

Peace Church News

The Newsletter of the English-speaking United Methodist congregation in Munich



ISSUE **Advent**
NOV. / DEC. 2022

Dear sisters and brothers,

As we approach Christmas, we enter a time of waiting and preparing to meet our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Advent is therefore a season of hope, but also of struggle. This Newsletter contains Advent reflections and prayers to accompany us through this special time.

New for the Newsletter is an Activity Page, with Advent themed puzzles and colouring. There are also beautiful photographs from the Baptism of Purity Otoide and the Harvest Festival.

Peace Church has a number of special services and celebrations planned for the coming weeks, including an Advent Open Church, Nativity and Gospel Choir.

I hope you enjoy reading. You could even use this Newsletter as a prompt to pray for the upcoming services and events, and for the people of Peace Church.

A blessed Advent to you all!

Kat Wagner
Pastoral Assistant



Peace Church United Methodist
Munich, Germany

“Arrivals”

An Advent meditation by Pastor Alex von Wascinski



We're right at the start of Advent—the time of arrival. We're focusing on the arrival of our Lord, Jesus Christ. A twofold arrival: We remember his arrival as messenger of God's love to his people and all peoples of the world, as the Son of Man who called all people to become disciples, his sisters and brothers, and citizens in God's Kingdom. And we focus on his coming again to bring full justice to all—the departed and the living, and to bring time to its fulfillment.

When you come to Peace Church and listen carefully to the people there you can hear the most varied stories of arrivals. Arrivals in a new and foreign country, arriving amongst unknown people, an unfamiliar neighbourhood, an arrival maybe in dreary circumstances, at a place which is rather a place to leave as soon as possible than to stay. Tough arrivals. And you will hear about arrivals which turned foreign places into a home, strangers into friends, a yet unknown church—found somehow on the internet—to a place of moving worship, wonderful fellowship, a place of peace.

158 days have passed since I was inducted as the new senior pastor at Peace Church. So I'm wide over the mark of the first 100 days. But only today (24/11/2022) the last few things to complete my office (which I really like to call the Peace Church

Office!) will arrive. This is quite a marker for me. It's like a sign of now really having arrived in my ministry at Peace Church. And here and now I want to thank you, the people who are Peace Church, for receiving me in such an open and warm hearted way—from my first conversations with pastor Christine, via my first encounter with the interviewing group, further on to my first appearance and preaching at Peace Church, via my wonderful introduction service right up until now, the day that the new office is completed. Despite some turbulences throughout my first 158 days (with Covid and being on sick leave for about 4 weeks) you have made my arrival a smooth and happy one. Thank you all for that!

Now, back to Advent—the arrival of the Lord, Jesus Christ. Looking at Luke's gospel (Luke 2:7), the new born Saviour also had a rough arrival, a rough start to his life.

[Mary] gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.
(Luke 2:7, NIV)

There was actually no place for him, not even a guest room—despite Mary being heavily pregnant, so he had to be laid in a manger wrapped in cloths. Not exactly what you wish for a newborn.

And moreover, even for the coming again of Jesus Christ a rough time preceding is announced. But despite his rough birth circumstances Jesus brought salvation, comfort and liberation to peoples lives. And despite all calamity, injustice and grief he will bring peace, comfort and justice to the people.

Peace, comfort and justice are pillars of God's kingdom. And we, as the citizens of this kingdom, sisters and brothers of the One to bring peace, comfort and justice, are called to participate in his mission. So if we meet people arriving, whatever their background is, let us help turn foreign places into a home, strangers into friends, and maybe even a yet unknown church to them into to a place of moving worship, wonderful fellowship, a place of peace—where they meet the One who brings peace, comfort and justice.

Have a blessed time of Advent—
and be a blessing in this time of Advent.

An Advent Prayer

**In the last days
he will beat their swords into ploughshares
and their spears into pruning hooks.**

**So, in these days,
we will turn around the camera
of our self-centered selfies
to take a long, loving look
at the face of Christ in others.**

**So, in these days,
we will upturn the podium
of our calculated competitiveness
and elevate the least among us.**

**So, in these days,
we will dismantle the walls of our fear,
which keep at arm's length the refugees,
the foreigners, the homeless,
and build them homes
with those same bricks and these same arms...**

Amen.

Prayer: Copyright © Angela Bryan, Sam Hargreaves/engageworship.org
Photo by Gareth Harper on Unsplash.com

An Advent Blessing

**Go in peace
to love and serve the world.
May your waiting be in hope,
each day be lived in faith
and the light of Christmas
be moving toward you.**

Amen.

Did You Know That...

...Peace Church has its own App? The App is the best way to find out what's happening in the Peace Church community. The latest information about worship services, groups and activities is shared on the app. Anyone can download the app from Google Play or the Apple App Store - just search for "Peace Church UM". You'll need to sign-up with your email-address if you want to send messages or join groups.



...we're looking for Stewards? If you have previously helped in this way, or would like to be a Steward, we'd love for you to be part of the team. Being a Steward involves getting to church half an hour early to set up and being a friendly face to greet people as they arrive. If you'd like to commit to stewarding on Sundays, speak to Pastor Alex.



...the Homework Club is looking for more helpers? If you are free on Friday afternoons, why not come and help out? You don't need to be a teacher or expert, just have an attitude of encouragement, support and learning together. Speak to Nico Kanzleiter if you're interested.



...the Bible Study Group will start a new topic in 2023? The group has just finished a six-session study on the book of Philippians, and will finish the year with two Advent-themed studies in December. The group will be continuing in the New Year with a new study, so its the perfect time to join...!

...the Peace Church Band will start to play in worship services again? If you have musical talent and would like to play in services, please get in touch with Graham Williams or Katie Gill.

...Graham Williams' has a new collection of Christmas songs? You can listen free of charge on SoundCloud from November 26th. There are three original songs together with three traditional carols. https://soundcloud.com/graham_j_williams/sets/christmas-collection-volume



...there will be a 'Peace Church Special' every month? Peace Church Specials are ways for us to get together outside of the normal Sunday services. They might be meals, Fun Days, Open Church, etc The next Peace Church Specials will be a Thanksgiving meal on Saturday 26 November and an Advent Open Church on Sunday 11 December.

...there is a new 'sending forth' ritual for the Sunday School? The Sunday School kids and teachers are invited to stand in a circle at the front and a blessing is prayed over them. A Sunday School candle is lit at the start of the service when we are all together and then carried out to Sunday School, recognising that the light of Christ goes with them and we are one church together.



...Pastor Alex has a new office? His office is located in the Friedenskirche building, Frauenlob Straße 5. If you need to reach out to Pastor Alex for a pastoral chat, you can contact him via the App, email, phonecall or SMS. (See Contacts details on the back page)



... there is a new initiative for young adults among the Methodist churches in Munich? Every two weeks there is a shared meal plus a formal and informal programme. If you are a young adult (20+) and would like to find out more, speak to Pastor Alex.

...the Sunday School is busy each week? The older group now have the opportunity to write Prayer Bubbles which are prayed for by the prayer group. The younger children are currently practicing songs for the nativity service on December 18th.



...it's getting colder in church but we're looking at solutions? Due to the rising cost of energy, Philippus is only able to heat the main church space to a low temperature. Therefore you may want to wear some extra layers to church, and please use the blankets provided. We are looking into other (warmer!) solutions...

...Svenja's Gospel 'n' Soul choir have three Christmas concerts? Some of our own church members are performing! For details and tickets see www.gospel-n-soul.de

Welcome interview with Ann & Michael Hewson

What brings you to Munich?

Michael works at a University in Central Queensland, Australia and was granted a six-month research opportunity to go to the Rachael Carson Centre for Environment and Society. So each week, he works on researching river 'property rights' policy to improve Australia's environmental legislation. Ann has taken leave from her role as a Hospital Chaplain, where she visits three different hospitals in Rockhampton, central Queensland. We will be here until the end of February 2023.

Where do you call 'home'?

We have lived in three different states on the east coast of Australia, but Michael is wise to call Queensland home (because it is Ann's home state)! (Note that Germany is only 1/6 of the size of Queensland.) We currently live in Yeppoon, a seaside town of about 25,000 people. This region is always warm, and quite hot and humid in summer. We hope to move to Brisbane when we retire.

Have you experienced any 'culture shock' since moving to Germany?

The language is the biggest challenge for us, really, and filling in all the visa and registration forms. Otherwise, people are similar everywhere. Of course, getting to know people is always a challenge, especially when you are only here for 6 months. Ann feels lucky to have an aunt who still lives near Regensburg.

What do you particularly enjoy about Peace Church?



The church has a welcoming atmosphere, and we have felt at home there with many of the hymns very familiar to us. We have really enjoyed the African Choir and the very thoughtful messages, as well as all the wonderful musically talented people sharing their skills.

Do you have a favourite Bible verse?

For Ann, Jeremiah 29:11 is always a reminder that even when things may not seem to be going well, God wants the best for us, and we need to 'hang in there'. Ann says she also likes Peter, who could manage to put his foot in things and I am prone to that a bit myself. For Michael, Psalm 23 is a source of wisdom that acts like glue.

What are your hobbies and interests?

We both like getting out in the country. Walking in nature always uplifts – and now science is saying the same thing. Ann particularly enjoys seeing the birds and is often out in Englischer Garten with her binoculars. At home in Yeppoon, Michael spends time racing his 4-metre sailing dinghy with his Sailing Club.

Baptism

On 18 September 2022 we celebrated the baptism of Purity Otoide. About 150 people attended the service, including church members, guests and about 50 children and youth. We also had a blessing part for all of those starting into a new school or kindergarten year. It was a wonderful service with stories, songs, prayers—a colourful celebration of life and God's love to everyone.



African-style Harvest Festival

After two years of pandemic-restricted Harvest festivals, we were finally able to celebrate in the 'usual' way on Sunday 16 October. The African choir were in full voice and lead us as we danced our offerings to the front. The auction generated lots of excitement, and we finished the afternoon with a meal shared together outside in the warm sunshine. A total of 2136,30€ was raised for Peace Church through the offerings and auction - thank you to all who generously gave!



Advent Prayers



An Advent Affirmation of Faith

I believe that Christmas is more than a time for parties and ornaments; it is a time for remembering Christ and the incarnation of God's love for humanity.

I believe there are gifts more important than the ones under the Christmas tree, such as the things we teach our children, the way we share ourselves with friends, and the industry with which we set about reshaping the world in our time.

I believe that the finest carols are often sung by the poorest voices, from hearts made warm by the wonder of the season.

I believe in the angels' message that we should not be afraid, that the child of Bethlehem is able to overcome all anxieties and insecurities.

I believe in prayer and quietness as a way of appropriating Christmas: that if I wait in silence, I will experience the presence of the One born in the stable, for he lives today as surely as he lived then.

I believe in going away from Christmas as the wise men went 'another way'. I want to be different when these days are past. And I believe God will help me.

This Advent, Lord, invade the busyness of my doing with the smallness of your coming.

This Advent, Lord, illuminate the darkness of my thinking with the brightness of your seeing.

The Advent, Lord, infuse the coldness of my loving with the warmth of your being.

This Advent, Lord, take the unprepared places of my life and make them fit for your dwelling.

Amen



May the carols we sing help others to sing, even in their sadness.

May the gifts we give and receive deepen our spirit of generosity.

May the candles we light remind us that you intend no one to live in darkness.

May the people we meet remind us that we meet you in our neighbours.

May the stories we tell be good news of great joy to us and all people.

May our worship lead us to acts of service which transform people's lives.

Activity Page



Advent Word Search

N	P	E	A	C	E	C	A	N	D	L	E	S	L
F	H	O	E	A	O	N	K	R	C	V	U	W	L
R	A	C	J	N	E	N	A	T	I	V	I	T	Y
A	I	H	E	M	S	T	E	T	N	E	N	N	I
N	S	R	S	E	S	R	E	S	E	G	O	L	D
K	S	I	U	H	N	E	M	E	S	I	W	E	N
I	E	S	S	E	Y	S	Y	A	E	O	J	V	I
N	M	T	R	L	L	E	R	M	N	Y	R	O	T
C	S	M	A	H	T	P	R	W	J	G	R	L	L
E	A	A	M	T	M	O	H	Y	O	J	E	I	A
N	C	S	A	E	S	H	E	R	P	H	L	L	H
S	L	Y	A	B	W	R	E	A	T	H	S	R	S
E	N	O	W	A	D	V	E	N	T	S	C	N	A
S	H	E	P	H	E	R	D	S	E	H	A	A	A

STAR
SHEPHERDS
ANGELS
PEACE
GOLD
BETHLEHEM
JESUS
FRANKINCENSE
JOY
CANDLE
NATIVITY
CHRISTMAS
WREATH
LOVE
WISEMEN
MESSIAH
MYRRH
ADVENT
HOPE



Advent & Christmas Services

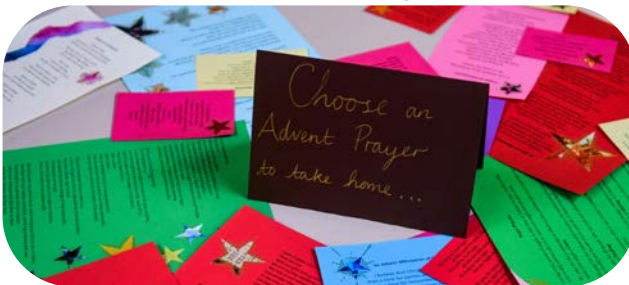
1st Advent (Sunday 27 November)
12 noon Worship service with Sunday School



2nd Advent (Sunday 4 December)
12 noon Worship service with Sunday School
and Communion



3rd Advent (Sunday 11 December)
12 noon Advent-themed Open Church



4th Advent (Sunday 18 December)
12 noon Nativity service



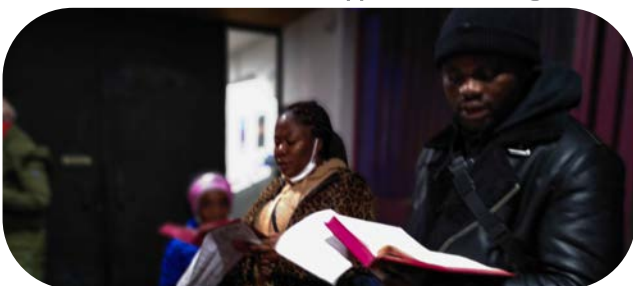
Christmas Eve (Saturday 24 December)
Christmas Eve service
Please check our Website/App for the starting time



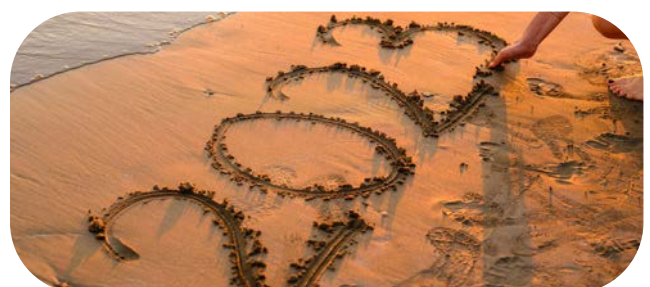
Christmas Day (Sunday 25 December)
12 noon Christmas Day worship service



New Year's Eve (Saturday 31 December)
New Year's Eve joint service with Philippus
Please check our Website/App for the starting time



New Year's Day (Sunday 1 January)
12 noon Worship service with Sunday School
and Communion



Peace Church Calendar

Saturday 26 November	5pm Peace Church Special: Thanksgiving meal
Sunday 27 November	12 noon Sunday Worship (1st Advent) and Sunday School
Wednesday 30 November	7pm Council on Ministries
Thursday 1 December	6pm Young Adults Night, Erlöserkirche 7pm Bible Study Group
Friday 2 December	2pm Homework Club
Sunday 4 December	12 noon Sunday Worship (2nd Advent) and Sunday School with Communion
Friday 9 December	2pm Homework Club
Sunday 11 December	12 noon Peace Church Special: Open Church (3rd Advent)
Wednesday 14 December	7pm Women's Bible Study
Thursday 15 December	6pm Young Adults Night 'Christmas Special', Friedenskirche 7pm Bible Study Group
Friday 16 December	2pm Homework Club
Sunday 18 December	12 noon Nativity service (4th Advent)
Tuesday 20 December	6pm Online Prayer Meeting
Saturday 24 December	4pm Christmas Eve Service (Please check our Website/App for the starting time)
Sunday 25 December	12 noon Christmas Day Worship Service
Saturday 31 December	New Year's Eve Service (Please check our Website/App for the starting time)
Sunday 1 January	12 noon Sunday Worship and Sunday School with Communion
Sunday 8 January	12 noon Sunday Worship and Sunday School
Thursday 12 January	6pm Young Adults Night, Friedenskirche 7pm Bible Study Group
Friday 13 January	2pm Homework Club
Sunday 15 January	12 noon Sunday Worship and Sunday School
Tuesday 17 January	6pm Online Prayer Meeting
Friday 20 January	2pm Homework Club
Sunday 22 January	12 noon Sunday Worship and Sunday School
Thursday 26 January	6pm Young Adults Night, Erlöserkirche 7pm Bible Study Group
Friday 27 January	2pm Homework Club
Sunday 29 January	12 noon Sunday Worship including Gospel Choir



The African Choir performs at the African-style Harvest Festival, Sunday 16 October 2022



Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.

The people of The United Methodist Church®

Our Mission

Proclaiming the Good News of Christ
Encouraging spiritual growth through Bible-reading and prayer
Accepting all-comers from all nations
Celebrating God and each other
Enabling all to use their gifts in mutual service

Giving

Peace Church is financed through the tithes and offerings of its members and attenders.
You can give money in the plate offering during Sunday services or by bank transfer: KSK München Starnberg,
IBAN: DE47 7025 0150 0009 0883 94 | BIC: BYLADEM1KMS

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Impressum

Your suggestions, comments and contributions to the Newsletter are welcome. The deadline for the next issue is 30 January 2023. If you would like to receive future issues by email, please contact Pastor Alex. The deadline for this issue was 21 November 2022.