Dear Members and Friends,

“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation.” Isaiah 57:7, NRSV

How beautiful are the feet… I personally like this image very much. Usually we don’t hear about the feet in the Bible. Yes, we hear about people traveling and going places - from Abraham and Sarah to Jesus and his disciples. But the act of walking, of moving, of taking step after step is just assumed and usually not described.

Our feet take us places. And as we walk, and as we reach our destinations along the way, we are messengers. We may not proclaim the gospel loudly at street corners, but we represent Christ, whose name we bear, in our words and deeds. We take Christ with us, wherever we go on our beautiful feet; and hopefully the people we encounter experience Christ in us and through us.

Summer is about to start. Many folks travel over the summer and go places. Some spend some time in the place they are from, visiting family and friends – in fact, quite a few people from St. Matthew’s have already left for Germany and Austria. Some explore unknown places.

My husband and I will be going on a road trip through Oregon and Washington and visit my son, who currently lives in Seattle, along the way. We both love nature and hiking, so we plan to put our beautiful feet into hiking boots often and explore the wonders of God’s creation, from Crater Lake and the Columbia River Gorge to the Olympic Peninsula.

Even though we don’t plan to preach to the animals along the way (as St. Francis allegedly did), we intend to be messengers of God’s love and care in how we treat that, which God so lovingly and marvelously created. Sometimes the good news of life for all creation is to just treat said creation with the respect it deserves and to tread lightly with our beautiful feet.

Beyond spending time in nature, we look forward to encountering all kinds of people on our journey. From the fellow hiker with whom we exchange some words to the waitress in a small restaurant along the highway to the tour guide – there are many opportunities to be a messenger of Christ that goes beyond preaching. We intend to be friendly, courteous, helpful, and good tippers (!) for all those in the service industry and just let people know that we respect and appreciate them.
And we hope that we will be experienced as messengers whose feet bring good news to those we encounter, not necessarily through our words, but through our deeds. At the same time, we expect to encounter Christ in those we meet on our journey and delight in their beautiful feet as they bring good news to us and others. For me, this is one of the joys of travel: to experience the love of God and the presence of Christ in sometimes quite unexpected places. I don’t know if you will be traveling this summer. Maybe you plan to go on a journey that takes you to distant lands – maybe you will be ‘staycationing’ and walk about in familiar places. But wherever your beautiful feet take you, my hope and prayer is that God will be with you on your journey and grant you respite – and my hope and prayer is that people will experience you as a messenger who brings good news into their lives and into this world through a kind work, a helping hand, and generosity. May God bless your feet so that they may take you to the places where you want to go – and to the places you are needed.

Pr. Kerstin Weidmann

Good Friday
On March 30th, the people of St. Matthew’s and Santa Maria y Santa Marta Lutheran Churches came together for a moving ‘Stations of the Cross’ Service. Pr. Monique Ortiz and Pr. Kerstin Weidmann led the congregation in worship and prayer. Nicole Fahlman (piano) and Alvin Walker (Baritone) offered a beautiful musical rendition of ‘Were you there when they crucified my Lord?’

On Easter Sunday, April 1st, St. Matthew’s offered a festive service for the entire family with many special musical guests: four trombonists from the San Francisco Conservatory for Music, the vocal group Tactus, guest organist Matthew Phinney and the St. Matthew’s Choir. (Bill’s picture of St. Matthew’s choir)
Council President’s Message

Dear Members and Friends of St. Matthew’s,

Summer is just on the horizon with cool and often foggy days here in San Francisco and warm to hot days in the surrounding counties. People are taking vacations and undertaking travel to places both near and far. Here at St. Matthew’s we are now switching to our summer worship schedule, begun last year, with one bilingual service at 10:00 AM each Sunday.

Now it is again time for me to report to you on the activities and business of the church since the last newsletter of late February. During this Lenten season our busy and resourceful Pastor Kerstin held a series of weekly Bible studies which were followed by a joint Good Friday service held at St. Matthew’s this year jointly with Pastor Monique Ortiz and our neighbor church, St. Mary and Martha. Easter Sunday, April 1, saw the church fairly well-filled with a wonderful service enhanced by a trombone group from the SF Conservatory of Music and a chorus largely from the vocal group Tactus. Prior to the Pentecost service on May 20, the Pastor led another successful Bible study group on the Holy Spirit.

Upon the recommendation of the Church Council and the approval of the congregation at the annual meeting in February, a fundraising campaign was begun to purchase and install a stairlift to aid those with mobility problems to gain easier access to the sanctuary upstairs. This was done at the urging of Marie Hoffman of the Excelsior German Center in Oakland who said this organization would make a sizable contribution once the church fully committed to the project with other monetary donations and a firm contract with a supplier. Fundraising was led by Ulrike Hodges and obtaining bids from suppliers was done by Juergen Fehr. The necessary initial funding was accomplished and the stairlift is currently being manufactured by the Gamburd Co. in Wisconsin and should be installed and operational by the end of June. Thank you so much to the generous donors who are making this a reality after many years of discussion. A formal dedication will be held in the near future with details still to be worked out.

Other events that have taken place since February include the regular weekly evening rehearsals of: Freundschaft Liederkranz on Mondays, the Golden Gate Men’s Chorus on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, Tactus on Thursdays and the International Orange Chorale on Sundays. Tactus held a concert on March 24 and Freundschaft Liederkranz held their spring occurrent on April 14. One-time rehearsals were held by Resound on March 3 and Capella SF on March 10. Jill Brenner’s young piano students held a recital on May 22. On March 31 the First Mennonite Church held an Easter vigil service at St. Matthew’s.

After the services on March 4 a celebration of the 91st birthday of Hans Sass was held along with the upcoming wedding on March 25 of our talented, easy going, and much appreciated organist, David DeAngelis and his bride-to-be, Hillary. A memorial service for our previous and much loved organist of many years, Gary Hunt, was held in Oakland on April 29 at Lake Merritt United Methodist Church and attended by several congregation members. Lastly, Olympia Pfandt was baptized during the service on May 6.

This past weekend from June 1 - 3, Pr. Kerstin attended the annual Sierra-Pacific Synod Assembly held this year in Sacramento. No lay members volunteered to attend. Regarding member participation, attendance at Sunday services has not been very good recently, so please try and make it when you are able. I am sure the pastor feels somewhat discouraged by all the empty pews. Lastly on behalf of the Council, let me wish you all a safe, healthy and enjoyable summer filled with God’s abundant blessings.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Hans Sass’ 91st Birthday Celebration

David (our organist) & Hillary’s Pre-wedding celebration
On April 14th, ‘Freundschaft Liederkranz’ under the direction of Dr. Dietrich Erbelding performed for their spring concert at St. Matthew’s.

Doors opened at 2 p.m. The ‘Deutsche Musikverein’ opened the concert with a selection of audience favorites until the vocal concert started at 3 p.m. ‘Damenchor Liederkranz’ and the mixed choir of the ‘Oakland Turnverein’ also participated in the concert.

As always, the concert was a beautiful experience, and the audience enjoyed the selection of beautiful German songs. The concert was well attended – and where does music sound more beautiful than in our wonderful church? We are thankful we were able to use this venue to perform.

After the concert we enjoyed an exceptional buffet in the fellowship hall, where beautifully decorated tables awaited the guests. According to the lively conversation around the tables, everyone thoroughly enjoyed the event – we thank Freundschaft Liederkranz and all participating musical groups. We also thank them for keeping the tradition of German song alive.

Singer’s greetings, Gerda Beisel

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Upcoming Events

Summer Study Series: The Apostles Peter and Paul
Thursdays, July 12 – August 2
11 a.m. – 12:30 a.m.

Join us for a fascinating journey through the 1st century AD with the Apostles Peter and Paul. All are welcome.

Summer Worship Schedule
June 10th - August 26th
One Bilingual worship service at 10:00 a.m.
Organ Concert with Roland Voit
Saturday, July 28th
5:00 p.m.

Roland Voit, who is a professor at Max Reger Musc School in Hagen, Germany, is an accomplished organ virtuoso. In October 2016, he gave an unforgettable concert on the newly restored St. Matthew’s organ. Voit will be back this summer to play English pieces of old and new masters.

Admission is free, but a free-will offering will be taken.

Special Concert on Many Keys, Concerto Fisarmonica
Featuring Christoph Mehner, award-winning German concert organist
Sunday, July 29th
3:00 p.m.

Join us for a special appearance of German accordion group ‘Concerto Fisarmonica’. You may remember this group of talented young musicians from a concert they gave at St. Matthew’s in October 2016, during which they presented classical music, German folk songs, hits from the swinging 20s and pop. This year, award-winning organist Christoph Mehner will be playing during this concert as well.

Admission is free, but a free-will offering will be taken.

Outdoor Service and Annual Picnic at ‘Naturfreunde Oakland’
Sunday, September 16th
11:00 a.m.
3115 Butters Drive, Oakland, CA 94602

Join us for our long-standing tradition of worshiping at the Naturfreunde Oakland. After the service, we will gather for a potluck picnic luncheon (bring an item to share, if you can) and kids’ activities. All are welcome!

Please note that there will be no worship service at St. Matthew’s that day.
Mark your Calendar

June 10 - Third Sunday of Pentecost
10:00 a.m.—Bilingual Service with Holy Communion
Council Meeting

June 17 – Fourth Sunday of Pentecost
10:00 a.m.—Bilingual Service

June 24 – Fifth Sunday of Pentecost
10:00 a.m.—Bilingual Service with Holy Communion

July 1 – Sixth Sunday of Pentecost
10:00 a.m.—Bilingual Service
Potluck Meal and Birthday Celebration

July 8 – Seventh Sunday of Pentecost
10:00 a.m.—Bilingual Service with Holy Communion

July 15 – Sixth Sunday of Pentecost
10:00 a.m.—Bilingual Service

July 22 – Seventh Sunday of Pentecost
10:00 a.m.—Bilingual Service with Holy Communion

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