

## Newsletter March 2013

Dear brothers and sisters,

In this first quarter of the year, we focused more on the work of the church than on missions. I hope though that we will soon be ready to do more outreach again. We started this month taking about fifteen minutes after the sermon for questions and clarifications. It has turned out to be an excellent tool for the communication in the church. I will briefly tell you why. We eagerly expect fourteen people from Pickerington, Ohio, on June 8, which is this upcoming Saturday. I will tell you about this project in the June newsletter.

### **Focusing on the Work in the Church: A Time to Ask Questions after the Sermon**

The members have found it to be very helpful to be able to ask questions immediately following the sermon. Any questions and also comments are appreciated as long as they are not made to personally attack someone. If that should happen, the brothers should intervene at some point. At the moment we think that this is not likely to happen. As far as we can tell just about every member has taken advantage of this time after the sermon. Most of the time there are questions about the sermon. This helps the one who preaches, which is most often myself, to understand what is on the mind of the church members. So far the sermon has always just been a one way communication. The time after the sermon is refreshing and makes the fellowship among each other certainly better.

To not make the worship service longer than usually, the song leaders will in the future try to cut some time with the singing, reading and commenting on Scripture. We still have a prayer time in the worship service. Most often every brother is welcome to pray, but sometimes we have it that only one brother prays for what the members ask him to pray for that morning. During the sermon, the children have a time for storytelling, singing and playing. Sometimes Lena helps with the children.



*(Lena), Elena, Ilja, Jeanette, Robin and Joline, but there are other children who are not in the picture.*

### **People Find Us Over the Internet and No Longer in the Newspaper**

We stopped our weekly advertisement in the regional newspaper called the “Thuner Amtsanzeiger.” Why did we do that? The main reason were the finances that have been tight during the past years. We also did not see very much benefit of it any longer. There were rarely people showing up at the building as a result of the newspaper advertisement. In fact, we had two young guests who found the church over the Internet during the past few months. I had a long discussion with one man who was looking for a church and wanted to talk about doctrines and believes. He believed in original sin of every newborn infant. As our brother James from England was there too, it turned into an English-German conversation. We made clear to him that in spite of our disagreement on some points, we would be so glad to have him back on Sunday morning. It probably was my first conversation of this kind at a bar. We were there to celebrate a 60<sup>th</sup> and 80<sup>th</sup> birthday.

## Snack to celebrate 60<sup>th</sup> and 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday



Kornelia and my father had their birthday during the month of February. Kornelia turned 60 years and my father 80 years old. Their birthday party was in the bar of Andrea and Kilian. All the church members were invited after worship service to eat a rather big snack that most decided not to have lunch afterward. At the snack bread, meat, cheese and different kinds of vegetables were served.

*In the background our conversation at the bar. In front you can see Veronika holding a baby, Lena, Mirko and Angelica.*

## News about People

Marcel will have another back surgery in the middle of June. We will certainly all have him in our prayer and hope that this will be the last back surgery for a long time. He has had at least a half a dozen back surgeries already over the last one or two years. Each back surgery is building upon the last one and hopefully nothing more will have to be done after this next one.

## German Section for Youth of Pickerington, Ohio

You have learned some German. Now comes the time to practice it. You can, however, be confident that most Swiss know some English. Still, there will be opportunities to add to your knowledge of German while staying in Switzerland. As you meet for English conversation, you might want to think about asking the people to teach you one sentence so you can improve with German, too. I wish the group from Pickerington, Ohio, a safe trip to Thun on Friday. We pray for a successful outreach to the people in the Thun region and well beyond it. We will see you at 4.00 p.m. on Saturday at our house.

## Article for the Feste Fundament (“Firm Foundation”)

My sixth and last article about Church History I dedicated to the origin of infant baptism. The article can be viewed at [www.gemeinde-christi.de/index.php/dff](http://www.gemeinde-christi.de/index.php/dff)

## Asking For Your Prayers:

- Strengthening our confession of Christ in the world
- The financial stability of this church
- Peter Lindenmann's job position in the foreign department in Bern
- Tino and Mo who are looking for a job in their fields
- Teklosien, his wife, and their newborn baby
- Martha's family as well as the church family
- my father, 80, and my mother, 84
- Marcel, 40, who will have another back surgery
- Lucia, 70, and Elfriede, 84 who are dealing with all kinds of health problems
- Rösli, 85, who attends the Sunday morning assembly as a regular visitor
- Our babies: Robin, Ilja, Elena, Jeanette, Joline, Sarah, Julia, and Eliane
- Anna, daughter of Ruedi and Regula, who has not visited the assembly for over one year

- Teenagers of church members – Mathias who has not attended church any more since 2009; Benjamin, 17, and Rahel, 16, occasionally visiting
- Ueli, a church visitor, who studies electrical engineering in Biel, 40 miles from Thun

**Any Funds Can Be Sent to Our Overseeing Congregation:**

Park Avenue Church of Christ  
5295 Park Avenue  
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Grace and Peace,

Ivan + Lena

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