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Rev. Joseph and Deaconess  
Dr. Jennie Asher

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## Military Prison News

Many of our prayer and financial supporters have been fervently petitioning God to “open doors” to the military prison system so that Joe can have access to the day room. The day room allows him to interact with prisoners in a more relaxed setting – like while watching baseball or playing chess. This allows him to be more approachable since he’s not just seen as a pastor, but also as a *real person*.

This has not occurred. Due to prison rules, the US Army (which runs the prison to which Joe volunteers) believes that this allows too much risk for him, and also could put them in a legal bind should something like a fire occur – or a riot, etc. The risks to him are extremely remote, but the institution must protect itself.

But God has graciously given Joe greater access to prisoners in the last year! Since he has been volunteering once a week for three years, the US Army recognizes that he provides a great benefit to incarcerated soldiers who are often at the lowest point in their lives. The Army sees Joe as a civilian Lutheran pastor who is a “subject matter expert” in Christian theology, that he is outside the US military chain of command (a good thing), and that inmates can talk to him privately and receive solid Christian Biblical counseling on everything from addiction to marriage to the hope we have in Christ. So, while he can’t go back to the day room, ANY inmate can ask to



see him for counseling in the chapel or in their segregated housing unit (SHU).

Beyond this, Joe is now permitted to visit Leavenworth prison (US Army facility- Kansas) when he is there. The chaplains here have assured him that they will give him a letter of introduction to that facility, and he will have the advantage of being escorted in by a former member of our Kaiserslautern congregation who is stationed there. Already, four inmates have requested that he see them should he ever be in Kansas! This is an incredible thing which God has caused. A pastoral relationship is being developed with men who have been very far from God!

We share this with you because we want you to know that God hears our prayers and responds to every situation according to His will. Obviously, God knows that these men Joe is seeing need to hear the Gospel, and that in prison it is good to have a pastor that keeps track of you.

## PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- *A member who has been deployed to a dangerous location, and his family who remains here at KELC*
- *The many visitors we've been having, that we welcome them into the church.*
- *God continue to grant us joy in His service.*

## GIVE THANKS FOR:

- *A complete slate of officers for our Church Council, including a new position, youth committee chair.*
- *New junior and senior high youth coming to KELC and our active youth group.*
- *Three adults now taking private catechism instruction toward becoming members of the Lutheran church.*

## PRAISE GOD FOR:

- *The many congregations and individuals who pray for us, encourage and support us.*



*There are many opportunities to serve as short-term or GEO missionaries. Check out the current list and download an application at [lcms.org/service](http://lcms.org/service). Click on "Service Opportunities."*

## Fasching

We are now in the heart of "Fasching" season in Germany. Also known as "Karneval" or "Fastnacht," the word refers to pre-Lenten celebrations. The season actually begins on the eleventh day of the eleventh month at 11:11 a.m. when the prince and princess are crowned. There is then a break to observe Christmas and New Year's, with the season beginning again in earnest on the seventh of January and culminating in Fasching week (the week before Ash Wednesday).

In many cities in Germany large carnivals take place on the Monday ("Rosenmontag") before Ash Wednesday ("Aschermittwoch"). Similar to Mardi Gras, these include parades (starting at 11:11 a.m.), elaborate costumes, masked balls and street parties. The parades highlight satirical floats of political figures. Of course, candy will be thrown to the children from the floats, but beer or schnapps will be given to adults. This season is also used as an excuse for parties and feasts. Fasching is known for a special treat called the "Berliner" (jelly doughnut). The grocery store where Jennie shops will make 50,000 Berliners in the few days before Ash Wednesday! On Tuesday ("Fastnachtsdienstag") schools will be closed and many businesses will close early. On this day some will bury the "Nubbel," a life-sized doll made of straw that embodies all of the sins committed during the Fasching season. It is buried or burned on Tuesday evening during one last party before Ash Wednesday.

On Ash Wednesday party goers meet one last time for "Herringsessen" or the eating of herring, a food that is supposed to ease hangovers. This marks the beginning of the season of Lent and a period of fasting.

## Meet our new webmaster!

KELC has a new webmaster and Facebook page manager. Raja Sundarsingh James is from Tamilnadu, India. He is 25 years old and doing his masters in commercial vehicle technology at the Technical University Kaiserslautern. Currently he works as a master student assistant at the Mercedes Benz company in Germany.



Raja was brought up in a Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church (TELC) located in Kariapatti, Tamilnadu, India. It is a very small village church in India. His father is involved in part time missionary work amidst his business. Raja has an elder sister and together as a family they share the love of Christ wherever they are.

Raja was very much delighted to find a Lutheran community in Kaiserslautern. He loves to be the webmaster of KELC, updating the Facebook page and website. Please remember Raja in your prayers for his future endeavors and career.

Be sure to check us out at [www.facebook.com/KELC1985](http://www.facebook.com/KELC1985) or [www.wordpress.kelc.eu](http://www.wordpress.kelc.eu) !