Newsletter in November

United Methodist Church
Flensburg Congregation
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Dear friends!

You shall live!

This month's newsletter brings a warm invitation to worship with us this coming Sunday, November 8. It's another Sunday where we are delighted to welcome a guest, William Barnard-Jones, better known to many



Flensburg Methodists as BJ, formerly pastor to the congregations in Flensburg and Kiel, now retired in Hamburg, where he can still be heard preaching on many Sundays. So many of you in Flensburg have shared with me your memories of times with BJ, always with a smile, with words of gratitude and affection. The title of his sermon this Sunday is "You shall live!" We wish BJ and his wife Petra a safe trip to Flensburg and a blessed reunion with the city and our congregation.

A Sunday with a difference – let's definitely do it again sometime!

Why not combine one good thing with another? That was our conclusion when we realised that a recent Sunday – which had long been set aside for a visit from Pastor May-Britt Johannsen from Engelsby – would also be a good time for a bit of an outing. The upshot being that after the service on 27 September, Flensburg Methodists and friends did not take their seats as usual around the table in St Jürgen parish hall, but reconvened at Café Riebe in Flensburg-Mürwik. It was quite a day of differences, because our pianist Reginhild Staudacker was committed elsewhere and Pastor Johannsen came to the rescue, inviting Sönke Thomsen to play the piano during the service. We'd like to extend a big, warm thank-you to May-Britt and Sönke.

Pastor Johannsen spoke about the encounter between Jesus and the Canaanite woman (Matthew's Gospel 15:21–28). Anyone who would like to read or revisit the sermon is welcome to ask me for a copy.

Greetings from our neighbours in Kiel



The two congregations of the Methodist Church in Kiel are delighted to be able to use their sanctuary again. As mentioned in the last newsletter, the floorings needed replacing following water damage. The work was recently completed and, as the picture shows, sent by a very pleased Pastor Rainer, the result is looking good.

In the international congregation, preparations for the Thanksgiving celebration on 8 November are in full swing. Since the beginnings of International Kiel Church in 2018, this celebration has been an important event in the calendar. With music and thoughts about Thanksgiving as sharing in gratitude for God's good gifts, accompanied by a wealth of international dishes at the buffet – warm, like the atmosphere – it's quite a highlight and all are welcome (Gneisenaustraße 2 in Kiel, on 8.11. at 5 pm).

Eternity Sunday and "Never Walk Alone"

On 22 November, we will be marking Eternity Sunday, remembering that this world may be transient, but the kingdom of God, as the Bible calls it, is eternal. Another, older name for this Sunday in German is "Day of Remembrance for the Departed". Like many other congregations, we will commemorate those who have passed away during the year and light candles. Our candles will also be lit for the men and women whose names we know through "Never Walk Alone".

For twenty years now, Methodists and others from Flensburg churches have accompanied people on their final journey at the "Never Walk Alone" farewell services, 153 in all. The first of these services at Friedenshügel cemetery, like most of them over the years, was led by Edgar Nordmann and took place on 7 November 2006.

Services in November and December

All events take place at 11.00 am in St Jürgen parish hall
in Flensburg, Jürgensgaarder Str. 1, followed by coffee fellowship

8 November	Church service with a guest preacher Local Pastor William Barnard-Jones ("BJ", Hamburg) & Edgar Nordmann *You shall live!* Based on Jeremiah 29:1, 4–14
22 November	Service for Eternity Sunday with the lighting of remembrance candles *Life – a room with an outlook* Gillian Horton-Krüger & Dörte Lorenzen
6 December Second Sunday in Advent	Worship in Advent Gillian Horton-Krüger & Peter Nordmann
13 December Third Sunday in Advent	Advent fellowship – with seasonal reflection, music and brunch Gillian Horton-Krüger & others
27 December First Sunday after Christmas	Worship at Christmas Pastor Rainer Prüßmann (Kiel) & Gillian Horton-Krüger
	First services of the new year on 17 and 31 January

This hydrangea and some of its neighbours have filled several vases for our services in Jürgensby this year. We are still enjoying a few of their late blooms here in Kiel, but I also like to stoop to admire the delicate, filigree structures that become visible once the petals have lost their summer "flesh" and colour. The leaves – which in this picture are just a hint in the background – by now are looking distinctly autumnal, too, colourful in a different way. This phase has its own beauty, after the flush of summer.



I recently picked up a snippet from Isaiah, 46:4, which I found poignant, consoling, not just for this month of November, but for life.

> "Even to your old age I am faithful, even when you turn grey I will carry you. I have made, and I will bear; I will carry and will save."

May God bless us this November, whether we are grey on top or not (!), help us to feel His faithfulness and strength, and find a little something beautiful to treasure for a moment every day.

Yours, Gillian Horton-Krüger

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