


Joseph.asher@lcms.org
jennie.asher@lcmsintl.org


Rev. Joseph and Deaconess
Dr. Jennie Asher

Did you know?

- *Muttertag* (Mother's Day) was first celebrated in Germany in 1922, although it did not become an official holiday until 1983. It is celebrated on the second Sunday in May, with similar customs to the U.S.
- *Christi Himmelfahrt* (Ascension Day) is a national holiday, this year on May 21. It is also marked as "Father's Day" or "Men's Day."
- Sixty-five percent of the highways in Germany (the autobahn) have no speed limit. On many the limit is 130 km/hr (about 80 mph).
- Germany is one of the world's leading car producers. Its top brands are Volkswagen, BMW, Audi, and Mercedes.



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Frightened Hearts

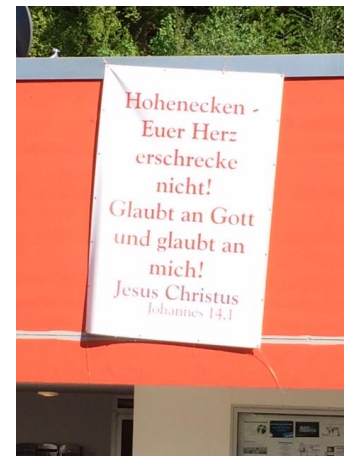
"Hohenecken – Let not your hearts be frightened! Believe in God and also in me! Jesus Christ" John 14:1

That's the translation of a giant banner hanging outside an independent protestant church in Hohenecken (our village). What a witness to a country whose largest single religious group (34%) is non-believers, with another 6% being Muslim! Even in the second-largest group (Christians) most do not attend church, except for Christmas and Easter. So this witness is vital during this pandemic.

Our streamed worship services (see facebook.com/KELC1985) are also a witness during this pandemic. We are finding that we have "visitors" in our worship every week. We thank God that His Word is still being proclaimed, in spite of the pandemic, and that we can see the Lord using this witness. Here in Germany, when people consider that they *could die*, the mind often goes to end of life thoughts like, *"If God exists, maybe I should give some thought to Him."* And when this happens, then a discussion about God is possible.



Joe distributes the Lord's Supper to a family. All (including Joe) are wearing masks.



John 14:1 verse outside the protestant church in our village

The problem for too long has been that most Germans see a belief in God as irrelevant to modern life. On many levels, COVID-19 strips away that delusion. So to combat fear of what may happen in the future from an unseen virus, people might see a need to give more thought to having an active and meaningful life with God. For if God holds our future, then ultimately we have nothing to fear.

Lutherans have always known that Word and Sacrament ministry is where God connects to us. For in the Word, we hear God's voice and the Holy Spirit works in our lives. In the Sacraments, through simple water and the bread and wine, we receive the forgiveness of sins as well as strength for each day from God Himself. And fear cannot stay around when our God is with us.

So do not fear! Believe in our God who loves us in Jesus Christ!

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- *Joe's eye surgery on June 5. That language won't be a barrier and that all will go smoothly to restore full sight in his right eye.*
- *Our catechumens who are being confirmed May 31.*
- *The technical production of our worship services, that it would continue to go well.*
- *Our three adult catechumens, that they would be able to focus in spite of all the changes that have occurred in family life due to the pandemic.*

GIVE THANKS FOR:

- *All of our members to date are healthy, with no confirmed cases of COVID-19.*
- *Our university students, Raja and Jeba, who are helping with the technology for worship services during this time.*

PRAISE GOD FOR:

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

Fellowship at KELC

By Shreya John

For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

Matthew 18:20

What joy it is to worship the Lord our God in His Holy Sanctuary, in the midst of our brothers and sisters! Our Heavenly Father has so ordained it, that we come together as a fellowship of believers and share sweet communion. I have often pondered on the importance of this community worship and how the lack of it affects one's spiritual life. Over the past five months, God has shown me that no matter where we go, He will always provide us with just the right fellowship.

As a student, coming all the way from India to pursue my studies, I was worried about whether I would find an English-speaking church that I could attend every Sunday. Coming from a background where my Sundays were almost entirely spent in church, packed with fellowship and activities, I earnestly prayed and hoped that the Lord would open the doors of a good and faithful church for me, and indeed He did!

Over the past few months, KELC has grown to be an important part of my life here in Germany. I was warmly welcomed and made to feel at home by Pastor Asher, Jennie and the entire congregation. Attending the services has been a joy for me. The liturgy, hymns and the sermons give me the strength to start the week, trusting fully in the Lord. The Adult Sunday School has enriched my faith journey. Participating in a Biblical discussion with members of all age groups was a novel experience, and it has been wonderful to listen to the different perspectives that come with age and experience. I was also invited to help out with the Children's Sunday School one week, and it was a lot of fun.

As a student away from home, the fellowship and love that I have received at KELC has made me feel that I indeed have a family here. Pastor and Jennie always enquire after my studies, encourage me and pray for me during my exams. Many times, when I have been unable to attend the service or the discussions, Pastor, knowing how much I enjoy the classes, sends me the sermons or notes of the Sunday school classes. The KELC community has been a blessing for me, and I thank God for the opportunity to join together in fellowship with them.

-Shreya Miriam John



Shreya John, one of our university students



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