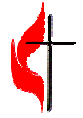


# Peace Church News



Newsletter of the English Speaking United Methodist Congregation in Munich: **25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 2009**

## One in Christ... the Peace Church of Munich on its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

“So we who are many, and come from many different places, are one in Christ...”, if we look at many of our Peace Church liturgies, this is a sentence often repeated, isn't it. And we need this!

Because the richness of Peace church is its people: people as diverse as the different countries of this earth can be. So again we need to be reminded that we belong together, that we are God's world wide family, no matter how different we are and how different our lives and looks are. We are loved by God, welcomed by God, cared for by God. And God calls us to love, to welcome, and to care, too.



Peace Church reminds me of the women in the book of Exodus who work together to protect life. Some of you may know the story: about baby Moses in the basket. It is a story of women, and in the centre there is a male child who with his actions will one day change the future of a whole nation. The story is all about power and threat, about courage and determination, about wisdom and awareness, and over all about solidarity. Since the time of Joseph, the Israelites had been living in Egypt. Valued workers at first, slaves later - a threat to a Pharaoh who feared that the foreign people could outnumber his own people and oppress the Egyptian population. Crazy, - but once he'd got that thought in his head, there was only one way out: oppress and wipe them out as quickly and as effectively as possible. All male babies were to be killed.

Two brave midwives were the first to oppose the evil plan. They saved as many babies as they could, and questioned by the Pharaoh they got away with courageous and bright responses!

Moses' mother had managed to hide her little boy for 3 months. But then it became more and more difficult. She sought a way out and did the absolutely unusual:

she placed her child in a basket and left the child and basket in the Nile. To make the mother's plan work, the story needed more people to take part in it. The sister of the baby boy comes on stage, the daughter of the Pharaoh, and her servants. The Egyptian princess – obviously a childless young woman – takes her bath in the Nile. The sister of the baby in the basket observes what is going on from afar. She is the guardian for her little brother without being noticed. The princess only notices the basket and the baby. She sends a servant to get basket and baby. And she immediately has motherly and warm feelings towards this helpless little creature. So when a young girl approaches her with the offer of a wet nurse to take care of the baby the princess agrees to the arrangement at once.

What this leads to in the end is: that the princess of Egypt pays a Hebrew mother to feed her adopted baby. And the irony lies in the fact that the princess herself has her father's future opponent raised in their own palace.

The summary of it all is: three women who can't be more different from each other than they are, come together to care for a child that actually is not supposed to live. They cross the boundaries of language, religion and social status in order to save this little life. Three women have the courage to overcome boundaries, take a risk and do the unusual!

The story of the women in Egypt shows us what it means to act together, and how such togetherness can make all the difference. Looking at the story in the light of strangers working together to save life, there is no better story to reach right into the heart of Peace Church.

We are encouraged to help each other, to reconcile and forgive, to welcome, accept and respect each other. We are asked to show to the world what God can do with the lives of people who have the love, the passion and the courage to be the body of Christ.

At Peace Church everybody is constantly challenged and challenging others to overcome boundaries, differences, fears and inhibitions.

It is the people who make Peace Church such a special and fascinating place that really makes a difference in our and many other people's lives. So, what is more appropriate than letting some of these people share a bit of their story with us when we celebrate our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary? And now enjoy the stories... as I enjoy my work in this congregation. With love and gratitude,  
**Pastor Christine Erb-Kanzleiter.**

## My Memories of Munich

When I started trying to reflect on my memories of Munich, the thought came to me that memories are strange things. Usually when you begin flashing back, you remember good memories, but you also remember bad ones. I'm very pleased to say that I don't remember any bad things from our time in Munich. I can't remember all the names of those who joined with us for worship, we had lots of visitors throughout the time, but I do remember lots of faces and lots of fond memories. I look forward to sharing some of those memories when we come to Munich to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the congregation. For now, I'd like to share just a few of those memories.



I remember when...

...we had our first anniversary service and the text from the Book of Acts was read in the various languages that were represented in our congregation – all at the same time – helping us to understand

what that first Pentecost must have been like;

...Alex and Carlos Valenzuela and I spent Sat. in Marienplatz passing out flyers and inviting people to join us for worship;

...we had no organist and I had to go back and forth – organ, front row, center, organ, pulpit, organ, front row, center, organ – I'm sure you get the idea;

...two young men from Ghana joined us; they had come to Germany seeking political asylum;

...during our welcome and announcements, Slav and Laura introduced themselves as just having escaped from Russia, and how they had made their way to Munich through The United Methodist Church connection - I could barely get through the worship service I was so anxious to talk with them;

...joint services with the German-speaking congregation;

...the husband of a tourist died while in Munich (his wife had been coming to our Bible study while he was in the hospital) and when I visited her the Sat. after he died, she told me she was coming to church in the morning - we quickly changed everything and used our worship service as a memorial service for him;

...the last worship service when Robert and I left was the marriage of Paul and Kathy Pilgrim and Bishop Sticher was with us.

So many memories come flooding back – thanks be to God, they're all good!

**Dr. Cheryl B. Rhodes, Columbia, S.C. USA**

## I felt myself being pulled to find a church...

I would like to extend my good wishes and congratulations to Peace Church and its congregation, both past and present. I lived in Munich for 11 years in the 1980's and found a true church home and family when I discovered the English speaking service at the church. As a small child I attended Sunday School at a local Baltimore church for a short time before my family moved to a neighbouring county where it was not so easy or convenient for us to continue our church attendance. During my childhood years I didn't attend church regularly but eventually felt myself being pulled to find a church in my adult years. I don't remember exactly how I heard about the English service in Munich but I decided one Sunday to attend. I can still remember vividly that as soon as I entered the church I was met by Pastor Cheryl Rhodes who immediately welcomed me like an old friend and from that very first meeting I felt I was part of the church family and never felt like a stranger. I can still see her warm smile and her arms extended in welcome to greet me as I entered the door. Both of my children were born in Munich and Robert, who is now 23, was christened in the church by Pastor Cheryl.

I was still a part of the congregation when we welcomed Pastor Richard Acosta and his wife, Lena, into the Munich church family. I have fond memories of our times with them as well and we still keep in touch with family photos and a letter at Christmas each year. I have wonderful memories of my church time in Munich. I fondly remember other members and people who passed through each Sunday. I remember the pot luck suppers and learning to make a quilt with Cheryl. My grandson, just last year, used the beautiful blue and white baby quilt that she made for my son in 1985. I remember all the wonderful music and singing and having contemporary music practices at my home now and then. I have funny and touching memories of my times teaching Sunday School. I remember the Christmas program where I watched my son and another little boy named Kevin, make mischievous faces and trade looking-for-trouble grins obviously trying to decide what they could do for fun besides just stand there in their shepherd costumes.

Most of all I remember this as the time when a neglected path was opened to me so that I could develop a true relationship with Christ. Although I was always a believer during those many years when I was without a

church home, my spiritual life came alive and my heart and soul opened to the many blessings I never really understood before I found this loving place to praise and worship. I will always thank the pastors and congregation of my first real church home for supporting and encouraging me on my journey. I am still on that wonderful path and have found a comfortable home at a United Methodist church near my home here in Maryland.

I wish I could have attended your celebration but my heart is with you all and you are in my prayers as you come together to remember the years gone by. I thank everyone who has touched my life, even if just by sharing a time of praise and worship with me. God bless.

**Anne Baschenis, Linthicum, MD USA**

### Find a Peaceful Home

In the year 1989 I started coming to Peace Church United Methodist. Through a friend I was warmly invited and welcomed. That made me stay in this church. I am very grateful to God for letting me find such a peaceful home. In the time when I first came Richard Acosta was the pastor at Peace Church.

**Naomi Yebuah, Munich**



### Still Very Happy...

I came to this church in the first week of January 1991 when Pastor Acosta and his wife were still here. I found this place by looking in the Munich Found magazine. I have seen a lot of people coming and going. Some of our church people left our congregation and joined the Anglican Church in Harlaching. I go to South Africa every year for 4 months, and have all my children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren in Cape Town. I worked in Munich for the Consul General of the Netherlands for 7 ½ years. Before that I was in Berlin for 2 years. I was transferred when the wall came down, because all Consul Generals had to leave Berlin. Up till now I am still very happy to be here.

**Wilhelmina Appolis-Pichlmeier, Pullach**

### Several Significant Things Happened...

Some reflections on the development of Munich's Peace Church United Methodist penned by Dr. James Dwyer, missionary pastor with wife Helen and children Erica and Paul from 1992-2003.

When Helen and I arrived in the summer of 1992, the congregation had experienced a number of cycles of ebb and flow since its 1984 founding. It was the nature of things that most participants in the life of the congregation were "on assignment" for 18 months to three years, rarely five, within a radius of perhaps 65 miles of Munich. Both their work responsibilities and distance made it hard to imagine building a congregational structure around them. The ministry remained largely a "chaplaincy" for its first eight years and the Acosta's provided extended family to many who passed through and felt homesick for parents or grandparents. Their respective emphases on flowers and cooking held many close.

Our arrival corresponded with an ebb-tide: hardly more than a dozen people remained in the congregation.

Among them were mixed British-German couples who had provided both the first wedding and the first child born into the congregation's history. That first baptizand born into the congregation became a confirmed "professing member" in a later youth confirmation class – the beginning of a "second generation."

A more substantive factor uniting many in the congregation in its early days was their support of the English Speaking Prisoners Support Group a joint project of members from the Anglican, Methodist and other English-speaking ministries to prisoners in Bavarian prisons. Worship leaders who had prepared worship for the prisoners were also available to serve in our congregation.

Within six months of our arrival in Munich several significant things happened. (1) Some people felt called to work on establishing both an intentional and effective outreach as well as a church structure. (2) A wave of immigration of English-speaking Africans to Munich redefined our ministry. (3) Ethnically diverse persons previously on the edge of the congregation claimed their proper place and created a momentum which reinforced the other forces at work.

A special memory is: One Ghanaian woman who spoke little English and less German requested baptism of her daughter. The baptism was accompanied by the setting of conditions on both sides. The pastor, she insisted, must also baptize the child born out of wedlock to another Ghanaian woman, close friend of the first. In turn, the pastor stated his expectation that the husband of the woman who first brought up the question of baptism must agree to participate in at least a minimal way in the life of our congregation. Thus it was that two Methodist women and one Presbyterian man from Ghana became pivotal members of the congregation and a key element in the enormous growth of both spe-

cifically Ghanaian and generally African participation in the congregation. That man, head of the local Ghanaian cultural association, later joined the church and remained instrumental in the stable development of the congregation, and his wife and her friend became instrumental in developing the cultural and social life of the congregation: one of the most important events in the annual cycle of the congregation became the African-style Harvest Festival!

The final significant development under the Dwyers' tenure may well have been the good fortune of aligning the "stars" in the international appointment system to allow Pastor Christine Erb-Kanzleiter to assume a staff position with the English-speaking congregation which enabled her to become the fourth pastor of the congregation when the Dwyers left.

**Dr. James Dwyer, New York**



## Peace Church as Host for the Women's World Day of Prayer

In 1993, led by Barbara Catlow of the Church of the Ascension, six of the English-language churches in Munich, including Peace Church, got together to discuss the idea of holding a WWDP service in English. There were many points to discuss as this was a brand new idea; amongst the questions asked was "where should we hold it?" Helen Dwyer and Cathy Pilgram who at that time represented Peace Church said "why not here? We are central and would be happy to host it". So began a tradition on the first Friday in March 1994 which has been repeated every year since. In fact not just the service but the two or three committee meetings we need beforehand are also hosted by Peace Church. There were 54 present at the first service which was prepared by Christian women in Palestine. Services have been written by Christian women in countries as diverse as Haiti and Korea, Madagascar and Samoa. We have had dancing, processions, Paraguayan harps, dramatic presentations as well as corpo-

rate singing and prayer and many have come to love this annual service. Peace Church always decorates the building beautifully according to the colours of the country whose service it is. They provide refreshments and it a tribute to them that most people stay after the service to enjoy fellowship with others whom they often only see at this service.

Very warm thanks and good wishes go to Peace Church from the Committee of the WWDP and we hope that we may be privileged to use Peace Church for this purpose for many more years to come.

**Mary Clelland, Chair of the WWDP Committee**

## I Feel Very Much at Home

My first time hearing about Peace Church was: Alice came to visit the church I was then attending. Later she invited me to Peace Church which unfortunately landed on stones or let's say I wasn't prepared for.

Then a year later I met James Affram at New Years African Party. We talked about the church and its multicultural congregation. Once again I was invited. I made up my mind to come and I haven't regretted it since. I am happy and proud to be part of this congregation because I feel wanted and very much at home. And I hope this will be inspiration and an invitation to anyone who reads this.

**Kate Stoiber, Munich**



## Wrapped in Love...

It was in autumn 1999 that Jim Dwyer, then pastor-in-charge of Peace Church, had asked me whether I could possibly do the pulpit cover for him in January 2000, while he would be in the USA for four weeks. Three January Sundays and one Sunday in February needed to be filled in the Peace Church preaching schedule. I was doubtful whether I could manage 4 Sundays in a row,

but nevertheless said “yes”. I suppose I liked the challenge of it.

It was in December 1999 that my father was diagnosed with cancer. Incurable. We spent Christmas 1999 together as an entire family at his place knowing that it was our last Christmas together.

January came. Jim left for the US. My father was sent to hospital again in the second week of January. I preached my first sermon on the healing of a leper, told the congregation about my father’s illness and felt very much accepted and comforted in spite of the sad news. On my second Sunday covering for Jim I preached on Shiphra and Puah (Ex 1. 15ff). In sharing time I told the congregation that I would not be able to stay for coffee, but would catch the 2 something train to Stuttgart and head for my father’s hospital. I visited him and stayed. He was in his final stage, and he needed me. At one point he opened his eyes, looked at me and said: “Don’t they need you in Munich?” And I told him that I would stay at his side until it all would be over. He turned his face toward me in astonishment. None of us had before dared to express it that clearly that he would die.

On the following weekend I turned home to Munich, preached at Peace Church, shared again how things were with my dad, didn’t stay for coffee but went back to the hospital near Stuttgart. On 1 February 2000 my father died. While I was with him, church people, I knew, prayed for us.

Everything was organized for the funeral which would take place a week later. Two days after my father’s death I returned to Munich and Peace Church, preached again – can’t remember what... And then drove back to Stuttgart. It had been my father’s wish that I would “bury” him which meant lead the service at his funeral. The text of the sermon was the story of Jacob’s struggle at Jabbok. At sharing time a Sunday later I told the congregation how it all had gone. And at the door one woman gave me a poem as a present to comfort me, which she had written after her grandmother’s death. I was so wrapped in people’s love and care! It was overwhelming. It felt as if I had come home. I felt, I had arrived at the place where I had always belonged and



been called to.

When in spring 2000 the General Board of Global Ministries was willing to offer the assignment of an assistant pastor to Peace Church I hesitated not a moment but applied to become a full-time pastor in this fascinating community.

And here I am. The happiest pastor ever. After 9 years still fascinated, still wrapped in love and loving myself.

**Pastor Christine Erb-Kanzleiter, Munich**



## How I came to Peace Church

In late 2000, I was posted from a position in the UK that I knew well to set up a management college in Munich for the parent company, Allianz. As English was the group language, a native speaker was needed, ideally with a training or Human Resources background. As I was English, a trained teacher and had twenty years experience in HR and Training, I was a natural choice. Although the job was one ‘to die for’, it was awkward for me in family terms. Our youngest son was just starting his ‘A’ level courses: Linda had to stay until he finished. So, I promised Linda never to go ballroom dancing on my own and set off for two years in Munich on bachelor terms. On Sunday, my first port of call was a church with a large, international, congregation, where I was quickly integrated into a home group. At first, I felt out of place as a lone middle-aged man with wife and kids at home. Others at church were obviously puzzled, but they soon came to accept me and I came to really value those evenings as havens of normality. However, over time, I realised that I had never seen a woman in the pulpit or leading a service. My wife was a Lay Minister in the Anglican church back home and had a real and valued ministry: I could not accept that that would stop when she came to join me. The leader made it very clear that their doctrine was not negotiable and that all leadership had to be male. No arguments moved him: much mission in the early church was female; most other churches accepted female leadership; boys were being taught by women in his own Sunday School. I couldn’t accept his view and

left quietly. I flirted with the Anglican-Episcopalians, but the choir seemed more important than anything else. I may be unusual but I've always valued the spoken word over music, so I left there too. So, one Sunday, I arrived unannounced in Peace Church, fearing there might not be an English-speaking church in Munich for me. All I recall of that first Sunday was the immediate unquestioning and loving acceptance of Christine, the then deputy pastor, and of Laura Thurston, co-ordinator of the Sunday School. Yes, I was middle-aged and male and on my own, but that was no problem. There was a sort of a structure of a Home Group, which I joined. And there were some evening socials I tried as well. What kept me was the unceasing and unfussy support. There was a real mixture of nationalities, languages and family situations whose unusual nature I came to appreciate, but at the heart of it all this unceasing and unfussy support. I was so grateful at the time and I recall those days often. So, when Linda arrived, I could go ballroom dancing as a couple and we had a ready home in a Christian community.

**Peter Clist, Liphook, GB**

### A Wonderful Example of God's Timing

My arrival at Peace Church turned out to be a wonderful example of God's timing. Six months after my move to Munich, the Pastor-in-charge was leaving. There was to be no more funding for a part-time assistant pastor. I had been around just long enough to feel settled and ready to do more than the occasional service-leading and preaching. That meant it was perfect timing when Christine, with the Bishop's blessing, offered me the role of lay pastor. Despite my recent arrival, Peace Church people seemed quite happy to welcome yet another new face and to accept the things I did differently 'without turning a hair'. I soon realised that one of the greatest strengths of this community is its readiness to welcome strangers, week after week, without getting weary of the process. Reaching out across cultural and language boundaries and building new relationships can be hard work. Hardly a Sunday goes by at Peace Church without new arrivals. It's a miracle, then, that newcomers still matter, still receive a welcome and still have every opportunity to take an active part in all that goes on. Long may it continue!

**Linda Clist, Liphook, GB**

### It All Began in Winter

...2000, when my wife Jemima arrived from Ghana. Before then I had already heard about Peace Church through some fellow Ghanaians. When Jemima came, we wanted to find a church and go there regularly. We started alone. And God blessed us so much that now we are five, a family of five: two daughters and one little

boy had been given to us. We thank God, our pastor and the fellow church members and wish Peace Church a happy anniversary.

**Francis Talleh, Neufahrn**

### I Really Wasn't That Excited to Go to Church at All

It was Emily and my first summer in Munich and in fact our first Summer as a married couple. We had lived in Dortmund and just got to Munich at the end of April. In Dortmund we had found a wonderful German-speaking Baptist Church, where we felt at home for the few months we were there. And they had suggested a Baptist Church in Munich. That sounded great - Emily was Baptist, I was - well, let's say: open. We went there for both their German and English speaking services. The German congregation was too large and impersonal for our taste. We got so upset about the Sermon in the English Speaking service that we left before it was over. Thus started a Summer of Church hopping, to English-speaking services and German-speaking Freikirchen all across Munich. Emily did major research, and at one point early in the search suggested Peace Church. We went and liked it, but still wanted to check out other places. I got exhausted, and possibly annoyed after a while. I really wasn't that excited to go to Church at all, and did it mostly because it was important to Emily. But strangely, one morning I felt the desire to go back to Peace Church. Not because it was the "smallest of the evils", but because I wanted to go there. And I loved it, then and ever since. This, our second Sunday, was the first Sunday the Pope-Levisons were at Peace Church. They told us later that they thought we had been here for ages. I think that's one of the best things about Peace Church: A second time visitor can feel as at home and as comfortable as a regular for years would anywhere else.

**Johannes Zumpe, Munich**



## We Feel Very Comfortable

We have been living in Munich since 2002, but we did not know Peace Church until we moved to Neufahrn. When we met the Addo family, they brought us to Peace Church – that was in 2006. We are very glad that we found this church and will never go to another one. We became full members two years ago. And we had our two children Ronny and Priscilla baptised there. We feel very comfortable at Peace Church and we are coming regularly.

**Joe Nyarko, Neufahrn**

## The Church Would Pay the Rent

In September 2006 I joined Peace Church. I was an asylum seeker from Nigeria – at the time I first came, I was pregnant. 2 months later I learned that I wasn't only expecting one baby (which is already hard enough) but two. For some weeks I didn't dare to tell anybody. By the beginning of December I confided in Pastor Christine. Christine promised all possible help and support the church community could give. The twins were due at the beginning of February.

At the beginning of December I went to hospital for a check up. And the staff kept me there. The twins were about to come – more than two months early.

While I tried to perform a natural birth, the twins got weaker and weaker. When their heartbeat was at the absolute limit, the hospital staff called the pastor to please explain to me that I would have to deliver the babies by a Cesarean.



My two tiny babies were born, and a whole network of church women took an interest in my story. They talked to doctors, nurses and social workers.

It was obvious that the twins – David and Deborah – would not survive, if I had to take them to the dirty and hostile environment of the asylum seekers' place. Pastor Christine intervened and negotiated with the highest authorities of the government to achieve an exceptional regulation for me and my babies. She offered to find alternative accommodation, which she did after some difficult phone calls with all sorts of authorities. Then

she offered to the government that the church would pay the rent for my stay in a house for single mothers and children, and helped me move there just a few days before Christmas.

I couldn't breastfeed because the babies were too weak and small. With the help of a midwife who Christine got on board, I was given advice how to pump the milk and give it to my children. I needed support with almost everything. Committed Peace Church women saw to all that. They invested a lot of time to help me. And at Easter 2007 David and Deborah were baptized in Peace Church.

**Tina O., Berlin**

## What Amazing Surprise!

I am from Cameroon. I arrived in Munich more than 8 years ago. I first visited a catholic church not far from my place. Being protestant, Presbyterian, I was looking for a church not far from home. I found a protestant church, but the sermons were in German. Unfortunately my German was not good enough. I could not really appreciate the preaching.

One day I was looking for a parking place near Sendlinger Tor. I found one in Frauenlobstrasse. Then walking towards the city to meet friends, I saw the Methodist Church, and I noticed that it also had an English-speaking congregation. The following Sunday I decided to come and visit Peace Church. What an amazing surprise: so many people from different cultural origins, from different continents! I was asked to stay after the service to share coffee. For the first time in many years I could understand and value the whole worship and preaching! I felt really welcome and decided to come again, what I've been doing since. Thanks for that!

**Nicole Biyee, Munich**

## The Chocolate Cheese Mountain Apple Family

It began in the head and ended in the heart.

It began virtually and ended in reality.

It began anonymously and ended in personal relationships.

The chocolate cheese mountain apple family: We - Dieter (mountain) and Franziska (apple), with our two children Benaja (7yrs) (cheese) and Anna-Mengia (soon 4yrs)(chocolate)- are a Swiss family. We still call ourselves "Swiss"- although we haven't lived in Switzerland for the last 7 years ☺

From tô with gombo sauce and speaking French we came to beer, snow and limited space. We arrived in Munich a year ago because Dieter is doing a training here. Having lived in Africa the preceding five years, the transition was a bigger challenge for the kids and Franziska than anticipated. Friendships need time to

develop. People in our neighbourhood have their relationship-nets already knitted and no new “threads” are needed.

### **Peace Church**

**Peace church building:** although there are windows only on one side, we sat in the sunshine each time we listened to the sermon: what a strong presence of God’s light in the darkness

**English, enjoy!, energetic, eventful, effective, eager, enrichment**

**A haven for travellers. A home for foreigners.**

**Coming back:** initially because of the warm welcome you, Alice, Liz and Christine, gave us

**Every Sunday church coffee- what a treat, what a pleasure, a real feast at times**

**Christine and congregation:** your ministry has an impact in this city. Words become actions, feet and

**Hand, hug and ear, food and shelter -> a real church!!**

**Unique union of many different people, young and old, colourful, powerful community**

**Relationship nets can be knitted here**

**Christ Jesus, you gave the needed confirmation and assurance that peace church is the place you “prepared” for us, meant for us. The place you want us to go to, participate in, share, give and take, pray, sing, be.**

**Franziska Kuhn-Haederli, Munich**



### **The Give and Take Day**

My first contact to Peace Church was on the Give and Take day in February. My friend and I came quite packed with things and were happy to distribute clothes and dishes. I was busy sorting the items when I noticed that my own jacket had disappeared. As I had experienced many difficult or dramatic situations in my life it was not really a catastrophe, but I was still worrying about my mobile and the keys to my home. I realized I had hung it among the clothes that were offered to be taken... I definitely needed some help and I saw Pastor Christine. Instinctively I knew that she was the right person to talk to. She showed much concern and helped as much as she could. This touched me. The jacket was definitely taken by somebody and could not be found anymore. My friend and I went back home, quite upset but hoping that an honest person would realize, it was not meant to be given away and would bring it back. The cat sitter had a second key, so we could go into the flat. It was lunchtime. Lamenting and being frustrated did not help, so we enjoyed our meal. A few hours later

I called Pastor Christine and... guess what?... someone had brought the jacket back! It was a great relief. Thank God there are still honest people in this world!!! I am still looking for the opportunity to thank this person. I have lived in Germany for 19 years and I was born in France. My parents were Catholics but I could never identify with this religion. I visited many churches before but never found the right one. For me this congregation is unique. What I enjoy most are the intercultural aspect, the family feeling, the high quality of the sermons, the singing and the social commitment. Now I thank God for the “loss” of the jacket...

**Nathalie Pfister, Munich**



### **Greetings from Bishop Rosemarie**

Dear friends and members of Peace Church, Congratulations to your 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. You are the oldest of our so called “International Congregations” and from the very beginning you are a model for us as United Methodists in Germany and beyond. You live what it means to be a church: it is the body of Jesus Christ, and since Jesus Christ came for all mankind, people from all nations, men and women, elderly people and small children - all are invited to be part of Christ’s church. Jesus included especially those who were marginalised. You are serving to people on the edges of the society here in our country. Thank you for your witness for Jesus Christ in words and deeds. I will not be able to join you to the celebration. I am grateful for your ministry and I wish you a joyful weekend at Pentecost so that your worship and fellowship may inspire all of you to continue “making disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world”.

May God bless the work of Peace Church in the future.  
Yours in Christ

**Rosemarie Wenner**



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