

## **Does mission play a role in the Lydia community? - 7 Theses on the 7th Thesis Verena Tigges, Vicar in the Lutheran Lydia Community Dortmund**

The evangelical Lydia-Community Dortmund is a parochial community in the area of the Dortmund Nordstadt. As a former working-class neighborhood, the Nordstadt is strongly influenced by migration movements. With the project "Being Church Together", the congregation has set out in 2016-2020 with the goal of being the first Westphalian local congregation to be an international congregation in 2020. This should be reflected in its worship services, groups and projects. An insight into our international worship services can be found on our Youtube channel <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=usFo6jWYZog>. As a vicar, I have been involved in church work since August 2019.

1. in the church work of the Lydia-Congregation - as well as in other church contexts - often an undifferentiated approach to mission or the concept of mission emerges. Statements are then made e.g. in the context of individual historical or biographical aspects (e.g. mission in the context of German colonial history; positive or negative experiences with "missionary preachers").

Challenges for transcultural congregations and ecumenical encounters are stereotypical attributions and images that we carry within us ("Africans pray so much" or "Germans don't really believe anyway"). To become aware of these, to reflect on them and to break through them is a great challenge, but at the same time the necessary condition for being able to learn and profit from each other: "Mutual appreciation and the willingness to change oneself in these encounter processes are indispensable." (Z. 310f.)

Therefore, the draft - and the accompanying discussion of an understanding of mission in the EKvW - is important for a dialogue with Christians of other languages and origins, in whose faith tradition the term "mission" is often filled differently and more positively than in traditional German congregations.

4 In my opinion, the orientation towards the concept of Missio Dei can achieve essential things in this context with regard to an understanding and a constructive understanding of mission.

Transcultural communities like the Lydia Community are places where people with very heterogeneous (faith) biographies meet. Heterogeneous communities invite discourse about different (faith) ideas and need this communication to enable understanding and community. Members of transcultural communities become able to speak in faith, which makes them participants in the Missio Dei.

Christians of other languages and origins enrich the life of the Lydia parish with the liveliness of their worship culture, their lived spirituality, their ability to express emotions, their ability to speak their faith and their cordiality. (cf. lines 302-305) Worship services and congregational life become more lively, diverse and appealing to young people as well through the transformation processes.

The prerequisite for such enrichment as is experienced in this congregation is that Christians of other languages and origins are not only welcomed in our congregations, but are also given opportunities for co-design and co-determination (e.g. through involvement in sermon and service design, transfer of leadership responsibility in groups and through election to the presbytery).