



Pentecost 2022

Newsletter of the English-speaking United Methodist Congregation in Munich

Dear Peace Church sisters and brothers,

Happy Birthday to us! This Pentecost, Peace Church celebrates 38 years since it was started in 1984. But what happened at Pentecost and what can it mean for our lives? Pastor Alex reflects on this important question in his Pentecost meditation. And you are of course invited to come to the Pentecost Open Church event on Sunday 5th June!

This Peace Church News also contains some updates and lovely photos from recent events, including the Easter Open Church and the Baptisms of Amos, Leander and Flora.

In this season of Pentecost we will not only be marking another year of this wonderful church, we will also be saying farewell to Pastor Christine and officially welcoming Pastor Alex. They both appreciate your prayers and support during this time of transition.

May the Spirit of God touch each of our lives, unite us in passion for the gospel, comfort us in difficulty, and guide us in the loving way of Christ.

With love and blessings
Kat Wagner (Pastoral Assistant), 17 May 2022

A Prayer for Pentecost

by John Harvey

Spirit of God,
flickering over our heads,
illuminating our faces,
inspiring our thoughts,
give us now, we pray,
words of joy and praise.

Spirit of God,
filling our hearts with hope,
steadying our nerves with peace,
comforting our lives with love,
give us now, we pray,
words of joy and praise.

Spirit of God, come to us now –
surging through the darkness of our lives,
sweeping over our weariness –
so that, in this time of Pentecost,
the sparkling light of faith,
the rushing wind of hope
and the joyful sound of praise
may echo round the world,
may echo in the church,
and find their response in us.
Spirit of God, give us now, we pray,
words of joy and praise. Amen

Breath of a new life

A meditation on Pentecost by Pastor Alex von Wascinski

You know how for many people it's one of the dearest traditions to write Christmas cards. Writing personal Christmas cards can be like a ceremony of remembering friends and staying in contact with loved ones – maybe spread all over the world. To be honest: I have to admit that I, personally, have never picked up this tradition. After long years of thinking and studying, I have found out that I am much more a *Pentecost* type of Christian, rather than being a *Christmas* type of Christian. For me, the impression is that celebrating Pentecost means celebrating God's continuous recreation of his people – and therefore his church – through his spirit.

¹When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. ²And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. ⁴All 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)

What do I mean by Pentecost type of Christian? During my term as director for youth outreach work at the Children and Youth Department in Stuttgart, instead of sending out Christmas cards I started to send out Pentecost cards to all of my volunteer team leaders working with JAT (Jugend Aktions Tage). Working with young people in church during JAT weeks always felt like being an advocate of God's acting through his Holy Spirit for the various churches and congregations where JAT took place. And it was not like a little breeze blowing some withered leaves around. God's Holy Spirit is the breath of a new life to his people, at the same time cleaning out everything that has become dead wood – baptizing by fire (Luke 3:16).

This kind of cleansing is an act of liberation. God's spirit gives us the opportunity to leave all the weight behind which only ties us and takes our room to breathe.

⁵Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. ⁶And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. ⁷Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?" ⁸And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? ⁹Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, ¹¹Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power." ¹²All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" (Acts 2:5–12, NRSV)

So, on the one hand God's spirit empowers, revives, and cleanses – establishes new life and purity. But God's spirit also brings people together in a way that everyone can hear and understand the Gospel in their own language. While languages became a marker for division among peoples and cultures – as can be read in Genesis 11 – God now unites humanity through his spirit under the Gospel. With Jerusalem seen as the center of the Judaic world, we are given a list of peoples from all the four compass points. We need to realize that the Gospel is clearly spread out to the people in the whole world, and has the power to unite the people of God.

Now: *'All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?"'* What does this mean? I am asking myself that question. What does this mean in a world of long-lasting and only recently established wars? What does this mean in an all but united worldwide (Methodist) church?



And what does it mean to me? Maybe caught up in (post-covid) powerlessness? What does it mean, when I am caught up in my daily experience of insufficiency?

It means: This uniting spirit of renewal and liberation is not available as a tool to us. We cannot *use* the Holy Spirit. In fact, it is us who are acquired by the Holy Spirit. He acts within and through us. And he acts towards unity, renewal and liberation. On the other hand: Whenever we see unity, renewal and liberation at work, we see acts of God's spirit.

So, it is up to us to invite God's Spirit into our lives. It's up to us to let him establish renewal, unity and

liberation in us and through us. It is up to us to pray and, through this, invite the Spirit to act within and through us. It might then be your call to turn the big wheel, working towards unity, renewal, and liberation – for the people in your city, your country, or even worldwide. Or it might be just a breezy hint to write a personal Pentecost card to someone who is in need of some good words, maybe a blessing, because they're caught in their personal state of powerlessness and thoughts of insufficiency.

Whatever you'll then be called to, take first a deep breath of new life: Let God's Spirit touch you.



God of Fire

by David Hamfleet

God of fire, burn brightly in your Church.
Consume our petty concerns and jealousies,
purify our deeds and intentions,
kindle in our hearts the fire of your love.
Amen

Did You Know That...

...on Easter Sunday we had a packed church with 90 people or so? We offered an Open Church again, something we had already done a couple of times last year. (Due to the pandemic and the regulations for churches, the Open Church format allows people to spread out throughout the whole building and enjoy the various workshop projects offered. People are encouraged to take part in whatever they like, when they like.) This Easter, the church was open from 12 noon to 2 pm. We offered singing with the African Choir in the church, a choir project in the fellowship hall, a painting room in the chapel, prayer corners and crafts. The Easter Gospel was hung up on huge posters in the windows in the yard, so you could stand outside and read the story. Food from all

corners of the world was handed out through the kitchen window. People loved the opportunity to meet and talk and have a fun time together.



Did You Know That... *(continued)*



Easter Open Church

...on the Sunday after Easter the Confirmation Class lead worship with Pastor Christine? The kids put their emphasis on Mary Magdalene in the garden, as she looked for Jesus' dead body and could not find him. They presented a little Bible drama to the church people. Ruth was Mary, Brian was Jesus, Lily and Gideon were angels, and Joel and Abena were the friends Peter and John who raced to the grave, found it empty and hurried back to Jerusalem. Mary, who stayed in the garden, saw the angels, meant to meet a gardener and discovered it was Jesus whom she loved so much. He told her that he'd be going to God, and asked her to tell his friends and the world about his resurrection. A big THANK YOU to the kids!

...the Homework Club kids are doing really well this year? We can take on new kids and hope to be able to find enough teachers to continue to support the church children with their school work.

...the Council on Ministries met on 27 April? Among many things which were discussed, the council decided to give the Sunday evening prayer a break. In autumn they will review and see what worship opportunities will be needed.

... Church music was discussed at the meeting too? A meeting with all people interested in church music is planned for September.

... Sunday School will meet again during worship? The Sunday School will restart after the Pentecost holidays (around the end of June). Cathy Williams has taken over from Sue Lawson as the Sunday School Co-ordinator. There will be two groups: ages 4-11s will meet in the Fellowship Hall or Sunday School room; ages 12+ will meet in the Chapel. Christine has re-stocked the Sunday School cupboard. Sunday School will be offered every Sunday, apart from occasional family worship services.

... once a month the 12+ group will function as a Confirmation Class? Pastor Christine has made a teaching plan which will lead the teachers & kids until Easter 2023. On those special Sundays, the kids will be taught according to the confirmation class teaching plan. The team are Nico, Irene, Lily and from now on Pastor Alex. All young people who are 12 years and older are invited to join in.

... we will not restart Kids' Club at the moment? It was agreed that we will continue to offer Family Fun Days instead. This is because the Fun Days require fewer helpers (parents stay with their children). The next Fun Day shall be a picnic in the park near the church on Saturday 28 May.

... on Sunday 8 May Pastor Alex was in church? Pastor Christine welcomed him informally and gave him as welcome presents a Desmond Tutu Children's Bible and the rainbow stole which she had been given by Pastor Jim in 2003 when she became the Pastor-in-charge of Peace Church.

... on Thursday 12 May another Council on Ministries meeting took place? Present were most of the members and Pastors Alex and Christine. It was a beautiful handover from the old to the new pastor. By now Christine has handed over to Alex church records, administrative information, documents on church history, church finances, and a long checklist with bits and pieces of the life and work of Peace Church.

... on Sunday 15 May three kids were baptized? Amos Bedford-Strohm, Leander and Flora Happe with their families and all the Peace Church people were celebrating a beautiful feast with Bible play, prayers, music and presents for all kids. We wish the children and their families showers of blessings.



... on Sunday 29 May there will be a farewell service for Pastor Christine? She will preach for a last time before she takes a long summer break. In autumn she will come back to Peace Church as a retired pastor and a normal church member – and hopefully as a Sunday School teacher.

... on Sunday 19 June there will be a welcome service for Pastor Alex? Superintendent Stefan Kettner will be present and Alex will be officially installed as the new pastor in charge of Peace Church.

Upcoming Events



**Welcome service
for Pastor Alex**
12 noon Sunday 19 June



Family Fun Day
3-5pm Saturday 28 May
Picnic and games in the Park
Contact: Pastor Christine



Pentecost Open Church
12-2pm Sunday 5 June
Pentecost-themed craft, texts, music, prayer activities and birthday cake!

Regular Groups



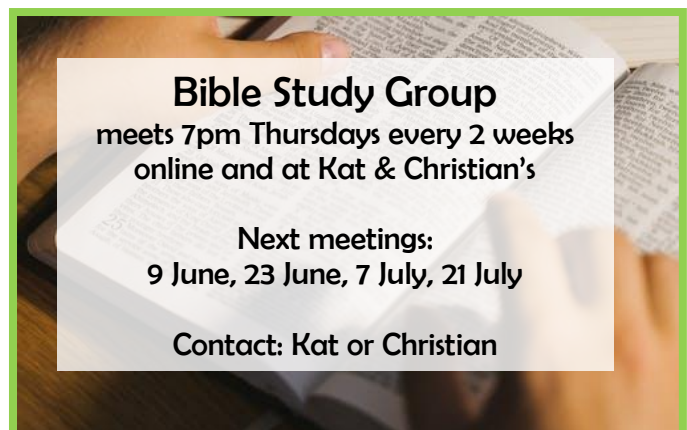
Homework Club
meets Friday afternoons at Nico's
Next meetings: 24 June, 1 July, 8 July,
15 July, 22 July, 29 July
Contact: Nico or Pastor Alex



Online Prayer Meeting
meets 6pm Tuesdays once a month
Next meetings: 21 June, 19 July
Contact: Rino



Women's Bible Group
meets 7pm Wednesdays once a month
at Vanda's
Next meeting: 8 June
Contact: Vanda or Kat



Bible Study Group
meets 7pm Thursdays every 2 weeks
online and at Kat & Christian's
Next meetings:
9 June, 23 June, 7 July, 21 July
Contact: Kat or Christian

Peace Church Calendar

June

<i>3 to 17 June</i>	<i>Homework Club takes a break</i>
Sunday 5 June	12 noon to 2pm Pentecost Open Church
Wednesday 8 June	7pm Women's Bible Study
Thursday 9 June	7pm Bible Study
Sunday 12 June	12 noon All-age Worship
<i>12 to 18 June</i>	<i>Holiday Pastor Alex (pulpit cover: Kat Wagner)</i>
Thursday 16 June	7pm Bible Study
Sunday 19 June	12 noon Welcome Service to Pastor Alexander von Wascinski
Tuesday 21 June	6pm Online Prayer Meeting
Thursday 23 June	7pm Bible Study
Friday 24 June	Homework Club restarts
Sunday 26 June	12 noon Worship and Sunday School
Wednesday 29 June	Council on Ministries
Thursday 30 June	7pm Bible Study

July

Friday 1 July	Homework Club
Sunday 3 July	12 noon Communion Worship and Sunday School
Thursday 7 July	7pm Bible Study
Friday 8 July	Homework Club
Sunday 10 July	12 noon Worship and Sunday School
Friday 15 July	Homework Club
Sunday 17 July	12 noon Worship and Sunday School
Tuesday 19 July	6pm Online Prayer Meeting
Thursday 21 June	7pm Bible Study
Friday 22 July	Homework Club
Sunday 24 July	12 noon Worship and Sunday School
Wednesday 27 July	Council on Ministries
Friday 29 July	Homework Club
Sunday 31 July	12 noon Worship and Sunday School

Prayers of Intercession for Pentecost

written by Elizabeth Baxter

Spirit of fire,

inflare in us a passion for justice and equality:
that we may know the cleansing
of our prejudices and fears
and proclaim your freedom boldly,
caressing your earth with humility.

Spirit of compassion,

infuse us with your longings
for wholeness and happiness:
that we may reach out
to those who are hurting and disordered,
enfolding one another
with your love and tenderness.

Spirit of wisdom,

be within us in our journeying,
gently guiding us along right paths:
that we may be led towards transformation
and new beginnings in our world.

Spirit of gentleness,

touch us anew,
releasing in us all that we are afraid of:
that we may know your acceptance of us,
and freely accept and embrace others.

Spirit of power,

hold us in our powerlessness:
that we may know your strength
and become a voice for the voiceless,
healing for the wounded
and empowerment for the weak.

Spirit of judgment,

be tender with us and show us your mercy:
that we may humbly learn of you
and not be afraid to be your prophets in the world.

Spirit of comfort,

draw near to us in all grief, confusion and pain;
in your gentleness, bring hope,
consolation and renewal:
that many may look up
and discover you in their midst.

Spirit of dance,

be our playfulness:
that we may leap and laugh and enter your joy.
Give us confidence in life and assurance in death.

Amen

Contact Details

Christine Erb-Kanzleiter (Pastor) christine@peacechurch.de 08093 7679271 /Mobile: 0179-6726794

Alex von Wascinski (Pastor) alexander@peacechurch.de Mobile: 0151-2235 4125

Kat Wagner (Pastoral Assistant) kat@peacechurch.de Mobile: 0176-5680 1258

Peace Church United Methodist, Chiemgaustr. 7, 81549 München

www.peacechurch.de Facebook: www.facebook.com/PeaceChurchMunich

Philippuskirche contacts: Pfarramt Philippuskirche 089-690 79 93, Claudia Viehbeck (Secretary)

Pfarrer Klaus Pfaller 089-693 94 685

Giving

Germany: Account 90 88 394 at Kreissparkasse München Starnberg (BLZ 70250150)

IBAN: DE47 7025 0150 0009 0883 94 / BIC: BYLADEM1KMS (München)

Impressum

Your suggestions, comments and contributions to the Newsletter are welcome. Deadline for the next issue is 17 July 2022. If you would like to receive future issues by e-mail, please send a message to Pastor Alex and we will add your address to the list.