

## Enthusiastically in the footsteps of Luther

Ulrich Buschmann brings second tour group from the USA to Zeitz – in town for two days

by Angelika Andräs, Oct. 8, 2007



Marianne Kehlenbach, Phyllis Wolkenhauer, Sue Zenk and Rachel Admire (from the right) are raving about their stay in Zeitz even after a few hours. They belong to a touring group of St. Mark Lutheran Church from Florida. (MZ photo: Hartmut Krimmer)

**Zeitz/MZ.** What started last year is being continued: For the second time a US-American travel group is staying in Zeitz. They came to Germany to walk in the footsteps of Martin Luther. More than 20 women and men are spending two

days in Zeitz. On Monday they were also the guests of the mayor.

"It is fantastic here, enchanting, simply wonderful!", raves Marianne Kehlenbach. "Such a beautiful city." And Phyllis Wolkenhauer adds that it is awesome to be where Luther's descendants lived – and she describes what it means to her to see the original print of the theses: "We have studied all this, read it, talked about it, but seeing it and really being here, that is quite a different matter." Phyllis Wolkenhauer is the wife of Reverend Alan Wolkenhauer from St. Mark Lutheran Church in Dunedin on the west coast of Florida. With a smile the Reverend remarks, "I would very much love to buy a house in Zeitz, but it would be time consuming and too far to get to my home."

Everyone is raving about their impressions, which are only the first few gathered during their stay in Zeitz. At that point in time they had already done their walking tour of the city, and had descended into "underground Zeitz". "*Ins underirdische Zeitz*", says Sue Zenk in German, albeit slowly. And then she continues to tell, now again in English like the others, how marvelous it had been that they had been fed at the church café at lunchtime. "It tastes very good" she had told the women, she reports, and she thinks that they had understood that.

But now they cannot possibly have their host wait any longer, as that is none other than the "*Oberbürgermeister*". Mayor Dieter Kmietczyk welcomes his guests in the hall of peace, one of the "parlors" of Zeitz. The other, according to Kmietczyk, is the festival room at *Moritzburg* castle. They listen anxiously and intrigued, yet again adding to their knowledge of the history of Zeitz. The *Michaelis* church with its library, St. Peter and Paul cathedral, the library of the *Lutheriden* and the *Stiftsbibliothek* are all still on the agenda of these guests from far away. Their tour will then take them via Eisleben to Wittenberg and further to Marburg. For many it is their first journey to Germany. Such theme-oriented trips to Germany and Europe, or "authentic" as tour operator Ulrich

Buschmann calls them, are becoming more and more popular. Last year Zeitz was part of the „Luther program“ of Buschmann Concept for a few hours for the first time. As this was well received, the time was extended this year. And now it is also time, Buschmann emphasizes, that the guests take a good look around the stores, too.

## The Concept of Luther Tours

**Halle/MZ.** Almost two years ago Ulrich Buschmann, who had already offered and operated Luther tours in the 1980s, started his quest for Luther descendants. After some detours he discovered the Lutheriden and the city of Luther descendants - Zeitz. And „authentic travel“ becomes his concept – rather than just ticking run-of-the-mill sights off a long and winding list. And this is the reason why now you can sit down and have dinner with genuine descendants of Luther.

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