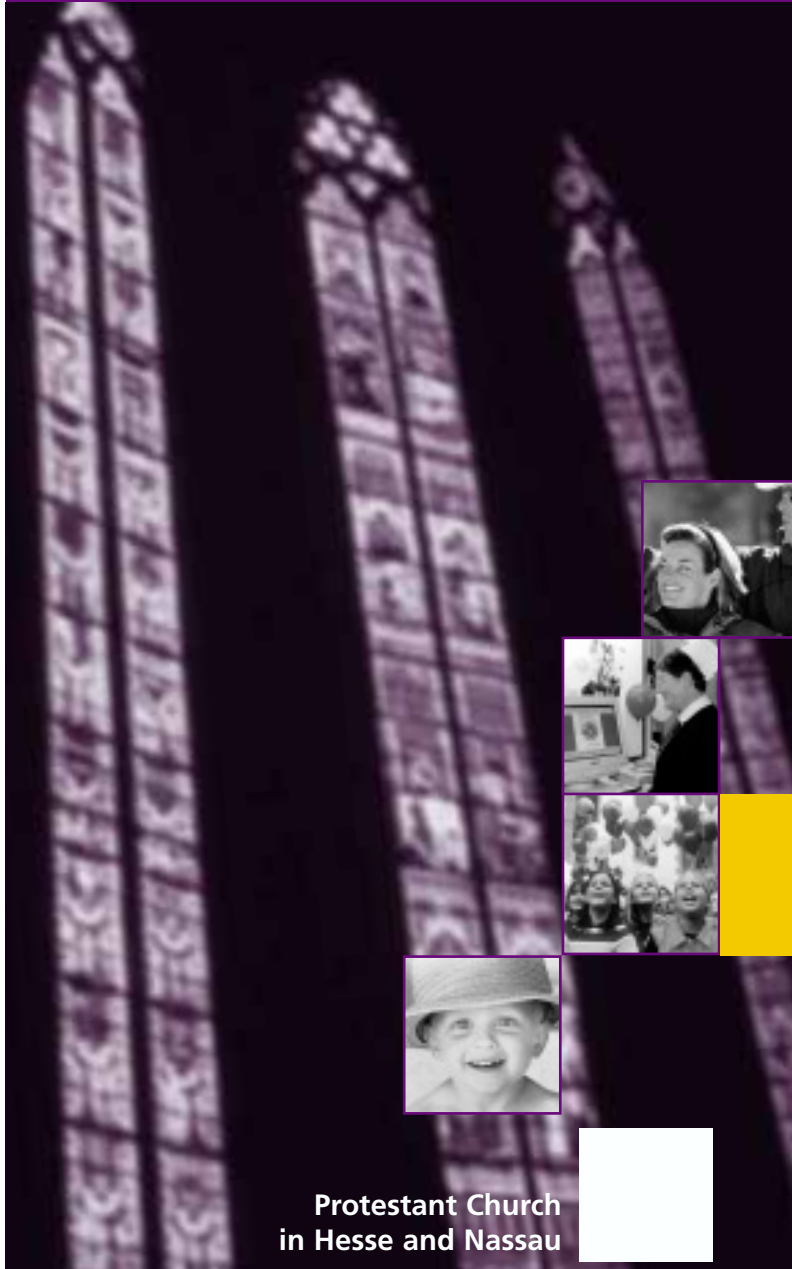


Church for one and all



Protestant Church
in Hesse and Nassau





I am part of it. ...

“... because the church service on Sunday has become an integral part of my life.”

Helga M., 63 years

“... because the church is open to everyone.”

Bernd M., 54 years

“... because I found people here when my mother died.”

Herbert K., 43 years

“... because our youth group has found a place within the congregation where it can meet.”

Tobias N., 15 years

“... because I am baptised and confirmed.”

Thomas K., 32 years

“... because the church invited me to take part.”

Karin P., 59 years



“... because the church is supporting 'peace, justice and integrity of creation'.”

Cordelia K., 47 years

“... because I have found people in the congregation who want to lead their lives according to God's will.”

Dorothea B., 46 years



The Church in Hesse and Nassau

The Protestant Church in Hesse and Nassau (EKHN) is located in the middle of the Federal Republic of Germany. It includes the southern part of the Federal States of Hesse and Rheinland-Pfalz including the Rhein-Main area and its vibrant center, Frankfurt, as well as the rural areas of Vogelsberg, Taunus and Odenwald.

Some five million people live in the cities and towns within our church boundaries. Nearly two million are members of the EKHN. An additional 1,5 million people belong to other denominations within the Christian church. Vital to our church is the inseparability of faith and social responsibility. No less important to us than a lively spirituality are the fair distribution of wealth and work within the country, a future-oriented economic policy, and the stewardship of God's creation.

“The decline in the number of church members challenges us anew to give witness to the living hope within us as Christians” (1. Peter 3:15b).



Muslims constitute the second largest religious community in Hesse. During the past few years dialogue with other cultures and other religions has become increasingly important. Indeed one of the church's most important ministries consists in encouraging peaceful and reconciliatory relationships among the different communities.



The Church in world-wide Fellowship

The EKHN, together with 23 other regional churches, forms the Protestant Church in Germany, the EKD. This in turn is a member of the World Council of Churches which was founded in 1948. Its members, having committed themselves to the concerns of this world-wide fellowship, work together with other churches in spite of denominational differences. A living example of this is the annual World Day of Prayer.

The EKHN extends its connections and partnerships to churches and congregations abroad- to Poland, the Czech Republic, Italy, the Republic of South Africa, Tanzania, Ghana, India, Indonesia and South Korea. We share experiences with these people, participate in the joy and concern of the partners and work together on issues of "peace, justice and the integrity of creation".

The EKHN supports the work of "Bread for the World" and finances projects in developing countries. In addition, it contributes to making people at large aware that poverty is created – and may be alleviated – by human beings.





The Church in the City

In Wiesbaden-Klarenthal, for example


The congregation was established in 1968 at a time when Klarenthal itself was being constructed – a residential area with high-rise flats alongside terraced houses and single private homes. The churches – both Protestant and Catholic – foresaw emerging conflict and friction of the contrasting living-styles and standards. They initiated round-table talks in which many unions, political parties and social organizations took part. When houses for the refugees were being constructed, a growing panic and prejudice was evident among the various groups. The church again called the inhabitants to tour the refugee housings. In so doing, the local congregation reached out to the surrounding area, yet without compromising its own identity. Worship remains the core of the congregation's life together.

Or the St. Katharinen Church in downtown Frankfurt

This house of God is located in the center of Frankfurt, surrounded by businesses and office buildings. This area has made living there prohibitively expensive, resulting in a shrinking attendance at the local congregation. Nonetheless, the church remains actively involved in outreach ministries. St. Katharinen is open for curious passers-by and for those who are in search of a quiet place. Inside one can discover the church office, meet the pastor in person and enter into a meaningful conversation with him.

With its exhibitions, lectures, vesper services, podium discussions, and concerts, St. Katharinen is transferred into a vivid center in downtown Frankfurt.





The Church in the rural areas:

In Jugenheim/Rhein Hesse

The 1,300 member congregation is located at the edge of the Rhein-Main area where more than 40 agricultural and wine producing businesses had once flourished. Of these, only 15 remain. Instead, construction boom is taking place due to the increasing number of people moving from the cities to this rural area.

The church plays a big role in bringing the “old-timers” and the “new-comers” together, encouraging their fellowship and

supporting them in their faith.

The congregation is growing in many aspects of its ministry. Here there is a kindergarten, a home for the disabled, confirmation lessons, a youth club, choir and church service.

In Hopfmansfeld

This small village is located in the heart of the lofty Vogelsberg region. The climate here is harsh, thus making it very hard for the few remaining farmers to keep the land fruitful. Employment opportunities are very few. People have to commute to the urban areas of Giessen or Frankfurt for work. Young people leave the village because they have no prospects here. However the local congregation tries to compensate for this disadvantage through its various activities. The Sunday service in the 18th century church is central to life in the village. Here, the old and the young meet to worship God, celebrate, sing and fellowship together.





A word of Greeting ...

... by Prof. Dr. Steinacker, the President of the Church in Hesse and Nassau

It is a great privilege for me to extend a warm welcome to you in the name of the Protestant Church in Hesse and Nassau. We stand in the tradition of the Reformation. Luther's concept of the "Priesthood of all Believers" is a leitmotif in shaping our Church's life today.

As Christians we unite together world-wide in our faith in the one God who has manifested himself as a human being in the person of Jesus Christ. It is essential for us that the members of our church witness for their faith and the reasons for their membership through their contribution to a peaceful and understanding society despite its cultural and religious diversity. If we are able to articulate our faith and give it an expression by means of entering constructive dialogues and showing interest in and committing ourselves to the concerns of those who live with us and all over the world, then we can live our Christianity in a meaningful way. To underline this, the church administration and the synod have adopted "Protestant for good reason" for their slogan.

Martin Niemöller, the first Pres-

ident of the Protestant Church in Hesse and Nassau, was one of the founders of the World Council of Churches in 1948. The fellowship of churches, expressed visibly through this organisation, remains for us a sign and a hope for living together and for surviving in this One World.

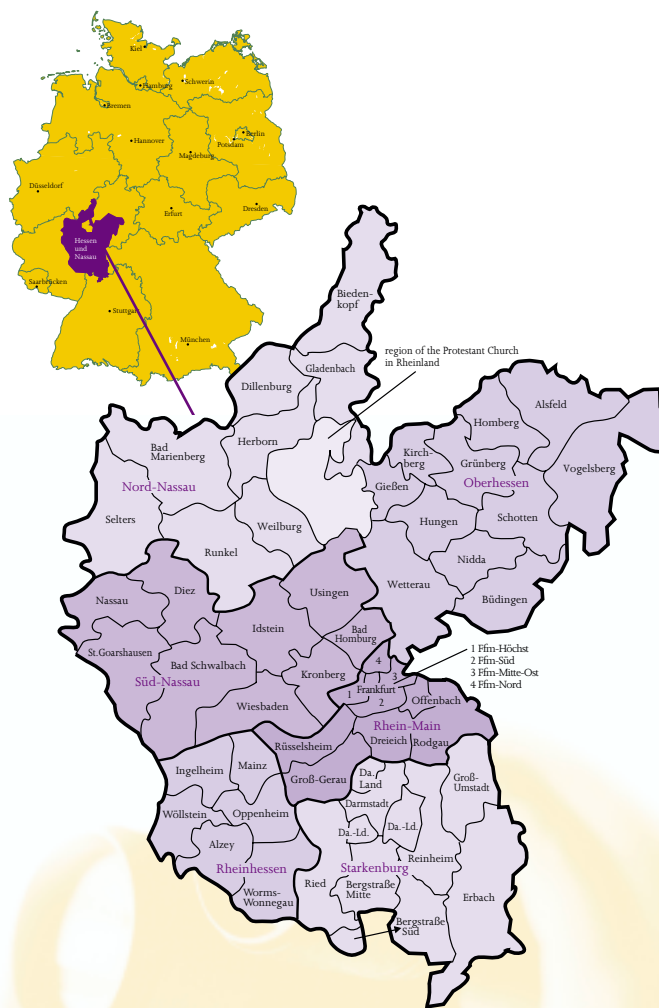
As a church for the people, we offer a home for those with very different ideas and opinions, vocations and lifestyles. This challenges us to be diligently pursue fellowship in diversity and to seek a common ground in a pluralistic society.

*Prof. Dr. Peter Steinacker
President of the Church*





How to find us?



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Cordelia Kopsch, Paulusplatz 1, D-64285 Darmstadt

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The Church Ministers: ...

The Protestant Church in Hesse and Nassau (EKHN) understands its mission as bearing witness to the love of God for all people and in service to the whole of society.



Through a variety of outreach ministries, the church is always within easy reach. Whoever requires pastoral care or has questions about the meaning of life, for example, can readily find a pastor or church staff member eager to be of assistance.

Worship services are celebrated each Sunday in some 1,200 congregations. The church also ministers to people during significant moments and turning points in their lives, such as baptism, confirmation, marriage, and death. In addition, the church offers an extensive education program, as well as a large number of social and diaconal services. The church itself supports kindergartens, hospitals and retirement homes. An extensive network of pastoral care services are also available to prisoners, migrants and persons with disabilities. The primary work of the church lies

in the areas of worship and proclamation, education, pastoral care and counseling, ecumenical relations, social justice issues and social services. Centers of ministry led by experts in the field have been erected in the forementioned areas of work and service.

Moreover, the church is an independent and impartial partner engaged in cooperative work with other groups in society. It provides a forum for individuals and groups from vastly different backgrounds to come together and engage in constructive dialogue. In questions of ethics, the church offers perspectives based upon Christian values. Not only does the church endeavor to preserve cultural heritage and support the arts (music, fine arts and architecture), but its people are engaged in the struggles for peace, justice and the integrity of creation.





... and Profiles

The ecumenical center in Frankfurt

For more than twenty years, the Ecumenical center has been a conference and a meeting center for ecumenical, developmental, political and intercultural activities. It is a place for experience-based learning. The Conciliatory Process (peace, justice and the integrity of creation) is an ongoing subject of discussion.

Women's Jobs

Women have the lion's share of church work. During the last several years women have begun wondering about the future of women in theology, church leadership and the place of women in the larger society. Women work voluntarily in all aspects of the church – in congregational groups and women's associations, on church boards, in synods and in church administration. In paid professions women work as religion teachers, educators in kindergarten, secretaries, pastors and as church executives.



In response, the church continues to discuss feminist theology, social justice for women, inclusive language, violence against women and gender issues.

Music and Culture

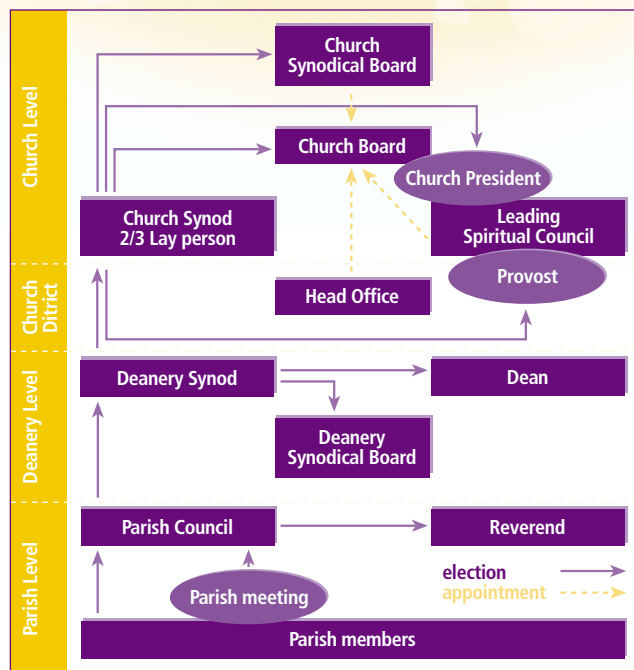
Throughout the centuries music has been played for the glory of God and for the pleasure of his creatures. The church in Hesse and Nassau celebrates this diverse tradition with a brass band, a Gospel choir and a rock band. Whether you sing, play an instrument or just enjoy listening to music, we have a place for you. 1.300 concerts were played last year in the Hesse and Nassau church.



The Structure of the Church

The Protestant Church in Hesse and Nassau is organized in a democratic way. It derives its impetus from its members whose voices are heard in the annual congregation meeting. Every six years the members of the congregations elect their elders for the church board on the congregational level. This church boards elect the members of the Deanery Synod in which congregations on the regional level come together. The Deanery Synods have bigger responsibilities and tasks.

Out of all Deanery Synods of the Protestant Church in Hesse and Nassau the members of church synod are elected. Two-thirds of them are lay members. The church synod formulates the church policy, elects the church leaders and the president of the church. They also elect the members of the church synodical board and the church board. The terms on all levels are 6 years. Only the church president is elected for a term of 8 years. All synod meetings at all levels are held openly.





The Budget

Total expenditure in 2001 = 460 million EUR

The work done in 2000 by the Protestant Church in Hesse and Nassau cost more than 893 million Marks. Some 75% of this amount went on salaries and wages for over 17,616 employees and workers including some 1,613 Pastors.

The 1,8 million members of the church finance the largest part of the Church's work through church tax. Church tax is drawn from the income tax collected by the government according to established rules. Those with large income pay more; and those with low income pay less or could be freed from church tax on application with convincing reasons. Some two-thirds of the members pay nothing.

Church tax is very necessary for our stable and predictable budget planning. Of course we are always grateful for the donations and offerings we receive and for the more than 53 000 voluntary workers in the church. But these donations do not diminish the need for the income we have through the church tax. The church employs a large number of people in several services and this is our strength.

The diaconic/social work, kindergartens and other institutions which belong to and are financed by the Hesse state government and the public are also subsidized by the church. In the field of diaconic work alone some 12,500 persons are employed full-time.

Total Expenditure 2001 460 Million EUR

