

**An interview Christine gave to
Peace Church Newsletter when she started
working in her congregation in summer 2000.**



Christine, Peace Church is now 16 years old. For 5 of those years, it has had its own Charge Conference, the only English-speaking Charge Conference in the Germany Central Conference.

How do you feel about your appointment as the first German Pastor of this Charge?

First of all I am very glad about the appointment. I have got to know Peace Church by stepping in as a preacher several times in Pastor Jim Dwyer's absence and I find Peace Church a most interesting congregation.

The special thing about my appointment is that I am not from abroad but the first pastor to serve in her own country only speaking a foreign language.

Peace Church is a very special charge - as you mention. And special things happen here - I like being part of that.

What has motivated you to offer yourself to work with international English-speaking ministry in Munich?

I love the English language. I like to be in your congregation and I wanted to do what I am trained for: be a pastor. I am very keen on working in Peace Church, sharing my gifts and contributing what I can.

In Munich there was no chance of a further appointment in a charge of the South Germany Conference. Only Peace Church had a vacancy: I am grateful about that, because any other appointment in my Conference would have meant moving away from Munich, which Reiner, my husband, and my children wouldn't have liked. Reiner is the Pastor-in-Charge of the German-speaking Friedenskirche and he loves his job and this place very much; and the children are so happy to be here as well.

Where did you learn English so well? Will it be a problem for you to work in a different language?

I have lived in England several times in my life: for instance, I spent one year in the North Yorkshire Moors sixteen years ago. And I did my circuit practice (two months) - which is part of the pastors' training in seminary in Reutlingen - in Liverpool twelve years ago. Ever since I have been back to England whenever I could and have kept close contacts to friends and colleagues there.

I will find it a challenge to work in a different language. It will take me a longer time to write and read sometimes, especially in the beginning, but I will certainly enjoy it as I have already done, when I prepared Sunday worship for Peace Church. Of course my English is not as excellent as my German, but this will improve once I talk to you and work with you regularly.

I have always loved to read English books, newspapers and magazines; if I do this even more often, I expect none of us will find it difficult with a native German as a pastor.

Both, you and your husband Reiner are pastors. Is this easy in Germany, or are there problems when both partners share the same vocation?

Sharing the same vocation has caused us a lot of problems and pain throughout the years. In our country it seems that in church a good or ideal solution can always be found for only one of us. Right now Reiner, my husband, is very happy with his job, but up to now there was no good opportunity to work for me that would have made me happy. Before we came to Munich I was the one having a pleasant appointment and Reiner was „pushed" about. But since August 1st we seem to be entering a happier phase in our lives as pastors.

You have children. Tell us a bit about them. What do they think about the burden of being pastors' kids twice?

We have two sons: Jacob and Nicolas. Jacob is 11 years old and starts Rupprecht Gymnasium in September, which means he will be learning English. And Nicolas is 7 and has just finished his first year at school. They are quite tough and self-confident children with a strong will. And what they hate most is to be nicely dressed, polite and friendly on a Sunday morning in church.

They are interesting children. I love them just as they are and I would not like to live without them, although I find it hard at times to be a well organized „good" mother.

What other assignments have you had as pastor? Do any of them have similarities to the Peace Church assignment?

I was 26 years old, when I received my first appointment by the Bishop as an Associate Pastor to Reutlingen Erlöserkirche. In my first year there Jacob was born - and Reiner took paternity leave.

After four years Reiner was sent to Munich Friedenskirche, our second son Nicolas was born and I stayed home for three years.

When Nicolas was three and went to Kindergarden, I got the chance to work as a hospital chaplain in the Methodist Hospital here. I stayed there for four years and then took a study leave for one year. I did courses on many different things with which I hope to have increased my pastoral capacities.

Knowing, that you will be sharing with us regularly over the next years, are there any points of your theology, personal history or philosophy of ministry that you would particularly like to share with us at the beginning of your ministry?

As some of you have already noticed, I love to work with words and language, to write sermons and to remember and interpret Biblical stories and to interweave them with people's lives.

I like to talk and preach, to plan services and to write new liturgical texts. And I find it a great challenge to express the old themes of our faith in a modern, inclusive language and translate circumstances and situations of Biblical time into today.

I find it important to combine the matters of society with those of the church. And I see myself as a pastor very much in sharing, supporting and enabling people in church, encouraging them to discover their many capabilities and possibilities.

I am open to „nearly everything", I am very interested in people and I love to listen when they tell their stories

Is there anything else you'd like to share with us?

Anything else to share?

All I have, and who I am for the following years. That sounds good, doesn't it? Maybe with my person in between the two congregations in this church we might be able to build a few more bridges between the two than we already have

I am willing to do my best. And I am looking forward to be working with you.