

What's New? Was gibt's Neues? For the of Month of June

A Monthly Update about What's Going on at and around
St. Matthew's during the Pandemic

Dear Members and Friends of St. Matthew's,

As of May 2nd, St. Matthew's has been offering in-person worship services again. As was to be expected, there were a few glitches (unbeknownst to us, our sound system was 'blown out' during a power surge a couple of months ago, which made it hard for some folks to hear what was said up front during our first service – the issue has since been fixed), but we have found our rhythm again. We have been able to conduct our Sunday services safely and in accordance with ordinances and guidelines of the San Francisco Department of Public Health. We are even allowed to sing again (more information about that below), and conduct coffee hours! Things are definitely getting better every week...



Thanks to everyone who has shown understanding and patience as we are transitioning back to some state of 'normal'. Thank you also for following the rules and for doing your part to beat COVID-19. Stay safe!

Have a blessed summer,

Pr. Kerstin Weidmann

Spiritual Reflection by *Pr. Kerstin Weidmann*

'When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. ² And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³ Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. ⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.' *Acts 2, 1-4, NRSV*

We just recently heard these words in church as we celebrated the festival of Pentecost – the coming of God's Holy Spirit among the disciples. Pentecost is 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! At this specific point in our history, may we pay special attention to what God might be calling us to. And I hope that - as we recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and gather for in-person worship once more - we will feel some of that energy and power of God's Spirit, and be inspired ourselves to go out again and share the good news in word and deed with a world in need.

We celebrate Pentecost not only for one day (or two), but for an entire (and very long) season. During the summer and the fall, the Sundays will be called 'nth Sunday after Pentecost'. This time after Pentecost is also called the "ordinary time". Now we usually don't celebrate the ordinary – but this year, it will be good to return to some form of 'ordinary' after so many months that were anything but ordinary. Thanks be to God for that!

Under normal circumstances, we like to celebrate extraordinary occasions. But we have to remember that Jesus appeared in the least expected (= ordinary) places. May the "ordinary time", which we have now entered, 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 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 becomes extraordinary for someone else.

May God give us the grace to be good news in ordinary ways as we resume our ordinary lives once more.

Pr. Kerstin Weidmann

In-Person Worship Services at St. Matthew's

In-person worship services at St. Matthew's resumed on Sunday, May 2nd in accordance with ordinances and guidelines of the San Francisco Department of Public Health. Since we reopened, restrictions have been relaxed. We are now allowed to sing again, as long as we wear our face coverings and keep at least 6 feet apart from members of other households. We are also permitted to offer coffee hour once more.

We expect that rules regarding worship and small group gatherings will be further lifted come June 15th. Pr. Weidmann attends weekly briefings by the Interfaith Council of San Francisco and the SF COVID Command Center– so you can be confident we are up to date regarding the latest guidelines and ordinances.

Bilingual Worship Services are being offered **every Sunday at 11 a.m.**

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact Pr. Kerstin Weidmann.

Sunday Online Worship Services

St. Matthew's continues to make recorded worship services available every Sunday by 2 p.m. instead of 10:00 a.m. previously on our website (www.stmatthews-sf.org) and our Facebook page ('Matthew Lutheran').

If you'd like to receive a link to St. Matthew's worship services in your email inbox every Sunday, please let us know by sending a request to office@stmatthews-sf.org.

Pastor Weidmann's Upcoming Vacation

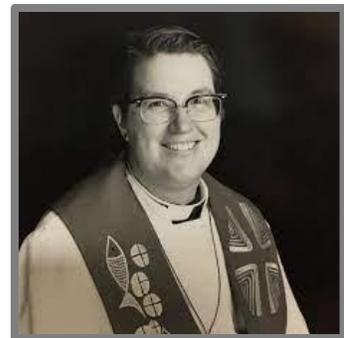
Pr. Weidmann will be out of town from Friday, June 4th, through Monday, June 7th. In case of a pastoral emergency, please contact **Pr. Monique Ortiz** (St. Mary and Martha Lutheran Church). She can be reached at (408) 821-9617 or moniqueortiz777@sbcglobal.net.

Pr. Christian Jennert will be the guest preacher and presider during St. Matthew's in-person worship service on June 6th.

Sierra Pacific Synod Assembly May 6-8

This year's Sierra Pacific Synod Assembly was held online. Pr. Kerstin Weidmann and Steve Crabiel were St. Matthew's voting members at this assembly. The most important business this year: the assembly elected a new bishop. The Rev. Dr. Megan Rohrer, currently serving Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church in San Francisco, will be assuming their new duties on July 1st. Please pray for bishop elect Rohrer, as they prepare for their office.

Mark Holmerud will retire after serving the Sierra Pacific Synod as bishop for 13 years.



Pentecost Sunday and Celebration of Confirmation

On Sunday, May 23rd, we did not only celebrate Pentecost, but also the confirmation of Kenneth T. We welcome Kenneth into the community of faith. May God bless him!

Visitation

Since Pr. Weidmann is now fully vaccinated (and most of you are, too), she feels comfortable making home visits again. If you'd like to arrange a visit, please contact her at (925) 330-2289 or pastorweidmann@stmatthews-sf.org.

Office Hours

Our regular office hours are Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Continued Financial Support of St. Matthew's Ministries

We want to thank everyone who has supported St. Matthew's financially during the past months. Please continue to send in your contributions!

Pr. Kerstin Weidmann's Contact Information

You can reach Pr. Weidmann via her cell phone (925-330-2289) or via email (pastorweidmann@stmatthews-sf.org).

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