



Pentecost- 2015

Die Gute Nachricht
Die Evangelisch-Lutherische St. Matthäusgemeinde

The Good News
St. Matthew's Lutheran Church



Dear Members and Friends,

This coming Sunday, May 24, we, as many other churches around the world, will celebrate the festival of Pentecost – the coming of God's Holy Spirit among the disciples. This day is also often understood as the 'birthday of the church'. And there is something to it, because without the power of God's Holy Spirit, the disciples may have become disheartened and given up their faith in Christ. God's Holy Spirit literally inspired the timid band of Christ's followers to share their faith in word and deed, and to spread the good news about new life in and through Jesus Christ all over the known world. Pentecost is a passionate festival, full of movement, full of life, full of fire – that's why the 'color of the day' for Pentecost is red. But red is also a color of warning: God is up to something, and we better be ready! And I hope that, as we gather in worship on Pentecost Sunday, that we will feel some of that energy and power of God's Spirit, and be inspired ourselves to go out and share the good news in word and deed with a world in need. God is with us – and God's Holy Spirit signifies God's presence among us.

But did you know that we also have an entire season dedicated to Pentecost, at least according to the American church calendar? Throughout the summer and the fall, the Sundays will be called 'nth Sunday

after Pentecost' (in Germany, the Festival of the Holy Trinity, Trinitatis, which we celebrate the Sunday after Pentecost, lends its name to the following church season which lasts through November). This time after Pentecost is also called the "ordinary time"; it almost feels anticlimactic after the excitement of Pentecost Day. For months, the color you will see around the sanctuary is green – a rather subdued color after the fiery red. There won't be any special church holidays until the end of October. There won't be any climactic worship experiences (unlike during Advent/Christmas and Lent/Easter). It's, indeed, rather ordinary, "back to normal". This could be experienced as boring – our culture doesn't necessarily celebrate normalcy. However, it could also be experienced as a respite: special times full of excitement are great – the anticipation, the preparation, the celebration – but aren't we also glad when it's over and we get a time to just take it easier again? Some people seem to need the special excitement in church; maybe that's why some folks are "CEOs" ("Christmas and Easter only"), and maybe even celebrate Pentecost. I can relate to that. We experience God in all glory on special Sundays and church holidays – in the music, the beauty, the energy, and the attendance (!). This is important.

However, I think we miss out on something if we think that God is mainly experienced in the more glorious moments of our (church) life. We are Christians each and every day of our lives, not only within our church walls. We are Christians in the rather ordinary places of our lives: at school, at work, in our homes; while we work out, walk the dogs, pay our bills, or prepare dinner. We are ordinary Christians in ordinary circumstances. Jesus rarely sought out the extraordinary, be it people or places; Jesus called some blue-collar working class folks to be his first followers. Jesus went into the homes and sat with the women. Jesus mingled with children in the marketplace. Jesus was with the regular folks in the midst of their lives – and he continues to be with us, regular folks, in the midst of our rather ordinary lives. If we expect to find God only in glorious times in our lives (and we all have a tendency to do that), how much of our faith is left when things are not so great in our lives? Jesus appeared in the least expected (= ordinary) places. May the “ordinary

time” which we have entered in our church year cycle be a chance for us to discover how God works in and through the ordinary – and how the ordinary thus is transformed in a place or moment of grace and peace. God’s Holy Spirit, which we celebrate each Pentecost before we move into the ‘ordinary’ time, works in mysterious and often subtle ways, in us and with us and through us. There may be the occasional fiery outburst of energy and excitement – but mostly we serve through the little things. The color of the ordinary time, as I already mentioned above, is green, the color of growth and steady life. There is plenty of opportunity to do things which may seem slow-growing and ordinary to us, but become extraordinary for someone else. May we remember this as we move into the amazing ordinary days of summer.

Pastor Kerstin Weidmann

Birthday Greetings

May

3 Richard L. Scopel
 8 Richard Rolfes
 16 Ulrike Hodges
 13 Guenther Stottmeister
 18 Virginia Pressler
 26 Ilona Frost
 28 Nicole Fahlman
 28 Marissa Barnes

June

8 Tom Enderes
 9 Siegrun Gottschald
 19 Annika Braucher
 20 Andreas Pielhoop



July

1 Gisela Reinhold
 4 Elke Kupfer
 5 Kerstin Weidmann
 8 Rev. Dr. Hing Siem
 10 Manfred Bohndorf
 11 Verena Tent-Braucher
 11 Peter Berner
 8 Tom Wynn

We apologize to any members and friends whose birthdays have been omitted. Please contact the Office if you wish to have your birthday included in future bulletins and newsletters. Thank you.

Pastor Weidmann will be on vacation from Monday, June 15 through Saturday, June 20.

Pr. Bea Chun from St. Francis will be her emergency backup.

Phone #: 415-621-2635

President's Message

Members and Friends of St. Matthew's,

May 18, 2015

In the church calendar it is now the week between Ascension and Pentecost (forty and fifty days after Easter) and we are about to enter what is called Ordinary Time. In our personal calendars we are planning our summer activities and anticipating the arrival of warmer weather with hopefully some additional rain to ease this worsening fourth year of drought. Our pastor has recently returned from a two week vacation in Germany to visit family.

Several weeks ago the Church Council was officially reinstalled and two new members were added, Ursula Younger and Alois Scholz, and we welcome them with their insight and experience. Our church treasurer since the beginning of the year, Dorly Carnes, unfortunately had to suddenly resign. Elizabeth Karp, the church office secretary, has gratefully agreed to temporarily assume this important responsibility until a replacement can be found. David DeAngelis, our organist, will be gone from mid-June until the end of July to begin work on his master's degree at the prestigious Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. During his absence Nicole Fahlman, our regular substitute, will be filling in.

The last weekend in May is the annual Sierra Pacific Synod Assembly, which will be held in Sacramento this year and will be attended by Dorothy Praeger as our lay voting representative and Pastor Kerstin. Erika Spaet, the wonderful

parish teaching student from the PLTS in Berkeley, had her last Sunday with us yesterday; we will miss her cheery presence at Sunday services and wish her God's blessings in her future.

Of significance and as you have been aware, our church representatives under Juergen Fehr have been in negotiation with the KinderHaus pre-school board regarding a new long term lease, which was necessary prior to their planned remodel of the social hall. Unfortunately a mutually acceptable agreement was not able to be reached, so it appears that they will be leaving sometime late this year. Their lease expires June 30, however they will remain with us on a month to month basis until their new facility is licensed and ready for occupancy. As the largest source of our outside income, their departure will leave a major hole in our projected budget.

Lastly, I have been meeting with the other religious organizations in our immediate area regarding the future of median parking on Dolores and Guerrero Streets. This has become a big issue again since Dolores Park has become very popular. The city transportation department is trying to mediate between the people and groups impacted and come up with a workable solution. This process is anticipated to take about one year.

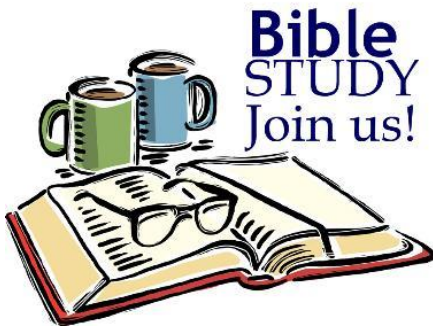
I hope this newsletter finds you all happy, healthy and enjoying God's bounty provided to us.

Wishing you peace and God's blessings, respectfully submitted,

William H. Bremer, M.D.

Room Wanted!

We will be welcoming Carola Scherf, a pastor from Lübeck, Germany, later this year, who would like to intern at St. Matthew's. As it looks now, she will be here from August 1 through August 26, 2015. Please let Pastor Kerstin know if you could provide a guest room for her, or if only for a part of this period. Thank you very much!



Beginning in June

Bible Study on every 2nd Wednesday of the month.

First Study: Wednesday, June 10, at 11 a.m.

Over the next months, we will be studying the Gospel of Mark

Everyone welcome!

Worship Schedule

First Sunday of the Month: Bilingual Service **11:00 a.m.**

Every other Sunday of the month:

English service at **9:30 a.m.**: German language service at **11:00 a.m.**

Office hours

Pastor Kerstin's cell phone number: (925) 330-2289

Pastorin@stmatthews-sf.org

Office hours: Monday and Wednesday: 10:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

The Office secretary, Elizabeth Karp, is here every Monday and Wednesday from 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

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