

July 8 to 14

Essen District

But now says the LORD - the one who created you, Jacob, the one who formed you, Israel: Don't fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine. (Isaiah 43: 1 CEB)

Against rules and regulations. For life!

Holiday time! Time at last to really chill-out. Time to have some quality time with my partner and for us to pray together. Then suddenly, this tranquility becomes disturbed. So many things which still need doing. That which was suppressed suddenly comes to the fore. Prayers don't offer me solutions. Conversations with my partner just seem to make our differences more obvious.

"Don't fear, for I have redeemed you." These words do me good. I can talk to God about everything. I can tell him about my needs and my fears, be they large or small; and I can listen to what he says. OK, to give things over to God and then let them go doesn't work completely. But through continuing conversation with God, and with my man, I notice that things start to happen. A new impetus evolves. New thoughts come into play, the next step becomes clearer; then grows the certainty that God is with me. From there I begin to own the second part of this

verse: "You are mine" you belong to me, "I have called you by name". Yes, God knows me completely and personally. He knows the pace that I need and which thoughts will bring me further. In this special communion with him, I feel at home.

God, thank you for this.

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Translation: Chris Woodhead

I GIVE THANKS

- that people seek God's will and then act on it
- that pastors and congregations heed God's call to mission
- for those people
- who pass on the love of God
- who invest both time and money
- who come up with new ideas (e.g. the Repair-Café in Lage)

I PRAY FOR GOD'S PRESENCE AND GUIDANCE

- during the transfer in the office of Superintendent of the Essen District from Dr. Rainer Bath to Stefan Kraft
- with the planned new allocation of pastors for some churches
- in churches which are struggling to carry on

Essen District

The churches in the Essen District are situated in North Rhine-Westphalia, Northern Hesse and West Thuringia. This is an area with a very varied culture, landscape and local economy. It includes the Rine-land, the Ruhr conurbation as well as the hill country of East Westphalia-Lippe and Thuringia. The 34 churches have a total of 3400 confessing members.

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