

Dear Reverend Mika, dear Sisters and Brothers in Dar es Salaam,

In the Protestant churches in Germany today verses from the 12th chapter of St. John's Gospel are the basis for our sermons. John describes how people of other than Jewish faith come to Philip and say to him, "Sir, we would like to see Jesus." This happens before the crucifixion and resurrection and while he is still alive. But he had already raised Lazarus and the news of that had spread. People had accompanied his entry into Jerusalem with waving palm branches.

A lot of them were not in Jerusalem because of Jesus or because they had heard about Lazarus' resurrection. They simply wanted to celebrate Passover. But, now they had heard about Jesus and had become curious: "We would like to see Jesus". It is nice when people become curious and want to get to know Jesus. Especially those who did not know anything about him before.

This describes in a wonderful way your task, dear Rev. Mika. Especially in the German-speaking congregation in Dar es Salaam: To work with people who often come for other reasons, move to Tanzania, temporarily or with a longer perspective: because they have found a professional task in Tanzania that appeals to them. Because they have met a person whom they have come to know and love and who lives in Tanzania. Because the profession of their partner or parents has taken them there and they now live in Tanzania, in Dar es Salaam or the surrounding area. People who move to this beautiful country for completely different reasons. And who become curious. They may have met you, the young pastor, somewhere, at a reception, a celebration and become curious about what you are doing. People, who hear about what the congregation has to offer and want to come and see for themselves. Or who, at one of the major feasts, like Christmas or Easter, feel it would be nice to attend a service in the language they are familiar with. And who become curious and want to see and get to know Jesus. Learn about what makes a Christian congregation and what your congregation in particular has to offer.

That is your task, dear Rev. Mika, to make people in Dar es Salaam curious about getting to know Jesus. And we are grateful that you decided to go back to Tanzania directly after your theological education and pastoral training and to work in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania. We are grateful to Mission Eine Welt for sending you. Above all, we thank the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania for their hospitality in the Azania Front Cathedral and under its organizational umbrella. It is only with all their help and support that we are able to assign you with the ministry in the German-speaking congregation in Dar es Salaam. I would love to be with you today to tell you all this in person. But, since this is not possible due to the pandemic, I am so grateful that Bishop Malasusa is making this introduction.

May God bless you all at this special moment of the introduction of Rev. Anne Mika, her work in the ELCT and in the German-speaking congregation, the Evangelical-Lutheran Church and the people of Tanzania, whatever their language and background may be. God bless all of you, but especially your ministry, dear Rev. Mika. May you succeed in making people curious about Jesus. Especially those who do not know him yet and originally came to Tanzania for completely different reasons.

Amen