Dr. Dr. h. c. Johann Schneider

I was born 1963 in Medias and grew up in Mosna/Meschen in a Lutheran Church in Transylvania, in Romania – in a Saxon community together with orthodox and other denominations. At that time my home country was a totalitarian entity where the ideology of “scientific atheism” and antireligious propaganda was taught and practiced in school and dominated public life. My motivation to serve as a minister in the Church and to study theology has its roots in the experience that the communion in a local Lutheran congregation is a visible space and a sign for the dignity and freedom in God’s world. I couldn’t become a student in Romania and became a toolmaker. Finally, my family emigrated 1985 to Germany. I studied protestant and ecumenical theology and philosophy in Neuendettelsau, Tübingen, München and Erlangen and in Rome as a postgraduate student at the Gregorian University in Rome. In 1997 I was ordained as a minister in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria. In 2002 I graduated as a Doctor in Theology in Erlangen-Nuremberg University with a doctoral thesis about Andrei Sagunas reforms and renewal of the orthodox churches in Transylvania and Hungary in the light of holy scriptures and the participation of lay people in the synods. I have taught Church History and systematics more than six years in Erlangen University, served as the secretary for international ecumenical scholarships of GNC-LWF (DNK-LWB) in Stuttgart, and led the scholarships program for Ecumenical Diaconia for many years. For six years I served as Executive Secretary for International and National ecumenical dialogues with Orthodox Churches in the Office the Protestant Church in Germany (EKD) in Hannover. In 2011, I was elected bishop in the church district of Halle and Wittenberg in the Evangelische Kirche in Mitteldeutschland and reelected 2021 for the district of Magdeburg that covers the Land Saxony-Anhalt, South Brandeburg, North Saxony and North of Thuringia. In 2017 the Orthodox Faculty in Sibiu awarded me a Doctor Honoris Causa.