

Bonner Querschnitte

Bonn Profiles – Press Reports

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Secretary General contributes to the Festschrift of the Home of Deaconesses where he found Jesus

(Bonn, 15.09.2023) 56 years ago the Secretary General of the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA), Thomas Schirmmacher, decided to move Jesus Christ into the center of his life. The place where this happened was the diaconal facility 'Diakonissen-Mutterhaus' in Lachen, Germany (in Neustadt an der Weinstraße, Germany). Below you find the contribution to the Festschrift for the 90th anniversary, which only now has been released as pdf for the public.

The contribution by Thomas Schirmmacher from the Festschrift

Beginning when I was six years old, I frequently visited the Deaconesses' Motherhouse—for many years as a participant in children's camps, and then later for recreation while our children attended the camps. Many friendships developed in Lachen that lasted for decades. I also came here to give sermons and lectures, or to visit Sisters Renate and Ludwine, who led me to faith in Jesus Christ 54 years ago.

In 1966, as a child, I decided to make Jesus Christ the centre of my life. At the very same location, on my 50th spiritual birthday and my 56th physical birthday, I preached a sermon at the service of the deaconesses' motherhouse and thanked both deaconesses and, of course, our Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

In my sermon I pointed out that my childlike faith, awakened and molded by the deaconesses, was fully compatible with my later academic tasks and research work in the fields of theology and sociology of religion. For the New Testament calls us to become like children (Matthew 18:3), but not to judge like children; rather, we should judge like

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iirf.eu

International Journal for Religious Freedom (IJRF) (Bonn/Toronto)
journal.iirf.eu

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vkwonline.com

WEA Global Issues Series (Bonn, Manila, New York)
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adults who “by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil” (Hebrews 5:14). Grown-ups in the faith should be able to test the will of God through the constant renewing of their minds (Romans 12:1–2) and decide independently for what is right. But at the same time, they must do this in the childlike awareness that we need God’s peace to guard and guide our intellect (Philippians 4:7).

I warmly congratulate Campus Lachen —Motherhouse of Deaconesses on its 90th birthday. I pray that the Lachen Campus will continue to be a place of rest and reflection, of spiritual new beginnings or renewal, and that many people will experience the love and blessings of God here and take them home with them.

I wish especially for you, Headmistress Daut, wisdom in achieving the many changes needed to make the Lachen Campus weatherproof for the future.

Thomas Schirmmacher
Secretary General of the World Evangelical Alliance



Thomas Schirmmacher mit den beiden Diakonissen, durch die er zum Glauben fand © BQ/Martin Warnecke

Downloads and Links:

- **Photo:** Thomas Schirmmacher with both deaconesses through whom he came to faith © BQ/Martin Warnecke
- Homepage of the Diakonissen-Mutterhaus in Lachen: <https://www.campus-lachen.de>
- The Festschrift as PDF: https://www.campus-lachen.de/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Jubi_22_Festschrift_final_211129_Druckboegen_c.pdf
- The contribution by Thomas Schirmmacher from the Festschrift: https://bucer.org/fileadmin/dateien/Dokumente/BQs/BQ700ff/BQ769/2022_Lachen_Auszug_Jubilaeum_Festschrift.pdf
- The jubilee celebration on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=2L2HCWBhfZ0>

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- '90 Jahre Diakonissen-Mutterhauses Lachen: Gott loben, Gemeinschaft leben, Gäste lieben': https://www.wochenblatt-reporter.de/neustadtweinstrasse/c-lokales/gott-loben-gemeinschaft-leben-gaeste-lieben_a365726
- 'Theologian thanks two Deaconesses' (BQ 505, No. 44/2017): <https://www.bucer.org/fileadmin/dateien/Dokumente/BQs/BQ0505eng.pdf>

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