



THE CLOUD OF
WITNESSES

TRACHSELWALD 2015

TRACHSELWALD CALENDAR 2015

This calendar is the first of its kind. It is dedicated to the most important witness of anabaptist faith back home in Old Switzerland. It is the castle that heard so many cries from its tower prison cells – cries of despair, of pains all over tortured bodies, of loneliness, and cries to God in deepest prayer. During the Täuferjahr 2007, the bad vibes of this ancient fortress gave way to a new light: The light of forgiveness and reconciliation. And three days of praise at the foot of the hill were like a new tune of joy spreading through the Emmental, the Canton of Bern and beyond the Swiss borders, even over the Atlantic. The September illustration gives a glimpse of this openair, attended by more than 10'000 people altogether.

Since then things have changed. The awareness of the Swiss population for the dramatic chapter of our history, more or less hidden until 2007, has opened many eyes and hearts for the unbaerable fate of early anabaptists, and many people are eager to get acquainted with descendants of the persecuted believers. Contacts are now easily established. The quantity and quality of friendships grow constantly. The carloads of heritage tourists outnumber those that were seen at the beginning of the 21th century. The castle itself has become more quiet, being disposed of its past purpose to serve as the district court and the governor's office.

The Canton of Bern decided to hand this castle over to a foundation that would keep it open to different visitor sectors, for local historic interests (it was for a time a orphanage, run by the famous pastor Gotthelf), the peasant revolt (the leader was kept in the tower before being burnt), and to a great extent to all the visitors from the US, Mennonite and Amish, that might even find a personal mark of an ancestor carved in wood or stone of the prison. The foundation will be established when half a million Swiss francs are brought together from the adjacent municipalities, the Swiss Mennonites, congregations of the the Reformed Church, individuals and – the large community of descendants in the US and Canada, congregations and family associations.

The help from abroad is indispensable, because the local efforts could not raise this much money during the past two years. Once the foundation reached its asset sum required from the state, the castle will be handed over to it for one Swiss frank, having an estimated worth of 2,2 million dollars. And an additional million will flow from a treasury for culture, to start with the transformation of the old offices and court rooms into a visitor's and encounter center. All the details can be found in our homepage www.trachselwald-castle.ch, "study for conversion" (pdf).

We know that a good startup will fire people's imagination so that further sponsoring will allow improvements (elevator, catering kitchen, modern restrooms) and render it even more visitor-friendly. Elderly people will not have to cope with medieval stairways (except prison tower), and the Sherk, Showalder, Miller, Yoder... – scores of Anabaptists will find an exposition and guidelines for further Emmental hotspots of their history.

The members of the future foundation board, among them the governor of the Emmental, the Emmental Tours Burgdorf, the mayors of Trachselwald and Sumiswald (from whence came Hans Haslebacher) and the Mennonites Langnau and Swiss Mennonite Conference encourage you to buy this beautiful calendar dedicated to your prime place of Bernese anabaptist history, to promote it among your relatives and friends and to make it a theme in your congregation.

If you're looking for a Christmas gift with meaningful Bible messages throughout a whole year, look at the verses fitting to every month's perspective of the picture.

The price is 18,5\$, with 11\$ going directly to the castle. Shipping fees will be added.

The calendar can be ordered via the homepage of the fundraising project: www.trachselwald-castle.ch, or at the address of the author of this text and the calendar as a whole: Paul Veraguth, Reformed pastor, 3665 Wattenwil, Switzerland, p.veraguth@gmx.ch.

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See information at the footer

The bank account for further donations is to be found on the aforementioned homepage.



Photo: Peter Bärtschi, CH-3322 Mattstetten, www.fb3.ch

Verily, verily, I say unto you: Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. John 12, 24

JANUARY

				New Year	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
12	13	14	15	16	17	18		
19	20	21	22	23	24	25		
26	27	28	●	29	30	31		



Photo: Dr. Dominik Hofer, CH-3550 Langnau, www.flickr.com/photos/dominikhofer

Thou broughtest us into the net; thou laidst affliction upon our loins.
Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water:
but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place. Psalm 66, 12

FEBRUARY

									1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8			
9	10	11	12	13	14	15			
16	17	18	19	20	21	22			
23	24	25	● 26	27	28				



Photo: Martin Mägli, CH-3671 Herbligen, www.naturbild.ch

For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Isaiah 55,12

APRIL

			1	2	Good Friday	3	4	Easter	5
Easter Monday	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
13	14	15	16	17	18	19			
20	21	22	23	24	25	26			
27	28	29	●	30					



Photo: Dr. Dominik Hofer, CH-3550 Langnau, www.flickr.com/photos/dominikhofer

Cling to that which is good, rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer.
Romans 12, 9 and 12

MAY

						1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
11	12	13	Ascension Day	14	15	16	17	
18	19	20	21	22	23	Pentecost	24	
Whit Monday	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	



Photo: Dr. Dominik Hofer, CH-3550 Langnau, www.flickr.com/photos/dominikhofer

Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. Hebrews 1, 1-2a

JUNE

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					



Photo: Dr. Don Siegrist-Hess, Bird in Hand PA 17505, jhs606@frontiernet.net

Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. Psalm 90, 1-2

JULY

		1	2	3	Independence Day	4	5
6	7	8	9	10		11	12
13	14	15	16	17		18	19
20	21	22	23	24		25	26
27	28	29	30	31			



Photo: Peter Schmid, CH-8344 Bäretswil, petrus@livenet.ch

Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness, to the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. Psalm 30, 12-13 a

SEPTEMBER

	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	●			



Photo: Dr. Don Siegrist-Hess, Bird in Hand PA 17505, jhs606@frontiernet.net

And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. Matthew 19, 29

OCTOBER

				1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
26	27	28	● 29	30	31		



Photo: Dr. Don Siegrist-Hess, Bird in Hand PA 17505, jhs606@frontiernet.net

They that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.
Isaiah 9,1b

DECEMBER

	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	Christmas 25	St. Stephen's Day 26	27
28	29	30	31			

