1951-1968 and 1971-1989 by the Communists). There are currently four priests working in the country (one of them part-time) who, based in Prague, where the main altar is located. They also serve the branch congregations in Brno, České Budějovice, Olomouc, Pardubice and Příbram. Services are also held irregularly in the Camphill village of České Kopisty. The biggest current challenge is the search for young priests; a middle-aged Czech student is studying part-time in Hamburg, but this will, of course, not be enough for the growing number of congregations.

In terms of church leadership, for a long time, the Czech Republic belonged to the region of East Germany, then to Bavaria and Austria, and now it is joining Austria, Hungary, Romania, Slovenia, and Slovakia in the recently formed "Central Europe" region. On October 6-8, 2023, the Prague congregation hosted the first regional conference, which sought to connect the congregations of these countries and connect people. It is hopefully the beginning of a new regional tradition.



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## Ukraine

The newsletter "Ukraine Aktuell," now in its 8th issue, is published in English and German by the Ukrainian-born priest Yaroslava Black, now assigned to Berlin, and her priest husband Ben, who maintain close ties to the congregations in Ukraine. Last year, they organized a confirmation trip to Berlin with Ukrainian youth and their parents and reported on the situation in the country in the newsletter. A few lines excerpted from the New Year's Eve 2023-24 issue:

### "Ukraine News" No. 8

The situation in Ukraine is still dramatic. Right now, at Christmas time, when the whole world is thinking about peace and coming together in families and churches to sing and celebrate, Ukraine is being bombed . . . There are many destinies that we accompany during this time.

But those who are doing the most are our two courageous colleagues: Tatyana in Kyiv and Andrej in Odessa. They are doing the most essential thing amidst the bombs: everyday acts of love. They themselves would certainly say: No, we're not heroes, we're just doing what we can. But I think they do much more than they can and much more than can be portrayed. We can only pray that they are given the strength they need because they wouldn't make it for long on their own. That's what they keep saying: feeling connected, knowing that people around the world sympathize and support them, that's what gives them the strength to carry on.

Tatiana Nechytailo says, "But the support of our friends from all over the world, who support us in prayer and action, including financially, helps us to breathe a sigh of relief every now and then, to get up, to continue planning, to support others who are in dire need and to keep on living. We are very grateful for this amid bombs and explosions, destruction and death!"

\_\_\_\_\_ <https://christengemeinschaft-international.org/ukraine-news>

## \_\_\_\_\_ Hungary

The community in Hungary received a lot of financial support and active help to found the congregation in 2011, for which we are very grateful. Since then, twelve years have passed, and we have been striving for years to cover as much of our expenses as possible from domestic sources and reduce our need for any central support from the Foundation. We are taking small steps on the road to raising awareness, and we are having successes. And every year, we can shine a brighter light on our own activities.

*Imre Silye*

### **Key features of the congregation in numbers:**

Active priests	___ 2
Members	___ 55
Regular contributors	___ 100
Confirmands annually	___ 5 – 10
Family camp participants	___ 60 – 80
Participants in activities (per year, approximately)	___ 200
Newsletter recipients	___ 600
Tax money 1% allocated to us	___ 1200
Annual budget	___ 100.000 EUR

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## Priest Seminary Toronto

*The Light in Every Thing* podcast is now over two years old! It was born out of a desire to provide living substance during the early days of the pandemic and quarantine. Jonah Evans and Patrick Kennedy, co-directors of the Seminary of The Christian Community in North America, were inspired to record their conversations on the deeper mysteries of Christianity. They have published over 185 podcast episodes with series' themes ranging from "The Path of Discipleship," "What is a Priest?" to "Christian Shadow Work," and "Heaven and Hell."

We know from streaming data that our listeners now span over 73 countries and six continents. Our Patreon community has also grown to over 380 patrons, who contribute \$3-\$40 monthly. Through their support, the seminary moves closer to its goal of a priest's training, fully subsidized by the free gifts of individuals. Our hope this year is to continue expanding the reach of *The Light in Every Thing* podcast and inspire people to support the mission of the seminary in thought, word, and deed. To that end, you can now find the podcast on Instagram and Facebook, as well as on all your favorite streaming platforms, including Patreon.

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**Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/thelightineverythingpodcast/>**

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**Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61554205583197>**

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**Patreon - <http://www.patreon.com/ccseminary>**

In the winter of 2023, the seminary students entering the ordination course visited the Stuttgart seminary and met with the Circle of Seven Leadership in Berlin, and one student wrote a blog post describing their trip:

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**<https://www.christiancommunityseminary.ca/blog/seminary-trip-to-germany>**

We will have ordinations in Toronto on the weekend of July 5th, 2024.

Administration

Outreach for The Seminary of The Christian Community in North America

### ***Imprint***

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