

Archbishop Justin wrote to the Chairman of the Council of the Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (EKD), the Revd Dr Nikolaus Schneider, who is laying down his office in November.

The text of the letter is printed below.

Dear Dr Schneider,

This comes to you with warm Christian greetings and prayers.

We have noted through press communications that you will be laying down your office as Chair of the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) on 10 November 2014, due to the illness of your wife, Anne.

I recall our meeting in Leicester during the Meissen Delegation visit. I was especially touched by your uncomplicated warmth and friendship. The relationship between the Church of England and the EKD has indeed been strengthened through your commitment and presence. Meissen is a success story with its numerous partnerships and links between our two churches and I am grateful for your friendship over the years, as our churches have journeyed towards closer fellowship and greater unity. You will be missed, but your decision respected, since it demonstrates a commitment, at a critical time of need in your family, to dedicate your time and energy to a loved one.

We will uphold both Anne and you in our prayers, asking for God's healing and mercies as both of you begin a new phase in your journey together and as you readjust to the changes.

Our thought and prayers are also with the EKD as it begins the process of finding your successor.

In Christ

The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Justin Welby

Archbishop of Canterbury

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