

*Yearly Report 2022
Akebulan- (Global Mission) e.V.*



Dear Friends of Akebulan,



now already, we all are “caught” within our activities of 2023, and the “New Year” doesn’t appear very new to us, any more. What did you experience during 2022? You are in our hearts and prayers!

For us in Akebulan, the last year was rather calm except two big repairments which became necessary, unexpectedly. We are extremely grateful to our landlord Dr. Knappe who was so kind to care about it all and carry the high costs! In our last report, we already told you about our heating system that broke down at the other year end and had to be totally renewed at the beginning of 2022. In September, the pipe that supplies our building with fresh water broke, and before we could realize it, a lot of water had seeped into the ground. The only indicator was a very tiny noise coming from one pipe within the building. The damage, again, was huge: The whole line leading from the one under the street through our garden, was very old and could have broken, again, at any time. In addition, the material was no more meeting the waterworks’ standards. So the whole line had to be renewed. Apart from the mentioned high costs, this was a lot of stress for Mr. Knappe when he had to communicate with the waterworks and organize a company who would carry out the exchange. We cannot thank him enough!



In January as mentioned in the other report, Together for Berlin e.V. invited for another Prayer Day One. As we also wrote then, Peter and Steffi travelled to Hannover where Drea Fröchtling, professor of the FIT Hermannsburg (Fachhochschule für Interkulturelle Theologie), was buried. She had been an outstanding personality who had engaged herself wholeheartedly for the school as well as for the students. In honouring memorial, there will be a symposium at the FIT in May where we will reflect several topics which were important to Drea.



After a relaxed February at the beginning of March, we held our first inclusion Gospel workshop of the year at ABSV Grunewald (General Association for Blind and Visually Impaired People Berlin e.V.) We are very grateful that in 2022, there were no more lockdowns and the regulations were loosened to an extent which made it easier to gather as a group and sing together, again. At ABSV, we could use the hall with a lot of space two times during the year. We give thanks to Mrs Krauss who did the check-in when it was still necessary, as well as to Mr. Ehab who is the new cook of the canteen and blessed us with lovely food and a very friendly service! Due to sickness, unfortunately, Pastor Daniela Nischik from the Evangelical Blind People's Service Berlin couldn't take part in the Gospel choir activities during 2022. At the end of the year by the grace of God, she was able to slowly resume her work with the Hamburger Modell. This way at our first workshop of 2023, she was taking part, again, which we are very grateful for.



"Global Local", the one part- project of "Church on Eye-Level" which we introduced, before, is still on our hearts. We are very glad that Together for Berlin e.V. was able to hire Njirilaina Andriamiharisoa called "Njiri" who engages himself successfully in the intercultural relationships of the network. We could win him as contact person for the project. For us, this is an answer to our prayers, and we hope that very soon, Global Local can be realized in this city. We really see many potentials in it to help intercultural relationships to grow in our midst and bear beautiful fruits. Since the time for the project is limited and many churches gave the feedback to be interested but find a process of 40 days to be too long to accomplish, Global Local is now being offered as an option to choose the time and the frame totally freely. This means, unimportantly how long or how much a church or a group wishes to use these special materials, you are heartedly welcome!

In April, our group Csi (To be a Christian interculturally) which Njiri also joined through Andrea Meyerhoff, was able to organize a larger meeting. We invited several people who also work interculturally in different churches and Christian organisations.



We had a very interesting exchange of thoughts. Afterwards, Csi intended to hold a second meeting with more people who were important for us to encounter with in this context. Unfortunately, we couldn't realize this. Since as a group we had concluded that our collaboration in this frame had come to an end, we wished to bring in line our ideas with that of others. What Njiri did then, was a new attempt to connect keyleaders of intercultural church work in Berlin. Thanks to his engagement and Global Local, our group felt that the "handing over" is getting on well. This February, we met for the last time and enjoyed good food in a Greek restaurant. Klaus Hägele has documented all our activities and put it online (see below).



In May, our Akebulan women met one time after our service. On Ascension Day after many years, we finally went to the One Spirit- und International Youth Bible Camp at Himmelsfels with our youth, again. (This is different from the summer program.) We went together with co-workers and the youth of Pastor Okito's church. There, we met a lot of interesting people as well as "good old fellows" like Prof. Wilhelm Richebächer who then was the current director of the FIT. He and Peter conducted a common workshop. As always, the youth camp, later, was very lively and inspiring. Again like in 2021 at summertime, we could also travel to the International Youth Summer Camp at Himmelsfels. This time, we went with the youth of the churches of Pastors Joachim and Juliane Bekou in Spandau and Potsdam.



Everyone had a lot of fun and experienced the presence of God. Mary got hurt when she slipped on muddy ground after it had rained, but thanks to God it wasn't so severe and she recovered, fast. On our way back home, we underwent an "odyssey" with the "9.- ticket"! We were very close to get stranded, but then unexpectedly, still made it to get to Berlin on time so that all children could arrive, safely. We give thanks for God's grace and good care!



The beginning of June brought another ecumenical worship service in our church neighbourhood. During the pandemic, we two times walked from "door to door" with singing, forming a human chain and in the end, celebrated a devotion in the huge garden of the Lutheran Gnade-Christi-Kirche. Now, we could gather inside the Catholic „Allerheiligen“- Church, again. Because of the Ukraine war, we choose

the topic "Light Signal for Peace". Peter got invited to preach. He choose Dr. Martin Luther King jr. out of several carriers of the Nobel Peace Price that served us as inspiration examples. Afterwards, we again could lunch and fellowship in the hall. A special joy and surprise were the participation of two former Akebulan members. From the end of the month until beginning of June, the APPA (African Pentecostal Pastors Association)



pastors again organised their yearly revival conference. The topic was "The Hand of God". The guest speaker Patrick Mumuni comes from Ghana and is general overseer of the Ghana Assemblies of God

in Europe. Afterwards, we celebrated a summer party at Akebulan before the start of the school holidays. The following Saturday, we met with our and the youth of Pastor Okito's church so that their new friendships could be enhanced. At the end of July, Pastor Peter went to speak at



another European Bible Dialogue which this time took place at Breslau. It was about "cheep grace", a term that theologically first had been introduced by Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Before the end of the holidays, we again went to Britzer Garden with our inclusion Gospel choir. We enjoyed a beautiful, sunny weather and found a nice place under trees next to a lake where we could sit down, picknick and sing together. Nearby also were a snack bar and toilets, so all needs were met. During our singing, we especially appreciated Peter's playing of the drum as well as Sister Christine's beautiful voice leading African choruses. The children had fun playing with some equipment at the pasture. Pastor Essi Lupemba who has joined the Evangelical Blind People's Service Berlin accompanied us. We know her for long time and are happy to have more contact with her, again. She, then, also came to visit our church a few times and blessed us as guest speaker.



In September, Sister Christine and Brother Flavor celebrated their wedding anniversary in an African restaurant. When we had to close down for the mentioned pipe repairments, the Pan-African Gospel choir Akwaba e.V. who still uses our rooms for their training was spontaneously taken in at Allerheiligen. This was very helpful since they were preparing to give two concerts. We are very grateful for this help which is a true friendship gesture for us! At our last report, we wrote about Sister Cristina doing a very challenging schooling to become a learned deaconess while working full-time. She now was able to complete it, successfully, and was ordained in a festive service at Johannesstift in Spandau. We rejoice with her that her hard work has been rewarded, and pray that God will open doors for her to use her new competences to bless others.



At the German Reunion Day, Peter and Steffi experienced a special kind of reunification: Pastor Dr. Kingsley Arthur invited us together with other pastors and their wives to go to the largest Chinese restaurant in Berlin. All of us had worked together many years ago before continuing on separate ways. As humans, we are limited, and sometimes, we have misunderstandings, controversies or different opinions. We had managed to stay in contact, sporadically. Now, we all met, again. We believe this is what the „family of God“ should be like.



At Akebulan, we joyfully celebrated Sister Enisa's 60th birthday. The church of APPA Pastor Miguel (also called Tychique) organised a women's conference where Sister Christine was actively involved and Steffi was invited to translate the preaching, spontaneously. At the end of October, there was a beautiful farewell service for Dr. Andreas Goetze who had been in charge for the interreligious dialogue in the city for several years. The way people addressed him and described his endeavour showed that he had not only done some "job", but was very dedicated and open when meeting people as well as put a lot of effort into building bridges.



On Reformation Day, Peter was invited to a panel discussion with Bishop Stäblein and other interesting personalities. They exchanged ideas how a better cooperation can be achieved among immigrants and people who live here, for long time. Before, the bishop held a devotion, and afterwards, there was time for fellowship and a refreshment. One woman from our local radio broadcast "rbb Culture" obviously liked Peter's statements during the discussion. She later asked one of her co-workers to interview him and introduce our church in their program. This way, Mrs Oswald came to visit Akebulan before and after the turn of the year. On the 19th February, the broadcast "Praise in a global village- the intercultural church Akebulan" was aired as part of their series "Living Worlds". We like it very good. If you haven't and wish to hear it, you can let us know so we try to send you the mp3.



In November, we held our fourth and last Gospel workshop of the year in our church. Thanks to the ending of all COVID-19 regulations, this year, we were able to plan our meetings more regularly and in the long term. What a relief! Peter was invited as guest speaker at APPA Pastor Eugene's church, and Pastor Okito celebrated his ordination as pastor of the umbrella organisation BFP (German Federation of Pentecostal Churches) in a joyful worship service and festive get together. We really wonder how he managed to visit the seminaries outside Berlin in addition to his fulltime work, huge family and church responsibility! It is our prayer that God may restore his strength and bless him in all his ways.



At Christmas, our children played the Bible story as a variety of our days when Jesus might have been born as the child of refugees coming from the Ukraine. On the suggestion of Bro Flavor and Sis Christine, we celebrated our Christmas service together with the church of Pastor Miguel. Some of their members are Sis Christine's friend Victoria with her family and more people belonging to their ethnic Kenyan group. All of us enjoyed a heartily fellowship...



Again looking back on 2022, we express our thanksgiving for any form of engagement in our midst and support of our Akebulan church work. We want to emphasize especially on continuing professional help with the maintenance of the building and the garden by our Brother Karlheinz and the very generous repair measures of our landlord Dr. Knappe! We give thanks for the beneficial cooperation with our umbrella organisation Mülheimer Verband FEG e.V., the African Pentecostal Pastors' Association in Berlin and Brandenburg (APPA) e.V., the Evangelical Blind People's Service Berlin, the General Association for Blind and Visually Impaired People Berlin e.V. (ABSIV), our neighbouring Ecumene and the now resolved group To be a Christian interculturally (Csi), the Pan-African Gospel choir Akwaba e.V., Together for Berlin e.V. and last but not least the Fachhochschule für Interkulturelle Theologie Hermannsburg (FIT), Himmelsfels e.V., Church on Eye-Level and its subproject Global Local.

We are grateful for everything the Lord is doing in our midst. It is our prayer that He will be gracious so that we all together will be able to master the ever new challenges of our days. May He help us to stand together in prayer, keep the faith, encourage and inspire one another as well as support us, practically. May He carry us through and guide us on divine, good paths!

*God's blessings to all of you
during this current year!
Heartedly, yours
Peter and Steffi Arthur
and Akebulan e.V.*



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Links:
<http://www.muelheimer-verband.de>

<http://www.blindendienst-berlin.de>

<http://www.absv.de>
http://www.akwaba-gospelchor.com/index_ger.html
<https://www.gffberlin.de/startseite>
https://www.fh-hermannsburg.de/die_fit

<https://himmelsfels.de/>
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