

Church News April 2018

Easter, the best remedy for stress!

People say that if you stare at something long enough, you stop being able to see it. (As in the old saying: You can't see the wood for the trees.) Maybe civilization has blinded us. It seems odd that people in the Western world, with its materialism and abundance, are so weighed down by problems like sleeplessness, worries, frazzled nerves, very high stress levels and a feeling of being totally alone.

They say that we get stressed when we feel that a lot is demanded of us, and we can't quite live up to it. When we think that the world's survival depends on what we do – and don't do! The balance between taking responsibility and letting go of it is very subtle. Because the demands keep growing, be it the societal demand for the individual to become ever more efficient and competitive, or our own personal demand for a long and happy, and preferably perfect, life – ideally without pain and suffering. The demands are relentless, and the stress levels keep going up, whilst at the same time we continue to be blind to it.

But what do we do when all these demands and expectations become too much? And when our life expectations aren't met? Most people try to pull themselves together and work even harder. There is another solution, however, which we could call **Easter, the best remedy for stress!** It's not because we have time off at Easter that it's the best remedy for stress! No, it's the Easter message that makes it the best remedy. The message that tells us that there is something bigger than us. and that we're not alone – that the world doesn't fall apart because of what we do or don't do! Because Jesus, the Son of God, gave his life for us – so that we may remember that he has set us free. Free to be us with all our limitations.

We were never promised a life consisting exclusively of success, eternal youth and health. We were never promised a life as some sort of superhuman who can and will do everything!

But we were promised that God will always be with us. We were promised that as God's children we're allowed to ask for help! And help will come! Not in the shape of extra strength to help us stare at our "spot" when we're trying to improve, but rather in the shape of God's forgiving love which takes us back into the light, saying: It's okay to be you! It's okay that you can't manage everything.

Jesus did it all for us. That means that it's okay to only be who we are. It's okay not to be superhumans who manage everything. We were created as human beings, with opportunities that have to be tested, of course, but we have no guarantee that we'll succeed!

The happy de-stressing Easter message tells us that we don't have to manage everything, and that we only have to be ourselves, with all our defects and shortcomings – we don't have to do anything else, because Jesus already did it for us. He did what no other human can do! So whatever we maybe should or could have done differently, we'll have to live with, knowing that there is forgiveness for that as well. Because through his death Jesus has paid for all our sins.

The Danish Lutheran Church in New Zealand

The next Danish service in New Zealand will be in Auckland

Sunday 1 April, 2 pm

At the Danish House, 6 Rockridge Ave. Penrose.

Everyone is welcome. We look forward to seeing you.

In December the Church had 5 Christmas services in New Zealand, all with a good turnout.

Thank you so much for all the help and support that you offer the Church when we visit.

Without your support and encouragement it wouldn't be possible to have Danish services in New Zealand.

In May the editor of *Nyt* (News), the newsletter of Danske Sømands- og Udlandskirker (DSUK), Anne Meldgaard, will be visiting New Zealand and Australia. She will be visiting several Danes who have been involved with the Danish Church in New Zealand for the past 10 years. We look forward to meeting Anne and to talking to her about the Church and about how it's grown and functions.

Photographs Wanted

This coming November the Danish Church in New Zealand will be celebrating its 10th birthday. We will celebrate with a 'kagemand' (cake made in the shape of a person) at all the Christmas services, and hope to make a photo collage of these 10 years for the newsletter. So if you have any photos from services or other church related events from those 10 years, please do send them to me: anjagronne@hotmail.com

Anne Meldgaard will also be writing an article in *Nyt* about the Danish Church in New Zealand.

Follow the Danish Lutheran Church in New Zealand

You're always welcome to contact us. You can ring, e-mail or come to one of our services or events around New Zealand. For more information please contact Pastor Anja G. Mathiasen:

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You can also follow us on Facebook: "Danish Lutheran Church of New Zealand"

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