



Wedding at Cana

A recipe to enjoy the summer...



The Wedding at Cana is a most fascinating New Testament story about a mother's initiative to help to solve someone else's problem and to set in motion her son's willingness to act.

Jesus was in Galilee. He and his disciples were invited to a wedding in Cana, a wedding that was also attended by Mary, his mother. In those days weddings lasted for 7 days or more. The whole time was a big feast of rejoicing, eating and drinking. The bridegroom and his family were responsible for providing the food and drink. Running out of wine, as it happened in the story from the Gospel of John chapter 2, would have been a serious embarrassment.

Mary became aware of the shortage of wine. So she went to Jesus and said: "They have no more wine." Jesus at first seems untouched. "Woman, (...) my time has not yet come," he answers. Mary, however, holds fast to the possibility that he could do something and advises the servants to do whatever he may tell them. As if she had known, a bit later Jesus turns to them and tells them to fill six large stone jars with water, draw some out of it out and give it to the master of the banquet. He tasted it, called the bridegroom and questioned his choice of which wine to serve first. The wine poured out last, was the very best! The bride and groom's families must have been filled with amazement at the miracle and the quality of the wine, and with gratitude towards Jesus who had met their immediate need.

On a beautiful summer evening following one of those really hot days which we can get in Munich, I had chosen the story of the wedding at Cana as the biblical text to study in the Home Group. On

the first Thursday in July we met at my place. I'd tidied up a bit, put out plates and glasses, drinks... some ordinary but tasty red wine from my favourite region in the South of France. The door bell rang. The first person arrived. We had a few moments to chat, when Sue came: carrying bags of food, announcing that Andy was bringing even more. In the end there were five of us in my kitchen helping together to prepare a delicious "makeshift" dinner buffet. Salad was washed, tomatoes and avocados sliced, spring onions cut into bits, a loaf of wholemeal bread was cut into slices, strawberries arranged nicely in a bowl, grapes put in between, creamy cheeses made our mouth water, a tuna loaf was unwrapped, the recipe discussed... And finally we all helped ourselves to a plate of "gourmet" food, poured glasses of wine and sat around the table on our balcony. Stories were shared; we filled each other in on what had happened since we'd seen each other last. There was news about health, jobs, new apartments, family situations on every side...

After dinner we retreated to the quiet living room, lit a candle, sat round it and prayed. Bible texts were handed out, and the guideline of the simple method of Sharing the Bible (www.pecechurch.de) which we always use. The text was read. We observed five minutes of utter silence to reflect and "digest". Then we were asked to share the sentence, word or phrase of the text that struck us most. The task is to merely share, not to give explanations, nor reasons or even to enter into discussion.

Often when five people read the same text, they come up with 5 different parts of the story to share. Not so this time. The five of us had three verses which had touched us most: "They have no more wine." (v3) "Do whatever he tells you." (v5) And "everyone brings out the choice wine first, and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now." (v10)

There we were and read the text a second time. After another time of silence we were asked what we'd heard through the text in the depths of our hearts. What had God told us personally for our very own lives with this story?

We talked about God's timing, bringing out the best (wine in the story) when it seems right and good for him, about letting go of control and trust more, about Jesus turning things upside down, using the unusual to do the exceptional (using stone water jars used for ceremonial washing and filling them with the best wine). We talked about Mary, the mother; about one woman's faith and belief that something could be done, about her holding fast to this and convincing others. We talked about seeing a need and taking the initiative, about standing our ground when rejected, and about letting the jars of our own lives being filled with God's "best" when it is his time.

When we prayed together after we'd read the story a third time, and observed a time of silence again, we were all filled with a deep sense of gratitude and praise, wonder and surprise. We felt liberated and comforted, free to let go and encouraged to carry on, on paths unknown and bearing risks. We felt called to live this summer as best as possible, trust in feasts and food and friends to be there at the right time, and to learn to celebrate each moment of God's timing for us.

Men and women drinking wine and celebrating a feast – this is one of the most beautiful biblical images of the Kingdom of God. And we are invited to make it an image for our lives, too: our needs met by God at the right time to live our lives in fullness and joy. May this be a recipe for you to enjoy this summer with all it has in store for you.

Wishing you much sunshine and showers of blessings, Pastor Christine.

News from Peace Church Life

Isn't This What the Kingdom of God Is Like? Give & Take Day at Peace Church

by Katy Wheat

This past weekend, from the 25-27 of June, Peace Church hosted its summer edition of the Give & Take, a chance for the community to find new treasures and share old ones. As a new addition to the Peace Church family, I had never participated in the Give & Take, and was eager to see how it turned out. Who would come? Who might find something useful? Who might clean out their storage for the benefit of all?

It was soon evident to me that the Give & Take is a well oiled machine.

We gathered on Friday evening to collect, sort, and display the donations. Every volunteer had a role to play – some gathered up the items from donors and distributed them to their respective sorting sites, some sorted baby clothing or household items, and still others collected food donations and prepared a delicious meal for all to share at the end of the night. Such excellent teamwork allowed us to finish quickly in preparation for Saturday morning, when we opened promptly at 11 am with a stream of excited guests, eager to find exactly what they needed.

We had all kinds of people visit on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. Some were members of the Peace Church congregation, while others were members of the community who stopped by to see what they might find. Some were born in Germany while others came from across the globe – from Kosovo, Nigeria, the United States, and South Africa, to name a few places. Some were Christian, while others were Muslim. Some brought their families – sisters and younger brothers, newborn babies and mothers. Volunteers and visitors alike passed the babies around, cuddled and kissed and spoiled them, precious children that they are.

Lots of people discovered exactly what they needed at the Give & Take this weekend. Many needed to simplify their lives, and were able to do so. Many had need of particular clothing or household items, toys or books, and were able to browse and select things at their leisure, and free of charge. All were in need of community, and there was plenty of it. There was lots of food, but more importantly, there was fellowship and kinship aplenty.

I couldn't help but think – isn't this what the kingdom of God is like? Some giving and others receiving for the mutual benefit of all involved? It was a beautiful thing to witness, that ability to work together for the uplifting of all. What a special thing it is, when the people of God come together in this manner. And how lucky we are to have an opportunity like the Give & Take for which we can gather!

Baby Welcoming Packs

by Liz Smith

Peace Church welcomes all who come, and is especially caring towards those in need. Over the last three years an increasing number of young

women, many of whom are asylum seekers, have found a refuge here. Until they reach a hostel in Munich many of these young people have no known friends in the country, though often their faith remains strong. Bonds of friendship can soon spring up, often to be broken weeks later when a friend is transferred out of Munich. Most of these young women are pregnant and have had difficult journeys and life stories before reaching Munich. Not all these pregnancies are results of loving relationships, and more often than not there is no father around!

Asylum seekers are given a bed, usually in a large room with up to five others and food by the state. There has also been an allowance of €40 per month, but with train tickets soap, toothpaste and shampoo, this soon disappears. There is no chance to save and buy the things necessary for a new baby.

Peace Church and a few in the surrounding community have helped by providing Welcome Packs for every new child whose mother has been attending Peace Church. These include a pack of nappies, a set of underclothes and some outer clothes, socks, hat, bib, a baby bottle and pacifier, fennel tea and a small toy. These small gifts help to lift the spirits of the new mums, and show them that there are people who care.

Will you be another one who cares and when out shopping pop the occasional toy, pack of nappies or tiny item of clothing into your trolley? Anything you may collect would be welcomed at the church office.

“Remember Me” -
a special Communion service
by Emily Zumpe

The church was a buzz on Sunday, July 4th - not only were some members celebrating US Independence Day, but it was a Communion service with a very special drama starring none other than our friends Linda and Peter Clist from England. It had been ages since they'd returned for a visit, and you could literally feel the joy and nervous excitement in the air, despite the overly high temperatures outside and inside the church. There were 5 participants in the drama - the Clists, Katie Gill, John Smith and me - and Christine had asked me to play the first part of Zacchaeus, the tax collector.

As the first notes of the Opening Hymn struck and voices raised in triumphant worship to O For a

Thousand Tongues to Sing, tears sprang to my eyes. The volume and the passion with which a full and diverse congregation sang was especially moving on that day. With sweat pouring, everyone joined in a responsive communion reading and the song and dance about God's love being deeper, wider and higher than the oceans, seas and mountains. And as the children left for Sunday School, the "actors" took their places.

The meditation entitled "Remember Me" was about Jesus, who invites everyone to join him at the communion table. But he never comes alone - he reminds us that "all have a place at the table" and he always brings along his friends. Each character talked about how their experiences with Jesus changed them forever. For me, it was a beautiful but difficult text. Zacchaeus spoke about turning his life around, leaving his old ways, losing his job, not knowing what the next steps in life would be like, but holding his head high, transformed and optimistic since having met Jesus. I had just been laid-off from my job the week before, and I was feeling very uncertain about my future as I approached the altar and lit the candles there. But as I read Christine's powerful words about faith in dark situations, I felt uplifted by sparks of hope.

The other characters brought bread, the Bible, flowers and wine - they talked of their pain and struggles - against others and inside themselves. John's portrayal of Simon the leper reminded us of the shame of being judged and judging others. Linda's Mary spoke of the pain of letting go of her son and having an empty place at her table. Katie's Mary, the sister of Martha, spoke of the difficulty of making individual choices in situations of family pressure or conflict. And finally Peter's portrayal of Judas reminded us of the shame and regret of making a mistake - and the importance of forgiving ourselves when we screw up.

As Christine welcomed visitors, prayed and invited everyone to communion, the mood in church was contemplative. God was present as Katie played so beautifully and the choir led the hymn One Bread, One Body. As we passed the peace, there were many hugs, hand shakes, some tears and laughs, and many smiles. The African choir sang a lovely and moving hymn accompanied by instruments and dance, and in two groups we moved to the front of the church to celebrate our unity with Christ through the sacrament of Holy Communion. A fitting end to such a moving service, we belted out the closing hymn I Come With Joy and received the blessing.

Visiting the Chiesa Evangelica Metodista in Milano, Italy

by Katy Wheat

When I first learned that I would be visiting the Chiesa Evangelica Metodista in Milano, Italy, as part of my work with Peace Church, I thought I knew what I would find there. I have been following the work of the church for years. While my initial interest in the Chiesa Metodista comes from the fact that my aunt and uncle, Kristin and David Markay, are its pastors, I soon came to follow its activities for other reasons. As I progress in ministry, I find myself more and more interested in churches whose missional goals center around welcoming the stranger (it's one of the reasons I love Peace Church!), and the Chiesa Metodista in Milano is a perfect case study. Its congregation is comprised mainly of people whose 'native' country is not Italy. And in the Chiesa Metodista's case, this necessitates a church atmosphere of advocacy.

There are all sorts of ways, I find, to be an 'advocate.' The advocates I know are passionate people – they work diligently towards a day when their view of the world might be upheld and honored by all people. At their best, people and institutions who are advocates work for justice in all its many forms. Some of the advocates I know are vocal and passionate – they march on the White House in Washington DC with banners and songs and chants. They lobby in the halls of Congress for reform. And while I believe it's important to hold the government to a high standard, I believe it's even more important to place a high standard for God's justice within the Church – to its organization and its people. This is, I found, how the Chiesa Evangelica operates.

Like most advocate institutions, the Chiesa Evangelica is working towards a goal. One of the broader mission statements of the Italian Protestant church is *essere la chiesa insieme* or *being the church together*. The Chiesa has found all sorts of ways to make this manifest within its own congregation. Although they come from many places, they work to truly understand and love one another – through fellowship opportunities after church, during choir practice (in which people from at least seven different countries sing), and during Sunday-morning Bible study, in which peoples from southern Africa, Egypt, the Philippines, South America, Europe, the United States, and eastern Asia gather to study God's word. They gather to praise God each Sunday, and ce-

lebrate to hear English accents from across the globe read Scripture, rejoice to hear music from every nation lifted to God in prayer. The presence of the Church in Isola, a part of Milano largely populated by immigrants, is a strong witness. Once a month, they gather together for a silent protest to the Italian government, whose policies, they believe, counteract the very essence of human dignity bestowed upon each child of God. They support one another, give kindness to one another. They are quiet advocates, making their passion for a unified church and a unified body of Christ a vital and everyday part of their ministry.

I was lucky to witness these things during my time with the people of the Chiesa Evangelica Metodista. It turns out that I didn't know as much about the church as I thought. Yet what I saw and learned during that week gives men hope for the Church as it should be: complex, maybe, but full of promise and passion and love for one another.

A Congregation of Faithful People Who Seek to Put Christ First in All They Do

by Katy Wheat

I love to visit new churches. The time before each new acquaintance is full of questions for me. What will the people be like? What will they be passionate about? How will they worship? How will they image God? How do they treat one another? Will I feel like an 'outsider,' or be warmly welcomed into the community? My visit to Alresford Methodist Church (located in Hampshire, England) did not disappoint.

Alresford Methodist Church boasts a small building on the outskirts of New Alresford, a town just eight kilometers from Winchester. It has about ninety members, and sixty to seventy pack into its sanctuary each Sunday morning. The congregation is small, but growing. I can only attribute this growth to Alresford's quite witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ that seems to permeate all they do.

The Good News of Christ's love for the world was evident in the daily life of this congregation. They're an extremely welcoming group of people. Friendly faces abound on a Sunday morning, as do cups of tea and coffee. They are eager to know new visitors and deepen relationships with one another. They love one another actively – several members of the congregation currently face health

problems, and they're cared for with meals, phone calls of support, babysitting, and even in rides to and from doctor's appointments. And perhaps most importantly, Alresford Church is an active part of the life of its community. Immediately before I arrived, the church had hosted its Summer Celebration – in thanksgiving for thirty years of ministry, the church hosted a weekend crafts fair and flower show in its building. They welcomed 800 visitors through the doors and raised £1000 for ministry with children and youth, all the while raising awareness of the church's work in the Winchester area. While I was there, we visited the 345 Preschool, which the church building houses during the week. We planned Alresford's participation in the 100th anniversary festival for a local park – the church plans to provide crafts and games (as well as a prayer tree) for neighborhood families. I was even able to help the Rev. Dawn Carn, whom I shadowed that week, find a leader for the new Parent and Toddler group the church hopes to start, and which will provide a support group to young parents while bringing them into the church.

The ministry of Alresford Methodist Church isn't overt. It isn't forceful or loud or rude. And that's why it's powerful. It's a congregation of faithful people who seek to put Christ first in all they do. Amen to that!

The Baby in the Basket – All Age Service on July 18

By Emily Neeson

When I walked into church on Sunday, July 18, the first thing I noticed was that the chairs we arranged in semi-circles, with scarves in different shades of blue, colourful seashells, and cups of pens and markers set in the centre of each circle. It was immediately clear that the children of Peace Church had planned something very special for the all-age service.



The service was centred on the story of Moses' birth, hiding, and eventual rescue by the Pharaoh's daughter (the Princess). As Katie read aloud a lively, modern version of the story, the children gathered around a large scroll which Becky unfurled as the story was retold. The Sunday School class had spend many months illustrating the story in three enormous panels. Every inch of these panels is full of gorgeous, vibrant colour, and the pictures themselves depict the unfolding story of Moses' early rescue with humour and power. As you can see in the pictures, the characters have truly been brought to life.



In our small circles, we were asked to discuss together what we liked about the story, what we didn't like, and which character we would like to be. Sharing gave us a way to interact with our neighbours in ways we usually don't in a church service. Then Christine read the children's answers to us from the pulpit. I was struck by how even small children have an innate sense of what is just, right, and beautiful, and an instinctive appreciation for bravery, friendship, and courage. There was also plenty of singing and a "body prayer" performed by a few of the children. In all, it was a thoughtful, moving, and colourful service prepared with great energy and dedication! If you haven't yet seen the panel illustrations, make sure you ask for a peek – they are really works of art.

News from the Council on Ministries

by Jenny McPherson

The Council met on 13 July and discussed a number of new initiatives which will be starting up in the autumn. The following are things to look out for in the coming months.

Mid-week meeting opportunity

It is planned to open the church rooms one day a week for anyone who would like to come along and join in with a whole host of activities which will be planned on these days. Lunch will be provided and it will be open to all. Parents with young children will be made very welcome.

Homework Support

This will take place on a Friday afternoon beginning with a lunch and will be open to any of our young people who would like support with their school work in a friendly and encouraging environment.

Social Events

A small sub-committee has been set up and are looking at running an event for the congregation once a month. This will be an opportunity for people to meet in a relaxed and friendly environment in the evening, sometimes in the church rooms and sometimes outside. The first event will be a picnic in a beer garden on 24 August to say farewell to Katy Wheat and hello to Sam Greening who will be covering for Christine in August when she is on holiday.

Faith Training Courses

Keep your eyes open for these short courses which will run for 4 weeks each term. They will take place in the church and will give you the opportunity to explore your faith and discuss it with others in an encouraging and supportive way.

Baby Friendly Coffee

Many of you will have already seen the changes to coffee after the service. A playpen and high chairs are now available for mums with young children so that there is somewhere safe to put the children whilst the mums eat and drink. There are also bottle warmers and a microwave available in the room to make preparing bottles safer and easier.

Flyers

In the next few weeks you will see some fabulous new flyers advertising Peace Church which were designed by Christine's son Jacob. Please take a few and pass them on to friends who may be interested in the church and tell them a little about the church family.

Please look in the announcements inside your bulletin each week to see the dates and times for all these new and exciting initiatives.

Did You Know That

The home group met 5 times in the last 7 months? It started in February at the home of Phil and Katie Gill. Hosting the group later were the Lawsons, McPhersons, and Pastor Christine. The home group is a simple Bible study taking place in the homes of various people. Everybody interested is always welcome to come and join in on the first Thursday per month. The next meeting is at Chris and Joe Czynszewski's on 7 October 2010.

On 10 June Katy Wheat arrived in Munich? She is a full-time student at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington DC. Katy is in Europe from 10 June to 25 August. She is working at Peace Church as well as with churches in Milan, Berlin, Hamburg and Alresford in England. While she is in Munich she is living with Jenny and Alistair McPherson. Read her articles on her time in Milan, Italy, and Alresford, England, in this newsletter.

Asylum seekers who attend worship on Sunday mornings are given free tickets for public transport so their journey on Sundays is safe? If you would like to support this ministry, talk to the pastor.

Pastor Sam Greening will come to Peace Church? Sam Greening is a friend and colleague of the Erb-Kanzleiters and will work with Friedenskirche and Peace Church from 7 to 22 August, while Pastors Christine and Reiner are away on holiday. Sam is fluent in English and in German. He lived in Germany some years ago, and is now the minister at the Congregational Church of La Jolla in the greater San Diego Area in the USA.

Kids' Club Movie Night was a great success? The children and the co-workers watched 2 films in the night and one "for" breakfast the next morning. Some eyes of the 34 children taking part may have turned into little "squares", but surely not for long. If you would like more information about Kids' Club, ask the pastor for this year's programme.

Pastor Ulrich Jahreiss will come again? Ulrich, a retired Methodist minister, had been assigned by the cabinet of the South Germany Conference of the Methodist Church in Germany to help out at Peace Church and Friedenskirche, while pastors Christine and Reiner were/are struggling with the changed situation of their everyday lives. Their paralysed son Nicolas is now living at home and in need of much support and nursing care.

Pastor Ulrich preached several times at Friedenskirche, once at Peace Church. He helped with all sorts of tasks in both congregations, and will be back in September to ease the situation when Nicolas is trying to start going to school again. For now, our heartfelt thank you goes to him for his care and support!

Pastor Christine teaches Confirmation Class for both – Friedenskirche and Peace Church? The last session was at the beginning of July; the next one will be on Saturday 25 September from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm.

Jenny McPhersons secretarial work in the church office is going on? Jenny is in on two mornings to help with administration tasks and preparations for Sunday worship. She writes articles, answers the phone, types texts, does the photocopying and many more. A big thank you to her for making life so much easier for Pastor Christine!

The church family is really grateful for the brilliant work done in Sunday School? ...and generally with the children in church. A big thank you and deep appreciation to all who commit their time to working with church children and youth!

All sermons preached at Peace Church can be found on the internet? If you missed one, or if you would like to re-read one, just check www.peacechurch.de sermons.

There are still copies of the Peace Church sermons' book? The book is sold for 15.-€. The proceeds go towards the work of the church with the asylum seekers. If you do like to purchase a copy, contact Pastor Christine, or Nathalie Pfisterer, or the worship leader of the day.

A handful of asylum seekers' homes were closed down? Some small and very run-down places in small villages in the middle of nowhere in Niederbayern closed recently. Their inhabitants (some of them come to Peace Church, when they can) were transferred to a bigger place in the town of Deggendorf. This is still not paradise, but at least the asylum seekers can now walk to the train station and catch the train to Munich, when they want to attend church. They still need invitations which Christine sends to the foreign offices on Wednesdays so that they are given permission to travel on the weekends.

There was an article about David Onka in the newspaper? David Onka is a very talented singer and pianist from Nigeria and has just had his first CD produced. In the eyes of the German authorities as an asylum seeker he is a nobody; but in the eyes of music fans, he is starting to climb a ladder that makes him at least well-known. David's story was published in the "Straubinger Zeitung" some weeks ago, and since he is a member of our church we are very proud of him. We wish, from the bottom of our hearts,

that one day David will be a free man again in a free country.

On 25 July Favour Osasumwen John was baptised? The little baby girl is the daughter of a young couple from Nigeria seeking asylum in Germany. May the young family find a home among us, and may we give them the help and support they need, while they are with us.

The church teenagers spent a Weekend Away in the "Bayerische Wald"? They had chosen a wheelchair friendly seminar centre in a small village called Neureichenau near the Czech border. 15 of them went along, including Nicolas. Our thanks go to Pastor Reiner Kanzleiter, Peter Schaetz and Martin Kuemmerlin from Friedenskirche who accompanied the young people.

Alistair McPherson offered a Saturday morning workshop for worship leaders? Learning by doing was the idea. We hope that this can be repeated once or twice per year to let our very good worship leaders continue to grow in creativity and confidence.

A big thank you goes to the "Gwandhaus" in Ismanning? The co-workers of this second hand shop charity decided to support the Give & Take project at Peace Church, and brought along donations of good clothes, toys and babies' items.

The Women's Bible Study finished their meditation cloth? Inspired by famine hangings from all over the world, the women had decided to do their own.



They began working on it in February. Now the result, a big painting printed on fabric, is hanging in the Bible Study room on the first floor of the church building. There will be occasions in the services in autumn on which the whole congregation will be given a chance to admire the piece of art and meditate on the cloth.

Peace Church Calendar

August

Sunday 1 August
7-28 August
Sunday 8 August
Sunday 15 August
Sunday 22 August
Sunday 29 August

All-age Communion with Friedenskirche
Holiday Erb-Kanzleiter family
Sunday Worship (Sam Greening preaching)
Sunday Worship (Sam Greening preaching)
Sunday Worship (Sam Greening preaching)
Joint Worship with Friedenskirche
(Pastors Christine & Reiner preaching)

September

Sunday 5 September
Sunday 12 September
Saturday 18 September
Sunday 19 September
25 & 26 September
Saturday 25 September
Sunday 26 September

no Home Group & Bible Sharing in Sept
Communion Worship (Pastor Christine preaching)
Sunday Worship (Alistair McPherson preaching)
Kids' Club: Soup Kitchen
Sunday School Sunday
Give & Take
Confirmation Class
Sunday Worship

October

Sunday 3 October
Thursday 7 October
8 to 9 October
Sunday 10 October
Saturday 16 October
Sunday 17 October
Sunday 17 October
Sunday 24 October
Sunday 31 October

Communion Worship
Home Group & Bible Sharing
Kids' Club Reading Night
Sunday Worship (Stewardship season)
Confirmation Class
Sunday Worship (Stewardship season)
Prison Service in Stadelheim (CoA in charge)
African-Style Harvest Festival
Sunday Worship

Impressum

Your suggestions, comments and contributions are welcome. Deadline for October/November issue is Sun 26 September. Please include a photo if possible. (Reports may be edited.)

If you would like to receive future issues by e-mail, please send a message to christine@peacechurch.de, simply typing "PCN by mail" and we will add your address to the list.

Contact Details

Christine Erb-Kanzleiter (Pastor) e-mail: Christine@peacechurch.de
Office: 089-26023677 Mobile: 0179-6726794
Jenny McPherson (Secretary) Telephone: 089-85635348

Homepage: www.peacechurch.de

Peace Church United Methodist, Frauenlobstraße 5, 80337 München.
Germany: Account 90 88 394 at Kreissparkasse München Starnberg (BLZ 70250150)

For US readers

You can support the work of Peace Church through a mission "Advance Special" account. 3020450 designated for Peace Church, Munich, Germany, to support the congregation's local program.