



The Heinz

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Webpage: <http://TheologischerSchulungs-Service.de>

Dear Prayer Partners,

In 1839, Johann Hinrich Wichern invented the first Advent wreath. It was made of evergreens with 24 candles. Counting from the 1st of December, one candle was lit every day to show the poor street children in Hamburg the hope and joy of the upcoming Christmas. I think it is a wonderful metaphor to symbolize that Jesus is the *'Light of the World'*.

As usual, I have been home for the rest of the year since the end of November. It has been a time of reflecting on what God has done during the last year and asking Him for His plans for the next one.

This year, God has done a lot, many things that I didn't expect. It is exciting to be God's child, to be in His hands and count on His guidance.

As I have mentioned before, the Evening Bible College in Yalta had seemed to come to an end. With this in my mind, I traveled there in May and told this very clearly to the brothers and sisters. Even though they regretted that decision and suggested that it would be good to continue, I was certain that the ministry there would come to an end because of the decreasing number of participants. Thus, I said farewell to a town and dear brothers and sisters that I had ministered to for many years.

It is not the first time that I have had the experience of a specific ministry coming to an end. Before, I felt sad when something like this happened and thought, *"That's all?"* But, the ministry of Theological Teaching Service has so many different facets that this time I was able to concentrate on other areas where God had created new possibilities (as in Croatia, where we were able to start anew after a break of several years).

But God's ways are different from men's ideas! During the summer, I received a letter from the elders of the church in Yalta in which they asked me to continue with the Bible College. They wrote: *"All servants of the Church decided unanimously that all ministers and leaders of the Church should have theological training to be able to lead and minister with authority."* Attached was a list with the names of the brothers who had committed themselves to take part in the Bible College. They also suggested a different time frame. When we started with the program years ago, the only practical way to conduct such a program was in the evening because of the working situation. Today, the situation has changed. Thus, the schedule was changed from 4 hours in the evening for twelve days to three days of full-time school (Thursday through Saturday, 10 hours a day). The participants get a special document that states that they are taking part in an official training program and the employer must let them go on leave. So, we decided to continue and 20 students showed up for the first class. I was especially excited that two people from other churches came. Not only the interest in further education became obvious, but also their attitude towards me and the Theological Teaching Service. When it came to questions about the content of the curriculum, the pastor (who is also on the board of the Baptist Union of Ukraine) expressed his trust in me and that I should be free to decide which topics should be taught and in what ways.

I was astonished but, after some reflections, I guessed the reason: They know that I and the other teachers of Theological Teaching Service do not teach personal opinions but only the Word of God. We try to equip the students with the ability to develop their own opinions.

Well, now we are wondering about God's plans for the next year. Thank you for all your prayers. We need them in many situations where we need God's guidance.

The Advent wreath and its symbolic meaning mentioned in the beginning is an incentive for us to show more men that Jesus is the light to a dark world. We wish you a peaceful Christmas season and a blessed year 2008.

Love,



Botho and Gisela Heinz



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