

Next Danish service

Auckland, the 4th of August at 4 pm at the Danish House. For more information:

<http://www.danishsocietynz.com/>



For the first time the Danish Church will this year celebrate a Christmas service in Wellington in associating with “Den danske legestue”. Everyone is invited and I am looking forward to meet as many as possible.

Christmas services this year will be held in Hamilton 30/11, Auckland 1/12, Dunedin 22/12, Wellington 15/12 and Christchurch 17/12.

Did you know that...

- The Danish Church New Zealand is a private church under the Danish Church Abroad/ the Danish Seamen's Church Abroad (DSUK). The church receives no funding from Denmark, and relies on contributions from members and volunteers, fundraising events, gifts and donations. As a yearly contributor to/member of the Danish Church you will receive 3-4 church newsletters a year. Funds can be donated via online banking (Westpac NZ: 03 0502 0445253-000) or sent by cheque (to Treasurer Anne Cathrine L. Petersen, 10 Marion St., Dunedin 9014). Alternatively you can contact Anne Cathrine on aclpetersen@gmail.com for more information.

Church News – August 2013

A greeting from the Danish pastor

Rejoice it is winter

It is winter, it is colder than it used to be, and if we are not careful we start to believe there is nothing to enjoy or rejoice before spring arrives. But I am thinking - There will always be something won't there? A renovation that takes longer than expected, a house that has to be sold, more work that needs to be done, another phase we have to go through, milestones that has to be reached, the right moment or something else that just has to be done before we are ready to be present, to

live, to love, and to rejoice. It is winter and it is cold and we have a good reason to light a candle, listen to some good music, enjoy a warm cup of tea, to walk some extra steps, to lighten up some other people's life or to sit down and take time to enjoy what we have.

I once heard a story about a prophet that arrived in a village. All



the people gathered around him curious to hear what message he brought to them. He asked the people if they were ready to go through hard times, seriously illness, and carry heavy burdens in the name of the Lord. - And they all replied: "Yes we will". Then the prophet asked them if they were ready to enjoy, rejoice, be happy and not worry in the name of the Lord. And silence met the prophet. No one said anything and everyone looked as if the prophet was joking. Then one said: "it's not that simple because I'm just going through a really hard time with my kids" and others followed; "I'm not getting my sleep these days", "I just need to lose some pounds first and then life will be great", "I need to finish a burden of work but after that I'm in", "Winter always makes me feel depressed but at spring I will start enjoying life", "after my exam I will have time and more energy to be present". The prophet looked at them with sorrow when he saw them leaving one by one.



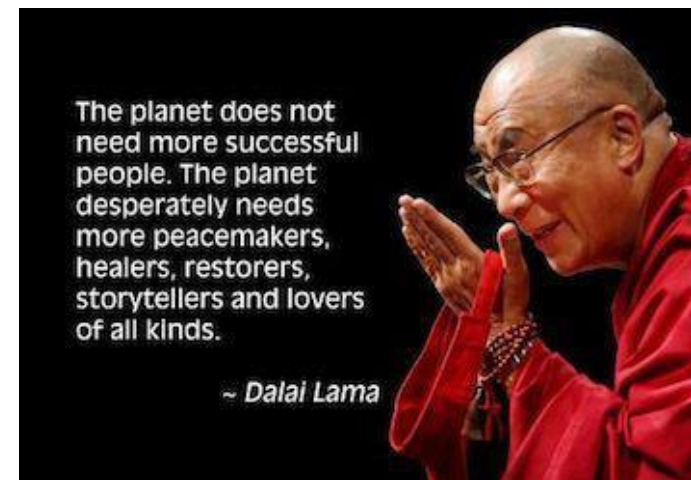
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Recently I had an amazing experience. I visited one of my friends, who had just moved in to a new house, has two preschool children, and a long "to-do" list. When I visited her she had made muffins, a delicious lunch and sat down with me for hours and offered me her presence that moment. That reminded me of what it's all about. Many of us are so busy, stressed, confused and have so much 'noise' in our heads that we do forget to enjoy, rejoice, and to be present now.

There will always be something. Life is full of surprises, detours, and unexpected tasks. But not all of them are negative. "The happiest people do not have the best of everything; they just make the best out of everything."

In the New Testament in Philippians 4:4 Paul says: "Rejoice in the Lord always: *and* again I say, Rejoice". One of the interesting things in this sentence is "and again I say". He really means it. So he repeats it and wants us to understand the importance of it. We are commanded to rejoice in the name of the Lord now and not just when we have become rich, perfect, and free of all obligations.

I'm not the best at hardly anything, and I forget birthdays and anniversaries just like everyone else. Again and again I forget what really matters to me but what I am learning is the importance of trying to enjoy the moment, to be present today and to rejoice in what I have. Let the burnt biscuits of life go and be grateful for what you do have. Happy winter - Pastor Anja G. Mathiassen



The planet does not need more successful people. The planet desperately needs more peacemakers, healers, restorers, storytellers and lovers of all kinds.

~ Dalai Lama