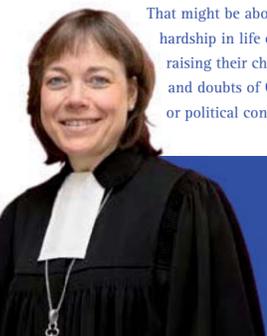


Christian faith always involves exchange with people of other denominations, cultures and religions. Ecumenical dialogue today focuses on questions about the foundation of faith and the common mission of Christian churches, without overlooking our differences. Worldwide mutual learning is important for the way our church understands mission today.

In a world torn by poverty and injustice, we in the Westphalian church share our skills, insights and money with German, African and Asian churches in the United Evangelical Mission (UEM). Together we bear responsibility. We belong to Christ and so face up to the challenges of mission. Many Westphalian parishes and districts sustain vibrant ecumenical fellowship in regular exchange and projects with church partners in Europe, Africa, America and Asia. In the face of the growing global divide between rich and poor, the Evangelical Church of Westphalia is energized by the biblical promise that "all may have life, and have it abundantly" (John's gospel, chapter 10 verse 10). It therefore advocates for a just shaping of the life circumstances of all people in the globalization process – in the service of life. The Westphalian church allocates substantial resources to world mission, ecumenism and Protestant development service.



The Church President (praeses)
Annette Kurschus has been the church president of the Evangelical Church of Westphalia since 2012. In that capacity she presides at its general synod, chairs its executive board and heads the Church Office. She represents the Westphalian church in public, and was elected for an eight-year period.

Ecumenism and mission

All in the same boat

The local church

Where Christians meet their church

People experience their church in totally different contexts: in the local parish as much as in the institutions and programs of every church district and at the regional church level. Whether in a discussion group or telephone hotline, in the schools department and in youth work, in adult education or a Bible study, in pastoral care in hospitals or home visits, in church music and in the social welfare chaplaincy; these are only a few examples of the many and varied activities supported by the local parishes. People have to be able to talk about what is important to them and find a listener.

That might be about personal hardship in life crises, problems raising their children, the joys and doubts of Christian faith or political controversies.

In all this, worship is at the heart of church life. Congregations plan services in traditional or refreshingly new ways. Different approaches appeal to different groups. Children, adolescents, women and men of all ages find room to listen to God's Word, to praise God and to lament, to celebrate together, to learn from one another, to come into conversation, make music and pray. What counts here is the interplay of professional and voluntary co-workers in the parishes. The Protestant church is founded on honorary, unpaid commitment from its very constitution: the governing bodies provided under church law – at the parish, district and regional level – are largely staffed by persons giving of their time and energy in an honorary capacity.

Diakonia

Assisting the vulnerable

Diakonia (Greek: service) is about helping people undergoing hardship, suffering from illness or unjust conditions. It has been an integral part of the church from the very beginning. Christians, who are grateful for God's love and energetically pass this love on to their fellow humans, act in the spirit of diakonia. That happens in every parish, for example through neighborhood assistance or support for refugees. That also happens in special institutions for old, sick or disabled people. In Westphalia there are over 3000 diaconal facilities with about 55,000 employees. They work under the umbrella of the nonprofit organization Diakonie Rheinland-Westfalen-Lippe e.V. Diaconal ministries have to operate cost-efficiently, e.g. under the general conditions of funds from long-term care insurance (paid from compulsory contributions). On the other hand, they are close to the parishes and stand for the

unity of Christian faith and real-life compassion. They therefore face the constant challenge of balancing the demands of the market and the interests of the community at large.

www.diakonie-rwl.de

Full-time services such as ministry to the elderly are just as much part of social welfare work as voluntary work.



Finances

Transparent pockets

According to the order of the Evangelical Church of Westphalia, every level has to take the responsibility appropriate to it. For that reason, parishes, districts and the regional church administration all have their own budgets.

The most important source of income for church work is church taxes. In 2013 church tax revenue is expected to total EUR 430 million. Out of that, parishes and districts will receive 256.85 million for their activities. The rest will go to the regional church budget to cover activities on behalf of the whole church (e.g. the financial offsetting between the regional churches in Germany) and for ecumenism, world mission and development assistance. The church is publicly accountable for its spending. Every budget – be it of a local parish, a church district or the regional church administration – is public.

You can find the current figures on our website at Presse/Finanzen.



Church tax:
Simple.Fair.



Church campaigns across the region such as the "Night of the open churches" at Whit give an impression of the multifaceted worlds of faith and life in the Westphalian parishes.

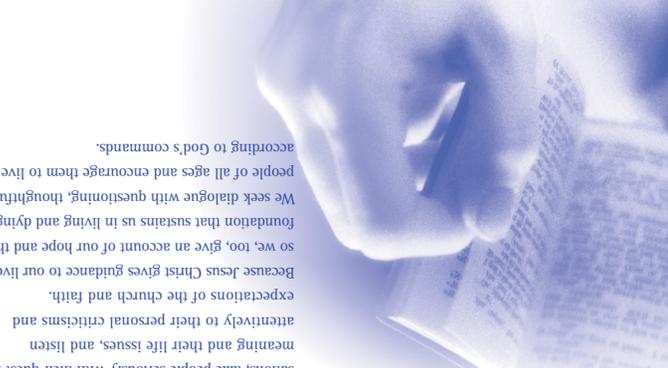


Our life. Our faith. Our actions.

Self-understanding of the Evangelical Church of Westphalia

After a long Bible. On the basis of our faith we are guided by the words and stories of the Spirit, as revealed in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, as revealed in the words and stories of the Bible. On the basis of our faith we are guided by the aims that give the manifold activities of our church a common direction. In 2004 adopted a mission statement. Here are some extracts from it.

Because God has come towards us human beings, so we, too, want to go towards other people and pass on the love and sense of worth that we receive from God. We offer space for conversations, take people seriously with their quest for meaning and their life issues, and listen attentively to their personal criticisms and expectations of the church and faith. Because Jesus Christ gives guidance to our lives, so we, too, give an account of our hope and the foundation that sustains us in living and dying... We seek dialogue with questioning, thoughtful people of all ages and encourage them to live according to God's commands.



Evangelische Kirche von Westfalen

Protestant in Westphalia

Faith for good

reason



Addresses – a selection

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info@evangelisch-in-westfalen.de
Haus Landeskirchlicher Dienste
Olpe 35, 44135 Dortmund
Tel. (0231) 5409-0
With the following offices and agencies:
Evangelisches Erwachsenenbildungswerk Westfalen und Lippe e.V. (Protestant adult education) www.ebwwest.de
Amt für missionarische Dienste der EKvW (mission services), www.amd-westfalen.de
Amt für Mission, Ökumene und Kirchliche (Bible society), www.werkstatt-bibel.de
Amt für Mission, Ökumene und Kirchliche (Bible society), www.werkstatt-bibel.de
Weiterentwicklung der EKvW (MÖW) (mission services), www.amd-westfalen.de
Amt für missionarische Dienste der EKvW (mission services), www.amd-westfalen.de
Amt für Jugendarbeit (youth work) www.kircheundgesellschaft.de
Institut für Aus-, Fort- und Weiterbildung (education and further training) www.institut-afw.de
Pädagogisches Institut (educational institute) www.pii-illigstr.de
Evangelisches Studentenwerk (Protestant student agency), www.vsv-studienwerk.de
Diakonie Rheinland-Westfalen-Lippe (Diakonia Rheinland-Westphalia-Lippe) Friesenring 32, 48147 Münster, Germany Tel. (0251) 27 09-0
www.diakonie-rwl.de

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www.evangelisch-in-westfalen.de

The Evangelical Church of Westphalia is present in the media with a clear message: who we are, what we believe and what we do – in the daily press and church networks, on radio and TV and on the web with its social networks. Every fortnight we produce a cost-free newsletter "EKvW-Info" which gives an overview of the most important topics.

Our Church Life – Our Faith – Our Actions' and 'Our history – our self-understanding' may be accessed on our website at www.evangelisch-in-westfalen.de

The two brochures 'Our Church Life – Our Faith – Our Actions' and 'Our history – our self-understanding' may be accessed on our website at www.evangelisch-in-westfalen.de

Because God has become our advocate, we commit ourselves to showing humanity and struggling for justice. We accompany and support persons in difficult life situations. We want to be a church that is mindful of its faith and its Protestant identity in all efforts to reform, that assumes responsibility for people with their questions and problems, and tells them of God's unconditional love. With all the reforms in store we will be guided by the ground of our faith, by our confessional tradition and Reformation heritage. We remain attentive to people's experiences and hopes, questions and doubts, and allow ourselves to be emptied by the gifts and abilities that each blessing upon our path into the future, and that God will go with us and pour divine God's Spirit will breathe new life into the church and make it new.

Bottom up

Shape and structure

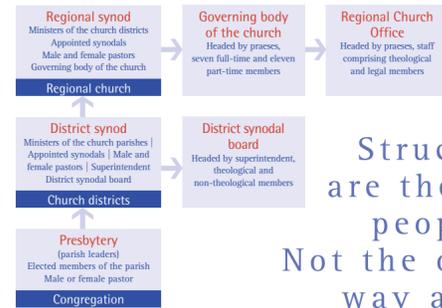
The Evangelical Church of Westphalia has the following structure:

- The church is built upwards from the local church level.
- At the local level, church leadership lies with elected presbyteries, at the church district and regional level with synods.
- In the governing bodies (presbytery, district synod and regional synod) presbyters and ministers work together at all levels on an equal footing.

The 518 parishes are grouped geographically in 31^{*} districts. They foster fellowship among the individual congregations, take on responsibility for common services and guarantee quality and sharing experience in the different areas of work.

* (1.1.2014: 28 districts)

Presbyters (Greek: elders) lead the parish. They have to be confirmed and at least 18 years of age (at most 75). The size of a presbytery depends on the number of members of the congregation. In Westphalia there are about 5.500 presbyters working in an honorary capacity.



Structures are there for people. Not the other way around.

Between Tecklenburg and Siegerland, the Ruhr area and Paderborn

The church in the region

The Evangelical Church of Westphalia (EKvW) has 2.45 million members and is the fourth largest church under the umbrella of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD). It comprises the areas of the government districts of Münster, Arnsberg and Detmold (without the district of Lippe). The EKvW extends over 250 km from Tecklenburg Land in the North to Siegerland in the South, and 260 km from the Ruhr-area in the West to the Paderborn Land in the East.

The region is diverse: the thinly populated farmlands of Münsterland border on the populous Ruhr area, the flat Soest plain on the hilly Sauerland. The EKvW's regional administration, known as the Church Office, is located in Bielefeld.



Some areas have been traditionally Protestant since the Reformation, like the Siegerland or East Westphalia. The Münsterland or Paderborn Land, by contrast, have stayed more Catholic. However, the respective denominational percentages have tended to even out in the last few decades.



General data (2012)	
Members	2,456,233
Parishes	518
Districts	31
Pastorates	1,329
Churches, chapels, about	873
Places of worship, about	1,057
Kindergartens and day-care centers	808
Diaconal service centers	140
Staff	
Volunteers in the local parishes approx.	100,000
Presbyters approx.	5,500
Full and part-time workers in the EKvW approx.	21,000
In diaconal ministries approx.	55,000
Church life in 2011	
Infant baptism	16,292
Adult baptism	1,815
Confirmation	23,051
Weddings	4,048
Funerals	29,241
Average attendance on Sunday	92,036
New members	4,497

You find further information on our Internet site at: wir-ueber-uns/daten-und-fakten



From the Reformation until today

A brief look into history

With Martin Luther's Reformation in Wittenberg, Protestant congregations started forming in Westphalia from as early as 1517. They developed in two forms: as Evangelical Lutheran and as Evangelical Reformed. After 1815 Westphalia became a province of Prussia. Thereafter King Friedrich Wilhelm III strove for a union of both traditions. Since not all Westphalian parishes followed the appeal to unite, Lutheran, Reformed and United congregations can still be found in this one regional church. The basis for Lutheran confirmation classes is – besides the Bible – Martin Luther's Small Catechism, and in Reformed congregations it is the Heidelberg Catechism. Visible differences have developed over time. The church building expresses holiness in the Lutheran understanding.

"Here I stand. I can do no other." The famous phrase of Martin Luther before the Imperial Diet of Worms dramatically underlines the Reformers' reliance on the sole authority of the Bible.

Images, candles and flowers also appeal to the senses. The Reformed tradition is more sober and takes the Old Testament prohibition of images very seriously. For this reason, it typically has Holy Scripture lying open on the communion table, with no other paraphernalia. In many Reformed churches there is also no cross. Congregations in the United tradition combine elements of both the others. With the end of the monarchy in 1918 the Prussian church became independent of the respective government. As of 1933 the National Socialists wanted to "synchronise" the church with its ideology.

More and more churches in Westphalia are also open during the week: www.offene-kirchen.info



The Confessing Church formed in opposition to this. After 1945 the church could no longer be a Prussian church province and the Evangelical Church of Westphalia was founded.



Facts and figures

Church district (2012)	Parish members	Parishes	Pastorates
Arnsberg	44,199	11	31
Bielefeld	105,017	27	60,75
Bochum	98,349	18	51,75
Dortmund Mitte-Nordost*	79,395	12	31
Dortmund Süd*	57,939	8	22,25
Dortmund West*	49,441	5	21
Gelsenkirchen u. Wattenscheid	96,637	15	54,5
Gladbeck-Bottrop-Dorsten	64,326	5	34,5
Gütersloh	109,521	17	58,25
Hagen	76,978	22	37,5
Halle	49,348	8	23,75
Hamm	87,607	13	47
Hattingen-Witten	70,311	17	37
Herford	123,522	25	71,75
Herne	72,824	15	36
Iserlohn	104,101	25	58,5
Lübbecke	67,462	19	33,25
Lüdenscheid-Plettenberg	92,629	26	51,75
Lünen	36,346	4	12,75
Minden	83,325	24	48
Münster	107,779	24	53
Paderborn	83,355	22	50
Recklinghausen	111,892	12	60,75
Schwelm	45,711	5	24
Siegen	128,149	29	69,5
Soest	67,376	23	41,75
Steinfurt-Coesfeld-Borken	86,978	20	40,75
Tecklenburg	78,819	17	33,75
Unna	81,316	13	47,75
Vlotho	60,376	21	32,5
Wittgenstein	35,205	16	25

In order to be able to cope better with cross-cutting activities, the 31 districts formed themselves into eleven organizational units in 2001. This took account both of traditional organic structures and regional boundaries.

* 1. January 2014 union Dortmund Protestant District

