

Lent / Easter 2013

Die Gute Nachricht

Die Evangelisch-Lutherische St. Matthäusgemeinde

The Good News

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

From the Pastor's Desk



Dearly Beloved in Christ,

As I write, we are somewhere past the midpoint of Lent, anticipating an early Easter. While part of a pastor's heart delights at the prospect of a calm, introspective Lenten season, in which we set aside time to assess (nonjudgementally, please!) our shortcomings, consider our need of God, and quietly rejoice that God, indeed, is here for us, the reality of ordinary life often intrudes into this ideal prospect!

Yet, when we, our friends, and congregational members are sick or carrying some other burden; when we lose loved ones to death; when we consider the dreadful economic situation of our country and our world; and when we think about how we selfishly and, often, blindly hurt not only one another, but the natural world that God created for our enjoyment and for our care, it is easy to abandon our Lenten discipline. It is easy to let our fear and anger shut God out.

If this has been part (or a lot!) of your Lenten experience, take heart and consider this: it is into a life such as this, a life very much like yours and very much like mine, that Jesus was born. Although during Lent we traditionally consider how he suffered on account of the failure of his disciples to keep faith with him and on account of his arrest, trial, and crucifixion, I invite you to consider, as well, the everyday suffering that Jesus endured.

“Jesus,” wrote St. Paul, “though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited.” Rather, Jesus lived as a human being, as a person like you and me. Jesus got distracted, too. Jesus had to jump in and fix things for other people. Remember the time he sent his disciples out to heal some people, and they were unable to heal them all?

Scripture tells us that sometimes he got tired; sometimes he yearned to be alone; sometimes he wept.

As we move through Lent – and through life – remember that Jesus knows your troubles, for he has experienced them, himself. But tell them to him, anyway. He's here to help.

Friends, please take the time to look through our newsletter and note the dates and times of our Passion and Easter services, as well as of our upcoming musical events.

We look forward to seeing you here at St. Matthew's in the near future.

As always, I invite you to call me, personally, or to contact the church if you think that we can be of assistance.

Many blessings,

Pastorin Robin Ressler

Pastor's First Year: Looking Back and Looking Forward

On Friday, March first, I marked my first anniversary as your pastor. It is hard to believe that I have been here a whole year. On the one hand, the time has just flown by, as it does when one is busy and as when one is having a good time.

This first year I had the opportunity to develop good working relationships with both the professional staff and those who volunteer regularly here. I have enjoyed getting to know those who worship here; those who, like KinderHaus and the Golden Gate Men's Chorus, have made our church their home as well; as well as many other people who have had ties to St. Matthews over the years. A special joy has been working with the choirs and other musicians who have come to provide special music for our worship services or to put on concerts here at St. Matthew's.

While the changes in our own music program have posed challenges, I am looking forward to reshaping the program under the direction of Gary Hunt. We are all delighted with our new organist, David DeAngelis, and look forward to engaging the services of a new choir director who is also an excellent vocalist and voice teacher.

On the other hand, there is so much that needs to be done if we wish to remain viable as a congregation. I am pleased to report that our Congregational Council has made a commitment to begin a process of Congregational redevelopment. We are planning a retreat for this spring, at which we will formally begin. I hope to have good news about this in our next newsletter... stay tuned!

Message from Your Council President

Dear Members and Friends of St. Matthew's:

March 1, 2013 marked the one year anniversary of Pastor Ressler's full time association with St. Matthew's. The work towards and transition to a viable future for our congregation is a continuing process. Changes are seldom easy or always welcome but are often necessary.

The process of formulating a meaningful music program has been a primary concern of the Council for the past several months since the resignation of our previous Kantorin, Nicole Hankemeier-Fahlman, which was effective on February 3, and the announcement that our longtime organist, Gary Hunt, felt he was no longer able to adequately fulfill this position. Luckily we were able to quickly secure the services of David DeAngelis as a replacement organist and he has stepped into his new position ably and enthusiastically. On the occasions when David is not able to be with us, Nicole has gracefully offered her services as our substitute organist for at least through June of this year. Gary is still with us performing special piano music and assisting the Pastorin with the musical aspects of our Sunday services. This was made possible by the generous and kind underwriting of Gary's salary by a gift from Mrs. Brigitte Pfau, which was announced at the annual congregational meeting on February 10 and was for a period of three months.

As of this time there is no plan for a fulltime replacement Kantor/Kantorin, although the Pastorin and the Council are discussing the possibility of using the Pastorin's vocal teacher, Sam Palmer, in some capacity on a non-salaried barter basis to enhance the choral aspect of our services.

This is a work in progress with nothing definite having been decided as yet.

An offsite retreat/workshop with the Council and other church leaders is being planned for April in order to develop ideas for a viable congregational future. The current path is not sustainable over the long term as our current membership ages and our financial resources continue to slowly be depleted. A major problem is a lack of energy beyond our regular and dedicated core membership. In our aging congregation too few people are required to carry too much of the burden of maintaining the church's weekly routine functions.

At the annual congregational meeting in February the 2013 budget as prepared by the finance committee chaired by Juergen Fehr was adopted. During this meeting it was decided to form a committee to plan what work needs to be done to modernize the church kitchen prior to getting bids for this project. This can be paid for from the Preservation Fund. It will not be an elaborate remodel but just a basic upgrade to improve its appearance and functionality. Of course, supplemental donations for this remodel would be much appreciated and gratefully accepted. Also, bids will be obtained for the repair and painting of the 16th Street front façade which is falling into disrepair with missing and damaged shingles. However no final decision has been made on proceeding with this job, but postponing needed maintenance and repairs will likely only increase the future costs.

Our new church treasurer, Annett Wagner, with the

assistance of the finance committee has been very busy in setting up and updating our payroll, bill paying and financial systems so that these functions can be handled mostly online in the future.

With this newsletter a questionnaire is being included which we are asking you to please fill out and return so that the church can maintain accurate current information on our members and friends so that we can better keep

you informed of church activities.

With your generous help and God's guidance we can and must keep St. Matthew's a vital spiritual entity both for now and for the foreseeable future.

Respectfully submitted,

William H. Bremer, M.D., Council President

March

- 2 Anita Bairogh
- 10 Juergen Fehr
- 17 Mike Callahan
- 23 Erich Craciun
- 28 Richard Braucher
- 29 Rolf Tschudi
- 31 Niels Nielsen

April

- 3 Margrit Buchmann
- 4 Marijane Jeannette
- 5 Brigitte Pfau
- 7 Werner Dehnbostel
- 8 Betty Kleinlein
- 24 Stefanie Pressler
- 27 Rosmarie Kamp
- Thea Scholz
- Alois Scholz

May

- 8 Richard Rolfes
- 16 Ulrike Hodges
- 14 Guenther Stottmeister
- 18 Virginia Pressler
- 23 Ilona Frost



As we update our membership lists we will add birthdays to the calendar. We apologize for any birthdays we missed in March, April or May.



2012 Crab Feed



"Our 3rd Annual Crab Feed took place on January 26 and was by all accounts a wonderful evening for all in attendance, including the kitchen staff! The crowd of about 60 people included many familiar faces as well as those of extended families and friends who have come back to our crab feed each year since its inception. We call that a tradition and hope to see everyone again next year. Thank you all for attending, helping or just sending your donation. We will use the proceeds (exact amount forthcoming) toward the kitchen remodel to take place later in the year.

Ingrid Rudolph-Angelich and Ulrike Hodges"



Lyle Sheffler

**Sunday March 17, 2013,
2:00 p.m.
St. Matthew's Lutheran
Church**

Acclaimed classical guitarist Lyle Sheffler, graduate of the prestigious Peabody and San

Francisco Conservatories, presents an eclectic program of classical guitar favorites that is sure to delight. Widely praised for his artistry, warm tone, and captivating programs, Sheffler will be playing works by Tarrega, Dowland, Albeniz, Granados, and many others.

Suggested Donation is 10 Dollars.

German Classical, Folk Songs, and more

**Marianne Lohaus, voice
Leta Henderson, piano**



**April 7, 2013 – 4:00 p.m.
St. Matthew's Lutheran Church**

Schedule

March 17 – Fifth Sunday in Lent

9:30 a.m. – English Service

11:00 Uhr - Deutscher Gottesdienst

2:00 p.m. – **Lyle Sheffler**

Classical guitar concert

March 24 – Palm Sunday / Palmsonntag

9:30 a.m. - English Service with Holy Communion

11:00 a.m. – Deutscher Gottesdienst mit dem Hl. Abendmahl

March 29 – Good Friday / Karfreitag

12:00 noon - Bilingual service



March 31 – Easter Sunday / Ostern

9:30 a.m. - English Service with Holy Communion

11:00 a.m. – Deutscher Gottesdienst mit dem Hl. Abendmahl

April 7 – Second Sunday of Easter

11:00 a.m. – Bilingual Service

4:00 p.m. - Concert

Marianne Lohaus, voice

Leta Henderson, piano

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

3281 - 16th Street,

San Francisco, CA 94103-3323

Tel.: 415 863 6371

office@stmatthews-sf.org

www.stmatthews-sf.org

