

## Church News – February 2012

A greeting from the Danish pastor

Since the last Church News a lot of things have happened:

The pastor took part in the celebration of the Danish bishop Monrad in Wellington.

The Danish bishop Steen Skovsgaard of Lolland-Falster and his wife Susanne visited the Danish Church New Zealand in November. Steen was an honoured guest and guest speaker at the Monrad celebrations in Wellington. We were pleased to have them here, and enjoyed their company and the Bishop's outstanding lectures and talks. The bishop and his wife also visited the Danish House in Auckland where Steen gave a lecture about Monrad for a full house. During the visit Bishop Steen Skovsgaard also met with Pastor Anja Mathiassen and had a pastoral supervision with her.

The Danish Church in New Zealand has now got access to the electronic church book of the Ministry for Ecclesiastical Affairs of Denmark. It means that in the future all baptisms, confirmations, weddings and funerals in the Danish Church New Zealand will be recorded directly into the church book of the Ministry for Ecclesiastical Affairs in Denmark.

A church meeting was held in December. The Danish Bishop Steen Skovsgaard and Margith Petersen the head of "Danske sømands- og udlandskirker" attended.

In December the Danish Church in New Zealand celebrated 3 Christmas services (Auckland, Dunedin, and Christchurch). All very popular and well visited.



### What happened to the purpose in life?

Summer in New Zealand is Christmas, BBQs, family gatherings, fresh berries, lots of salads, new potatoes, sun cream, childhood memories and summer blues. Summer is ending, and we need to get ready for autumn, for our daily lives with routines and repetitions. This time of the year is a trial for many people. After weeks with plenty of daylight, lots of time for friends and families, and lots of lazy days, it can be heavy to face the end for summer and to get ready for autumn. So you do what you have to do, and no more. You get up in the morning, you eat breakfast, you go to work, you watch television, and you go to bed. Day after day. The weekends may be different - you go out for dinner because you were invited a long time ago and not because you want to. You eat, drink, talk, laugh when it is expected, and go home to bed, and wonder if this is it, or what happened to the purpose in life? Life has become living by routine. But strangely enough, in the middle of these mechanical, empty and endless days it can happen suddenly that you are touched by something unexpected, a comment, a joke, a smile, a look, or something else. Something that breaks through to your life and makes it grow for a moment. Then you pull yourself together and continue living as before but something has touched you, and you are no longer the same. You have felt one of the moments where life and joy penetrate you without knowing how that could have happened because you felt sure that the purpose in life and all your opportunities were used up. You had scattered seed on your field, gone to bed at night, got up in the morning, and without knowing it, your seed had sprouted and grown.

What happened to the purpose in life? The answer depends on the individual. It depends on how you are, and where you are in your life. But one thing is certain: the purpose always returns. Because the purpose in life and the joy is something we cannot take but can only be given. When it's gone, it's gone, and when it's present, we are lucky.



Jesus explains this phenomenon as a part of the kingdom of Christ on Earth. He tells a parable (Mark 4.26-29) about a man who scattered seed on the ground. He sleeps and rises, night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows, he knows not how.

There are still things in life we cannot control. When the joy, motivation and purpose in life have totally gone from our lives it can seem impossible to believe that anything positive and happy will ever happen again. But the joyful in this situation is that it grows when we are asleep. It reaches us when we can't reach for it.

To ask for the purpose in life, to experience discouragement and a slice of depression is a part of life, and a part of being human. It is the end of summer, it's time to let go, to be, and to wait for the joy, the purpose, and all the new possibilities that will be brought to us.

Merry autumn

Pastor Anja G. Mathiassen

### **Beat the barrel in Dunedin:**

Everyone is welcome to attend the Danish Fastelavns party in Dunedin the 19<sup>th</sup> of February at 2pm. For the address contact [anjagronne@hotmail.com](mailto:anjagronne@hotmail.com)



### **Easter Church services;**

Auckland the 1<sup>st</sup> of April at 4 pm in the Danish House

More information is to found at [www.danishchurchnz.org](http://www.danishchurchnz.org)

### **Did you know, that ...**

- You can support the Danish Church New Zealand Inc with a \$25 contribution per year. If you wish to become a financial supporter of the church, please e-mail [anjagronne@hotmail.com](mailto:anjagronne@hotmail.com)

