

April 29 to May 5

Bethanien Diakonissen-Stiftung  
(Bethany Deaconess Foundation)

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## Sing to the Lord a new song because he has done wonderful things! (Psalm 98:1 CEB)

### A moving form of spiritualization

“The one who sings, prays twice”. These words have been attributed to Augustine, one of the church fathers, and they were also expressed by Luther. There is certainly something in it. Singing: that’s something for the heart and which touches the soul. It stays with us. Texts become impressed on our minds, the songs ringing in our ears. Martin Luther knew exactly what he was doing when he incorporated his most important messages into hymns. People have passed on these hymns, sung them heartily and, in doing so, have learned more of their faith and the message of the Reformation. It was just the same with the Wesley brothers. What would Methodism be without its hymns?

For me, the songs and hymns of Taizé belong to the most important prayers which are sung. A colleague of mine considers the songs of Jacques Berthier to be on a par

with the music of Bach. I personally wouldn’t want to be without them. There’s “Nada te turbe” for example: “Let nothing disturb you, let nothing frighten you. He who has God nothing lacks”. Or “Solo Dios basta” - God alone suffices. Again, and something which fits in with our topic, “Sing unto the Lord a new song. Praise him at all times”. That these songs are sung with much repetition doesn’t disturb me anymore. On the contrary, this is a moving way of internalizing something. Comfort and confession are harmonized in these songs. Cantata is a special Sunday for me: on the one hand we celebrate Easter joy, and on the other, we worship God with our hymns of praise.

*Erhard Wiedenmann*

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### I give thanks

- for all those who are committed to our work in the areas of care, administration, medicine, the institutions for children and young people and in counselling
- for the new diaconal projects undertaken together with churches and other partners, such as the youth centre in Karlsruhe, the Starkids work in Hamburg and the kindergarten work in Mülheim & Solingen

### I Pray

- that we as people can support, strengthen, heal and help others
- that we continue to find professional and committed individuals, both employed and voluntary, for our institutions
- that both our churches and the work of the deaconesses can together be there for others
- for the older deaconesses that, in spite of their difficulties, they may have hope and joy in what they do

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### Bethanien Diakonissen-Stiftung (Bethany Deaconess Foundation)

Bethanien runs 8 hospitals and 15 old-peoples’ homes throughout Germany, working together with Agaplesion gAG and the edia.con gGmbH. The Bethanien Deaconesses live in Hamburg and Frankfurt. New projects have begun in the area of help for children & young people, together with “Starkinder-Eltern” (Starkids-Parents) and support for addicts.

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