



Newsletter of the English-Speaking United Methodist Congregation in Munich: August 2020

Sisters and brothers, Peace Church friends, I found a new Bible woman and want to share her story with you. Here it is:

Jehosheba

We are in old Israel with our Bible text. 200 years or so after the great kings David and Solomon. The once striving kingdom had been separated into North and South. One king was more wicked than the other. Injustice, war and violence were on the agenda. And what perhaps weighed even harder: people, and especially their leaders, had lost their faith in the living God.

Bible Text from 2 Kings 11

Now when Athaliah, Ahaziah's mother, saw that her son was dead, she set about to destroy all the royal family. ² But Jehosheba, King Joram's daughter, Ahaziah's sister, took Joash son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from among the king's children who were about to be killed; she put him and his nurse in a bedroom. Thus she hid him from Athaliah, so that he was not killed; ³ he remained with her six years, hidden in the house of the LORD, while Athaliah reigned over the land. ⁴ But in the seventh year Jehoiada summoned the captains of the Carites and of the guards and had them come to him in the house of the LORD. He made a covenant with them and put them under oath in the house of the LORD; then he showed them the king's son. (...)
¹² Then he brought out the king's son, put the crown on him, and gave him the covenant;^[a] they proclaimed him king, and anointed him; they clapped their hands and shouted, "Long live the king!" (...)
He took the captains, the Carites, the guards, and all the people of the land; then they brought the king down from the house of the LORD, marching through the gate of the guards to the king's house. He took his seat on the throne of the kings. ²⁰ So all the people of the land rejoiced; and the city was quiet after Athaliah had been killed with the sword at the king's house.

²¹ Joash was seven years old when he began to reign.

Revolution here... protest there... crises, decay, and constantly changing inner and outer enemies. Threats and lies, mistrust, greed and murder... And in all that, we meet a woman with a breath-taking story of murder and mystery. She was a princess in Judah during the time of the Divided Kingdom, a devoted aunt to her brother's children, and the wife of the high priest in Jerusalem.

Jehosheba... She grew up in a household full of selfishness and evil. Her stepmother, Athaliah was the daughter of King Ahab and Queen Jezebel, fierce enemies of Elijah, the prophet, if you remember. Queen Athaliah and the king had several children. One son of them was Ahazia. The king however had several wives, and therefore more children, one of whom was Jehosheba. The kingly court was a mess of intrigue and injustice. For the ordinary people in Israel this was one of the darkest times ever. Not a good time to live.

Jehosheba stands out as the heroic daughter of a ruthless king. Ahazia, Jehosheba's brother, only rules one year and then gets killed in battle. He leaves several children. After his death, his mother Athaliah, sees the chance to grab the throne and rule the country. She has all her grandchildren killed to save her position. No heir, no claim to the throne, she thinks. But like all the best heroes, Jehosheba does what she can. She takes the youngest child, a tiny baby boy, smuggles him out of the palace and hides with him in the temple, over which Athaliah has no control. Church asylum, if you like. Jehosheba saves one life. Probably all she could do. Saving all the children would have been obvious fight and rebellion. But stealing the youngest one away, may well go unnoticed.

And here Shiphrah and Puah come to my mind, those brave midwives who opposed the Pharaoh,

when he wants them to kill all the new born baby boys of the Israelite people. And Jochebeth comes to my mind – with smart young Miriam, who hid baby Moses in the reeds. And the Egyptian princess and her maids come to mind, as they take Moses into the Pharaoh’s palace. And last but not least, the kings of the Christmas story are to be remembered. After their visit in the stable with new born Jesus, they return home on a different road. They do not let Herod know where the new king had been born. And Joseph, of course, mindful Joseph, who listens to the angel in his dream, and leads Mary and Jesus into exile in Egypt, and thus saves Jesus’ life. All these courageous role models stand up and step out to save innocent children’s lives!

But back to Jehosheba. We don’t know the details of her saving deed. We don’t know how she managed to get Joash, the little boy, - whether she had his nurse to help her. Jehosheba feared God. And she knew that the safest place for her little nephew would be the house of God, the temple in which her husband was the high priest. The Bible lets us assume that Athalia did not find out what happened. She supposed that the whole of her son’s family had been killed. Jehosheba does what she can. She gives up personal freedom and liberty to protect the baby in the bedrooms of the temple. I wonder what fears may have gone through her mind. What worries? What if Joash cried? What if Athalia’s spies found out? What if the little boy grew up and wanted to move about? What about the trustworthiness of the temple people? Of her own husband, the priest? Had they been caught, had the secret been found out, no doubt, Athalia would have been merciless.

For 6 years Jehosheba kept the child Joash in the temple, teaching him about the living God. And her husband, Jehoiada, the high priest, too, may have had a positive influence on the little prince. When Joash turned 7, Jehoiada was able to organize a rebellion against Athalia and have her wiped out. Young Joash was crowned the rightful king. The high priest helped the young king reign. Instead of terror and uncertainty, the narrator reports that all the people rejoice, and that the city is quiet. Quiet after 200 years of war and violence. “Joash did what was right in the sight of the Lord, because the high priest instructed him,” we read in 2 Kings 12. Jehosheba saved the life of Joash. By rescuing the little prince, she rescued the hope of Israel. She

made sure that the royal line of King David could be continued, as promised, and centuries later Jesus would be born... a descendant of King David. But to me today that is a side issue.

The real point to pay attention to, is Jehosheba’s courage, her fearlessness and her humanity. With these attributes she may have influenced men and women around her, and her husband too. They all surely wanted to end Athalia’s cruel reign, but did not dare to stand up against her. It took 7 years until Jehoiada and the resistance group around him saw the chance to end this dark episode in the history of Judah and initiate an overthrow.

Jehosheba teaches us to stand up for God, to be unafraid even when times are dangerous. To preserve our humanity and our faith in a loving God in the face of terror and evil. I would like to think that I would be like her, that I would stand up and step out for God’s ways, that I would be brave in the face of hostility and cruel injustice. Jehosheba could not save all her nieces and nephews. She could only sneak away with little Joash.

Let’s stay with this image: we too, cannot save the whole world. We can only do what we do in the places where we live and work. We can be advocates, supporters, encouragers, even rescuers, influencers, enablers. And by the end of the day, with lots of us doing the same, save the hope of the world. **Global transformation can come about through thousands or millions of Jehoshebas doing the right thing in countless places and situations.** Enjoy this summer which is so different from the summers before, and do what is right. Yours, Pastor Christine.



Blessing

May we never lose sight of the possibility of transformation and be continually surprised by people who believe in one another. Amen.

Prayer Wall

Dear all, the prayer wall in the church is full to overflowing. In order to be able to put up new prayer speech bubbles, I am taking prayers off every week. I would like to share some with you.



Please pray that...

- ...we will all meet again some day as we met before.
- ...the millions of displaced people in this world will find love, welcome and homes.
- ...we will manage to live through these strange times with nothing sure and all so uncertain.
- ...guidance in the decision what to do after school.
- ...people can be happy and healthy.
- ...the world will manage to stop racism.
- ...old parents and relatives are safe.
- ...God will keep us all in loving arms.
- ...the Peace Church community remains strong and healthy.
- ...people who are isolated & alone will find friends.



Please pray that...

- ...people will be able to hold their jobs.
- ...that we will be closer together as a church family even though we are physically separated.

Please pray that...

- ...there will be love, peace, healing, - no war and racism.
- ... the year 2020 will end better than it started.
- ...our wonderful young people manage to make plans for the future in these uncertain times.
- ... God blesses Peace Church as we seek alternative ways of serving our community.



Please pray for...

- ...unity, freedom, equality, tolerance, understanding & acceptance, for hope & peace & justice.
- ...the healing of the nations from the pandemic.
- ...someone's friend who is sick and in hospital.

Please pray that...

- ...the children are happy. Pray for happiness & health of all.
- ...people who look for jobs and places to live will soon find what they need.
- ...all who are dealing with health issues will find peace & healing.
- ...the leaders of the nations will make wise decisions.
- ... the focus of family does not get lost in the daily demands and distractions.

Please pray for Theo and Vivian. Vivian gave birth to a healthy little baby boy: Theo junior. May God fill their lives with happiness and joy and hold them in loving arms.



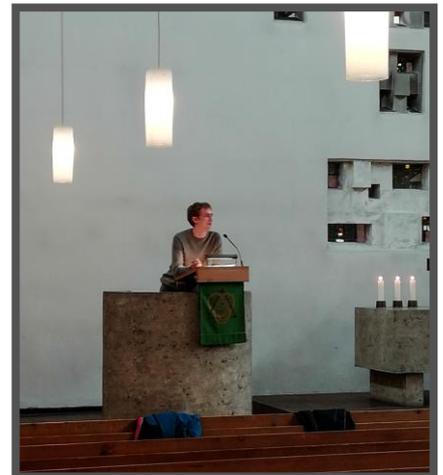
Peace Church Calendar August – September 2020

August

Saturday 1 August	17h All-age Worship in the park
Sunday 2 August	18h Evening Worship
3 – 14 August	Holiday Pastor Christine
Tuesday 4 August	18h Online Prayer Meeting
Saturday 8 August	17h All-age Worship
Sunday 9 August	18h Evening Worship
Tuesday 11 August	18h Online Prayer Meeting
Saturday 15 August	17h All-age Worship
Sunday 16 August	18h Evening Worship
Tuesday 18 August	18h Online Prayer Meeting
Saturday 22 August	17h All-age Worship
Sunday 23 August	18h Evening Worship
24 – 28 August	Holiday Pastor Christine
Tuesday 25 August	18h Online Prayer Meeting
Saturday 29 August	17h All-age Worship
Sunday 30 August	18h Evening Worship

September

Tuesday 1 September	18h Online Prayer Meeting
Saturday 5 September	12h Wedding
	17h All-age Worship
Sunday 6 September	18h Evening Worship
Tuesday 8 September	18h Online Prayer Meeting
Saturday 12 September	17h All-age Worship
Sunday 13 September	18h Evening Worship
Tuesday 15 September	18h Online Prayer Meeting
Friday 18 September	14h Restart Homework Club
Saturday 19 September	17h All-age Worship
Sunday 20 September	18h Evening Worship
Tuesday 22 September	18h Online Prayer Meeting
Friday 25 September	14h Homework Club
Saturday 26 September	17h All-age Worship
Sunday 27 September	18h Evening Worship
Tuesday 29 September	18h Online Prayer Meeting



Impressum

Your suggestions, comments and contributions are welcome. Deadline for the next issue is 30 August. 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 type "PCN by mail" and we will add your address to the list.

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