



Church News December 2016

The biggest trial of the year!

Watch out: The biggest trial of the year is just around the corner. Christmas and the summer holidays are in front of us! It's the time of year where it will show whether we have friends or we are lonely, whether our lives are in harmony with reality, whether our relationships still hold, and whether we can stand being with our children 24-7. What happens to the dynamics of the family, when we do not need anything other than to be together? We have been looking forward to the holidays.

Expectations are increased. We talk about everything we need - or don't need. Christmas and the holiday season is a wonderful time, it's the time of the year. But it can also be a difficult time. I think most people have tried to rush around like crazy up to a holiday. Closing down work, getting organized for the holidays and then out of the door with sweat on your forehead.

And then you're finally on holiday. It's hot. It rains. Your partner has laryngitis. The children argue. And you yourself are not as relaxed as you would like. The holiday atmosphere and the "carefree mode" have still not arrived. Instead, you just get tired and full of thoughts that are not suitable for the summer and light nights.

Christmas and the holiday MUST succeed, but they don't always. Conflicts and sorrows do not take a break. During holidays we sometimes struggle to get it all to fit. And then we have to hold on to it and fight for it. We must fight for what is worth fighting for: children, family, friends, marriage, good neighbors and love. Even if this means that we need to spend the entire vacation on it! God's love does not go on vacation, and God's care doesn't depend on how our own self-image and dreams are in harmony with reality. God's love also reaches us in the imperfect parts of our lives.

I wish you a Merry Christmas and happy summer holidays! Take good care of each other and let the following passage from the Old Testament be your rock to lean on to.

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you." (*Deuteronomy 31.6*)

Pastor Anja Mathiassen





Come join the Danish Church for a Christmas service in New Zealand – All are welcome!

Wellington: Saturday 26th November 2016 at 6pm - Brooklyn Hall

Hamilton: Saturday 3rd December 2016 at 11am - St. Matthews Lutheran Church, Abbotsford Street, Hamilton - After the Service there will be a shared lunch, everyone is welcome. Please bring a plate.

Auckland: Sunday 4th December 2016 at 4pm - Danish House, Penrose, Auckland. After the service there will be æbleskiver and Christmas Carols – All are welcome.

Dunedin: Sunday 18th December 2016 at 2pm, 304 Pine Hill Road, Liberton, Dunedin. After the service there will be a shared afternoon tea, everyone is welcome, please bring a plate to share.

Christchurch: Tuesday 20th December 2016 at 7.30pm. All are welcome

Scandinavian Christmas service at St. Paul Church 130 Burwood Rd, Burwood, After the service there will be supper and time to chat with fellow Scandinavians and friends. If able please 'bring a plate' to share.

Some highlights since last Church letter

Kawerau In August the pastor spent some time with some of the members of the Danish Lutheran Church, Erik and Josie Rohde in Kawerau.



It was a great experience to meet them and hear about the early days when Erik and his family immigrated to New Zealand from Denmark. Their life is a book worth! On Sunday we held a combined church service with the Presbyterian Church in Kawerau. I was overwhelmed by the kindness and interest in the Danish Lutheran Church.

In the photo: Pastor Bob McAulay, Erik Rohde, Pastor Anja G. Mathiassen and Josie Rohde

Nyborg Strand

At the end of August the pastor participated in the Annual Meeting of The Danish Church Abroad / Danish Seamen's Church at Nyborg Strand in Denmark.

We had some eventful and inspiring days. Employees from around the world, church committee's chairmen, church committee members and representatives, politicians and friends were gathered.

The photos below show: *The Chairman for DSUK Anne E. Jensen, Principal at YWCA London, Palle Baggsgaard, Bishop Marianne Christiansen, and a moment from our afternoon tea.*



Sydney

In September the pastor was invited by the Danish Church in Australia to come and meet the church and the congregation. Pastor Anja gave 2 talks about the Danish Church in New Zealand and preached at the Sunday service. It was also an excellent opportunity for the pastor to exchange ideas and experiences with pastor Bente Holgaard from the Danish Lutheran Church in Sydney.



Pastor Bente Holgaard and Pastor Anja G. Mathiassen, and Pastor Anja and the Sydney congregation in the Church Hall.



The Danish Lutheran Church of New Zealand welcomes your Support

Did you know that you can **support the Danish Lutheran Church of NZ** as a yearly contributor and become a member?

Funds can be donated via online banking (Westpac NZ: 03 0502 0445253-000) or sent by cheque to Treasurer Majbrit Lyngby Christiansen. Alternatively you can go to www.danishchurchnz.org or contact Majbrit on dkchurchsubs@gmail.com for more information.

