

Health, growth, completion

Vision



New Apostolic Church USA

District News

www.nac-usa.org

Autumn 2016

Dear brothers and sisters,

I recently read about a Puritan man long ago who sat down to a meal of bread and water. He bowed his head in prayer and declared – “All this and Jesus too?” Truly a wonderful example of contentment and thankfulness.

David expressed his contentment as well in his words in Psalm 23 – *The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want!* Contentment and gratitude are linked together. When one is thankful for what they have, they are content. And when one is content in their life, they are thankful. From this we can understand that being content is a choice – I shall not want! Let us never misinterpret the expression, “Always thankful, never satisfied,” that the District Apostle Kraus often intoned. His expression revealed that we should always be filled with thankfulness for all God provides, but never be satisfied with ourselves, our work, or our efforts because we can never deserve the grace that Christ shares with us.

It is always good to remember the words of Solomon in Ecclesiastes 5:15 – *As he came from his mother’s womb, naked shall he return, to go as he came; and he shall take nothing from his labor which he may carry away in his hand.* Hence, we really own nothing, but simply use it while we are here in this life, borrowed from God, the Creator of all. And as Jesus explained, we are not defined by these things, for *one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses* (Luke 12:15). It then begs the question – how is one defined then? The Lord clearly told Samuel, *the Lord looks at the heart* (1 Samuel 16:7).

As we come into the Thanksgiving season again and as we complete this year together, let us see to it that our hearts are filled with contentment for what our loving Father has bestowed upon us, even though it may seem difficult from our view. Our contentment shows our trust in His omnipotence – He is with us always and will provide for us out of His divine providence.

In thankfulness we can then exclaim – “What can I ask of Your providence more?”

With loving greetings,





*For the fruits of all creation...
for His gifts to every nation...
for the ploughing,
sowing, reaping, silent growth while we are sleeping, future needs in earth's safe keeping, thanks be to God.*

OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO CREATION

As we approach autumn, the harvest season, I would like to bring your attention to the thoughts laid out in this well-known, old English hymn (#37 in our hymnal). We, as a church, don't often talk about the earth and nature. We have a tradition that tends to disdain the material world, contrasted with our views of the spiritual world. However, we cannot conclude that the invisible, spiritual world outranks the visible, natural world because all was created by God and, as He said, was "very good." The earth is part of the plan of salvation. This planet is a gift from God to us and it is one that continues to provide for us, even in our misuse of it.



Gratitude and appreciation for what God has given us must be forefront for us as Christians, as we can see from the lyrics of the hymn. One of the definitions of the word appreciation is "thankful recognition." To be thankful and appreciate, we must first recognize what we have been given. And when we truly recognize, then thankfulness and gratitude lead us to the next step: stewardship. Stewardship is the responsible overseeing and protection of something considered worth caring for and preserving. So what should we be stewards over? I would suggest three relationships that were laid out in the Garden of Eden: our relationship with God, our relationship with each other, and our relationship with nature. All of these relationships are interwoven and it's important that they stay in balance with one another.

OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.
(Genesis 1:31)

Genesis 1:31 brings to expression the positive relationship God has with His creation and that it was originally created in perfection.

We can read in Jeremiah 1:5 (NIV), "*Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart.*" God not only created us, He knew us before we even existed. Each of us is the result of a thought of God. Each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each of us is necessary.¹ We have a beautiful relationship with our Creator and we want to continue to deepen that relationship with Him.

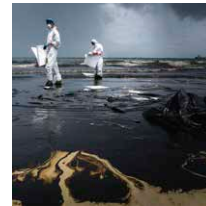


OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH EACH OTHER

It is not good that the man should be alone. (Genesis 2:18)

God saw at the beginning that we weren't meant to live in solitude. All throughout the Bible, God directs and urges His people to live in community; to help each other, to care for each other, and to love and serve each other. When Christ came to earth, He was the true and perfect example of this, guiding us even further to love one another as He loves us.

We are all part of this creation. All of us were made in the image of God and He wants us to see each other as He sees us: all a part of His family in this common home we have on earth.



OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH NATURE

Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. (Genesis 2:15)

The earth is the Lord's (Psalm 24:1), but He has given us the responsibility to tend and keep it. *To tend* is to cultivate, plough, work, look after. *To keep* is to care, protect, preserve, maintain. When God gave man dominion over the earth, it was intricately linked to us being made in His image; for us to be a reflection of Him. We have a responsibility to the earth and are accountable to God for it. Our relationship with the earth needs to consist of more than just being thankful for it. Just as we learn that we are called to care for others, we are also called to care for our environment. Luke tells us that not even the birds of the air are forgotten by God (Luke 12:6). If we believe this, then how could we mistreat them or cause harm to them? Or to anything else that God has created and put on this earth?

PERSPECTIVE:

The notion that human beings themselves might become a threat to creation is foreign to the biblical worldview. In the process of civilization, control over nature was first and foremost a matter of survival - life had to be defended against the threat of a hostile natural world, which could strike mankind in the form of sickness, famine, and natural disaster.

It was only after scientific and technical mechanisms capable of dominating nature were unleashed that an awareness began to develop about the damage to the foundations of life that was being caused by careless exploitation of natural resources.

For the first time in history, there was a real possibility that unbridled domination of nature might even go so far as to annihilate all life on earth, and indeed jeopardize the continued existence of the world - the very habitat assigned to humanity.

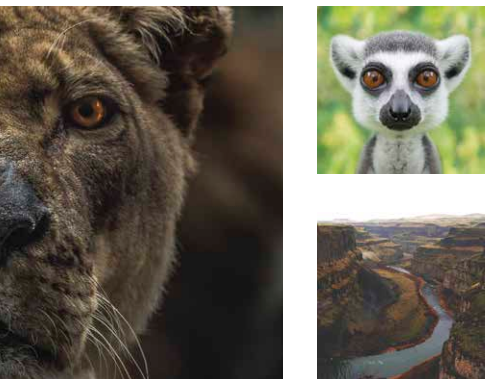


The entire material universe speaks of God's love, His boundless affection for us. ¹

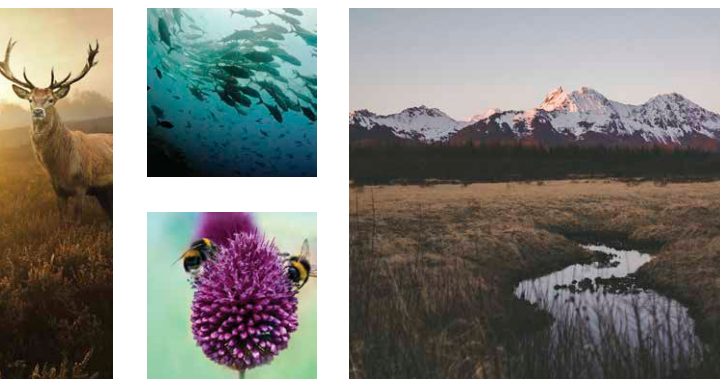




Recognizing and caring for these three relationships displays our love and humbleness before God. The misuse of creation begins when we no longer recognize any higher power than ourselves, when we see nothing else but ourselves.² When one of these relationships is broken, it affects the other two. When we don't care for and preserve our planet, the poorest of humanity are affected the most. When we don't think of each other as being equal and loved by God, we exploit resources that should be shared by all. And when we don't give thanks and appreciation for the things that our Creator has given to us and realize that everything is in His hand, we cannot be good stewards of our relationship with the people around us or the earth and its resources.



We all need to become more aware of how our everyday decisions and actions contribute to the health of the earth. God has given us this responsibility over the earth and He trusts that we will take care of it. We are expected not to use the earth's resources for our own benefits, but rather to glorify God and to further His mission.

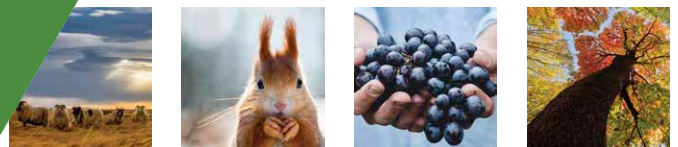
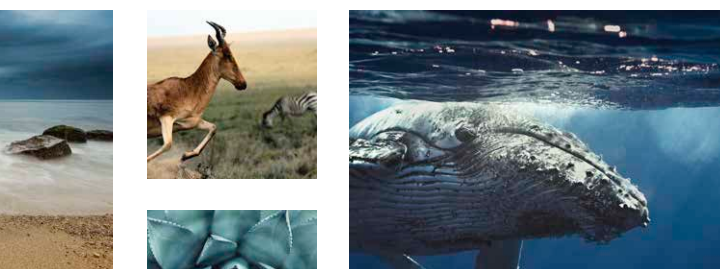


We know that damage has been done to the earth, but we can make a new start by taking an honest look at ourselves and embarking on new paths, always being aware of the earth, and of the people around us. We can only be responsible for ourselves and our actions, and it is up to each one of us to determine how we want to be stewards of the creation that God has allowed us to be a part of. Let this be a thought for you to ponder and discuss as we enter this season of harvest and stand in wonder at the abundance that God has created for us.



For the harvests of the Spirit...for the good we all inherit...in the harvests we are sharing... thanks be to God.

-LRK/KAH/VAA



* This article is based on the "Responsibility for the creation" presentation by Apostle Jurgen Loy
 1 -Pope Francis, *Encyclical on Climate Change & Inequality* (24 May 2015)
 2 -Address to the Clergy of the Diocese of Bolzano - Bressanone (6 August 2008)

WHO AM I THAT YOU ARE MINDFUL OF ME?

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YOUTH WEEKEND

Out of the many youth weekends in Central and South America, in August, youth in **Ecuador** gathered together for a weekend. They participated in a workshop about family structure and later, were able to share their culture with each other in a presentation of dancing and singing. The weekend concluded with a divine service, held by Apostle Diaz.



2016 LID EVENTS

The Linked International Districts have been busy in 2016 with events that have helped them grow in Christ. **-VAA**



EMERGING LEADER SEMINARS

Emerging leader seminars this year were held in **Colombia, Peru, Guyana, Mexico, and Panama**. Current leaders and emerging leaders from all over each country were invited to participate.

Some subjects that were touched upon were the future plan for each country, humility, worship, and a review of the Stepping Forward initiative. All in attendance were encouraged to continue to deepen their relationship with God and with our members. They were engaged in the teachings and showed an eagerness to learn.



CHIEF APOSTLE VISIT

From April 5th to 10th, Chief Apostle Schneider traveled for meetings and divine services in **Peru and Colombia**. The Chief Apostle traveled to a divine service in Pucallpa, Peru, a city in the Amazon jungle, where Apostle Pedro Marin was retired after 40 years in ministry.

The Chief Apostle then traveled to Colombia where a meeting was held with the district apostles of the Americas, the first of its kind to be held. The conference was an opportunity for the Chief Apostle to discuss topics relevant to the American continents with the district apostles and their helpers.

The next day, the Chief Apostle, District Apostles, and USA Apostles and Bishops had a meeting to discuss spiritual and administrative topics.

The week culminated in a divine service on Sunday morning with Chief Apostle Schneider in Bogotá.



2017 HUMANITARIAN PROJECTS DOMESTIC & INTERNATIONAL

The New Apostolic Church's affiliated charity, re Charitable Ministry, has released its 2017 volunteer project line-up, which we are excited to share here. There are lots of opportunities to get involved, whether that be by fundraising, spreading the word, supporting participants, or going on a project trip yourself. For answers to all your questions, please email re.charitableministry@nac-usa.org and follow us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/re.Charitable.Ministry

If you want to secure your spot for any of these opportunities, please email us for an application form. Application fees for all projects are \$25 and are non-refundable, and will be applied to your registration fee if accepted.



CINCINNATI – ONE WAY FARM PROJECT WEEKEND FAMILY / CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

In 2017 we are introducing our first Domestic Humanitarian Project. The Cincinnati congregation has developed a relationship with an organization called **One Way Farm Children's Home**, whose mission is to break the cycle of abuse and disruption, and offer trust and hope to all children in need.

Our project with them will take place from **June 1-4** with a maximum of **20 participants**. We plan to stay at a nearby hotel to facilitate group time. The weekend will include work at the home (light construction and cleaning), time with the children, devotionals, Sunday service, and a BBQ with the children at the home. The **registration fee will be approximately \$400** and will cover accommodations, food, and local transportation. Participants will also be responsible for getting themselves to Cincinnati.

This program does not have an age minimum (typically 21 years old), so think about bringing your **family!** Follow us on Facebook for updates and email re.charitableministry@nac-usa.org for an application.

DONATIONS & FUNDRAISING

As you can see, we have a lot going on next year. If you see anything that you are passionate about or that excites you, and you would like to donate or help us **fundraise**, please email us at re.CharitableMinistry@nac-usa.org for more information on the projects. Maybe your workplace is willing to sponsor or match your donations... Don't forget to ask!



Our participants completely cover all of their personal costs (accommodations, food, travel, etc.), so ALL funds donated to re Charitable Ministry for our projects go **DIRECTLY** to the projects. You can support us by donating through the eOffering site of the New Apostolic Church or by donating through PayPal: www.nac-usa.org/giving/re-charitable.html



ZAMBIA – MACKENZIE COMMUNITY SCHOOL PROJECT

EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS

In addition to its ongoing programs, re Charitable Ministry, from time to time, offers interested participants the opportunity to join in partnership projects with selected organizations. iChange International, a Swiss-based charity, is the main carrier and sponsor of the Mackenzie Community School in Ndola, Zambia. For more information, please visit their Facebook page: www.facebook.com/iChangeInternational

This partnership project will take place from **August 1-12** with a maximum of 8 participants. We'll be adding some classrooms (construction) to Mackenzie Community School. We'll stay at a simple guest house nearby and will have a day or two of rest over the weekend. Your **registration fee of \$650** will cover accommodations, food, activities, and in-country transportation. Each participant is responsible for paying for and booking their own airline tickets to Ndola, and any passport or visa fees.



Follow us on Facebook for updates and email re.charitableministry@nac-usa.org for an application.



BELIZE – KING'S CHILDREN'S HOME WATER SYSTEM

WATER / SUSTAINABILITY PROJECTS

Already in the 5th year of a wonderful relationship, we'll again team up with the **King's Children's Home (KCH) and the Hattieville Resource Center in Belize**. We are especially excited because in 2017 re Charitable Ministry will be working on (and hopefully completing!) a large rainwater collection system for KCH. Once this project is complete it will reduce their water bill each month by half and will have a major impact towards greater long-term sustainability for the home. You can find them on Facebook to learn more: www.facebook.com/Kings-Childrens-Home-Belize

We'll be spending a total of 3 weeks in Belize, one in January (already full!) and two in June; **June 14-21** (maximum of 12 participants) and **June 24-July 1** (maximum of 8 participants). The project is broken into 3 phases that will be split up over the course of our 3 weeks:

PHASE 1	Rain Water Underground Tank	\$13,000
PHASE 2	Rotoplas Water Tower Reservoir	\$8,000
PHASE 3	Water Treatment System	\$4,000

Your **registration fee of \$550** will cover accommodations, food, activities, and in-country transportation. Each participant is responsible for paying for and booking their own airline tickets and any passport or visa fees. Follow us on Facebook for updates and email re.charitableministry@nac-usa.org for an application.



OUR UNDERSTANDING OF HOLY COMMUNION

The question sometimes arises, “Should I go up for Holy Communion if I haven’t completely forgiven someone or if I still harbor negative feelings towards my neighbor?”

In order to partake in Holy Communion worthily, one must believe in Christ and His sacrifice and be baptized. Our admittance to Holy Communion is grounded on the relationship that was created with God in our baptism – through the sacrament, we (or our parents) vowed faith and allegiance to Jesus Christ.

Our New Apostolic doctrine states that we believe the body and blood of Jesus is added to the bread and wine of the wafer and that His real sacrifice is present in Holy Communion. When we decide to partake in Holy Communion in front of the altar, it is as if we are standing in front of the cross during Christ’s sacrifice and are witnessing His death for our sins. Considering this idea is central to what we believe about Holy Communion, who then could actually stand worthily before the Lord?

IN COMMUNION WE STAND AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS AND WITNESS THE DEATH OF OUR SAVIOR

Thus, this sacrament is also connected with the forgiveness of sins, although the absolution itself is not a sacrament. We believe the proclamation of the absolution insures that our sins are forgiven. While this is true, there is no way we can have knowledge of every sin we have committed or every lingering negative feeling we may have towards one another. And sometimes we simply struggle to forgive because the injustice committed against us is so great.

Already some years ago, the Chief Apostle expressed a vital key to this situation that if one wants to forgive, but struggles to do so, and fervently seeks the strength from Jesus to do it, then they should participate in Holy Communion.

HOLY COMMUNION GIVES US THE STRENGTH IN OUR STRUGGLE TO FORGIVE EACH OTHER

Deciding to partake in Holy Communion is a highly personal decision. It is something that requires a deep faith in the victory of Christ, a heart that is humble, and the willingness to repent. It is important to remember that the experience of Holy Communion brings us the closest we can come to Jesus Christ on the earth and this communion with Him is an essential part of our salvation. **-LRK/VAA**

**This article is based on thoughts from the Catechism and a theology presentation by Evangelist Kiefer, the church theologian.*

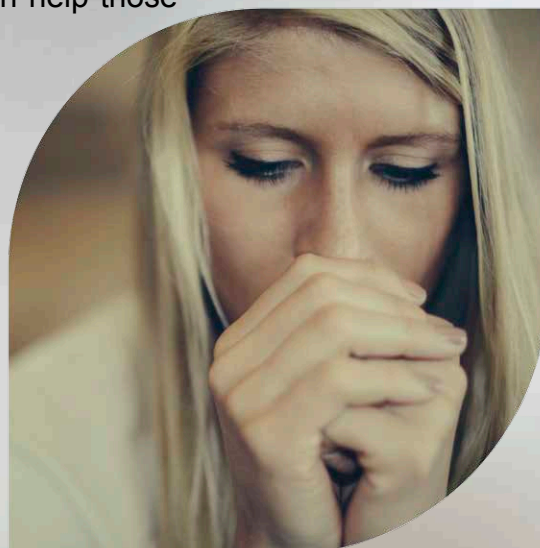


RESPONDING TO TRAGEDY

With instant and in-depth news coverage, each one of us is keenly aware of the many tragedies that have happened all over the world in the last year. Because it seems that we wake up to horrifying headlines on the news almost every day, it's important to remember our response and reaction to each instance. As a church, we are not equipped like a 24-hour newsroom is to make statements on every tragedy. Due to this, we should not always wait for or expect the Church to make a public statement but we should all take the opportunity to respond in a Christian way, by praying for the people involved and offering assistance when we can. We can display Christ's love by responding to the call to serve those around us who find themselves hurting.

- We pray for the victims and their families, while also praying for and forgiving those who may have caused the tragedy.
- We remember those who may have perished, that they can find the grace of God.
- Individually or congregationally, we can find a way to serve those affected, whether through a donation or fulfilling some other need in the community.

Ultimately, we reckon with the tragedies that happen in the world because we trust God and lay everything in His hands. During times of trouble, let's focus on this trust and our own response to how we can help those who have been affected. - LRK





NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF THE
NEW APOSTOLIC CHURCH
3753 N. TROY STREET
CHICAGO, IL 60618-4594

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END OF YEAR SALE

Over the past few years, we have accumulated CDs, books, and other items that can be used as resources in your congregation and homes. To help make it easier for people to have these resources, there is an end-of-year sale going on right now on the website, with certain items for sale. These items are listed below at their discounted prices. In order to view and purchase, you can go online to our website, www.nac-usa.org, and click on the link, "Shop" in the top right corner. Once in the store, please use the drop-down to locate the '2016 Close-Out' category for the items mentioned here.

MU-3022	The Many Moods of christmas	\$1.00
MU-3012	Spirit Alive CD	\$7.50
MU-3013	Stout-Hearted Men CD	\$4.00
MU-3014	There Is A Glorious Land CD	\$4.00
MU-3015	Thanks Be To God CD	\$4.00
MU-3016	Highlights From Handels Messiah CD	\$4.00
MU-3001	Christmas Joy CD	\$4.00
MU-3004	Shout Hallelujah! CD	\$4.00
MU-3005	Keys to the Heart - piano CD	\$3.00
MU-3006	Christmas in Cape Town CD	\$3.00
MU-3010	Emmanuel: Christmas CD	\$3.00
MU-3011	Hymns of Faith CD	\$3.00
MU-3018	We Thank Thee Father CD	\$4.00
MU-3020	Keys to the heart - Christmas	\$5.00
MS-A300	Baseball Cap (Navy Blue, emblem on side)	\$5.00
MS-A400	Black Silk Tie with Emblem	\$5.00
MS-S102	SS CHRISTMAS GIFT- A HAT FOR IVAN	\$2.00
MS-S103	MOST MARVELOUS GIFT (book)	\$2.00
MS-S104	JUNIOR PADFOLIO	\$2.00
MS-S105	DO YOU KNOW GAME	\$2.00
MS-S106	BIBLE FOR ME	\$2.00
MS-S107	MY ABC BIBLE VERSES by SUSAN HUNT	\$2.00
MS-S108	MAGNIFY-OT STORIES FOR KIDS	\$2.00
MS-S109	MAGNIFY-COMPLETE NT FOR KIDS	\$2.00
MS-S110	My Great Big God	\$2.00
MS-S111	Read N See DVD Bible	\$7.50
MS-S112	The Student Discovery Bible	\$7.50
MS-S113	The Illustrated New Testament	\$8.50