



One of the most commonly found sentences in the Bible is: *Fear not!* We can confidently ask ourselves, whether this is a sentence for gullible people. Or is it a phrase for daring people, who know no danger and perish in it?

In this world you will have tribulation, says Jesus on the other hand in the gospel of John. He himself knows that fear and distress are part of being human. And fear really takes many forms:

There is a moment of shock, in which the adrenaline suddenly kicks in – until a moment later I notice that my body's own warning system was triggered for no reason, and I laugh as I realise that the supposed danger does not really exist.



There is that dangerous moment in traffic, in which a critical situation just turns out alright. In the moment of danger, I have no time to think, I react automatically. It is only afterwards that I feel fear – when I gratefully realise how indescribably lucky I was.

There is also that uncomfortable feeling, when I consciously engage in a new experience and know that theoretically things could go wrong. I think of a mountain tour, at the limits of my capabilities – or a challenge in everyday life. When I voluntarily face such an experience, the fear of the unknown is usually met with anticipation. And the risk of failure with the desire to discover something new. I am confident that I am up to the task. My fear is then like a good friend warning me not to overestimate myself. It helps me to be attentive and concen-

trated, to react quickly to unforeseen circumstances and to reach my goal successfully.

There is the seriously perceived threat. My fear sounds the alarm: be careful, you've had bad experiences here! Watch out, you can only lose! Or even quite diffusely: Watch out, something's wrong here!! Then it simply feels incredibly good, not to be alone and to feel another person close to me, who I trust and who I can talk to!

And many a person has already experienced mortal fear or knows the horror of what people can do to each other.

Whatever grimace, whatever fear looks like: the more fearful I am, the tighter it gets. My scope of action becomes narrower, I feel threatened, pushed into the corner, at worst left alone in my distress.

Fear not, we sing during worship. This phrase is no cheap consolation. The words are addressed to people in real distress, they show us that someone is watching and is aware of our fear. *In this world you will have tribulation*, says Jesus, *but take heart, I have overcome the world*. God sees my fear – and beyond.

You have set my feet in a wide place, sings the psalmist: from all frightening confinement, God leads me out into a wide space, to where my soul can breathe a sigh of relief and my foot finds support, where my scope of action widens and my gaze opens up. My

fear is in good hands with God – he takes it seriously, he knows it and gives me a piece of his vastness. How comforting!

I hope you and I will have this experience that God sets our feet in a wide place. Especially now, after the confinement of the last months. Let us rejoice in everything that is good and possible. Let us meet each other with gratitude, goodwill and due respect. Let us take courageous steps out into the beauty and vastness of creation. Let us rejoice in life and in the people we love. Let us encourage each other and take each other by the hand if necessary. Not only at Easter, does death not have the final word. *You are my God!* It says in Psalm 31 – *My times are in your hands*. How good, how reassuring, how wonderful!

Birgit Foelsche-Gnigler



Prayer evening 30.05.

With the May 30th prayer evening, we have resumed our physical church life. We're able to keep the necessary distances, because we were a small circle. And for this purpose we cut our worship back - usually we sing 4 to 5 songs at the beginning and the end - to meet the concerns about singing.

Pentecost on 31.05.

The celebration of Pentecost on May 31st was our first worship service since the lock-down. Since March 8th we had not come together for a Sunday Service.

With information signs and distance markings on the chairs, with security help and floor markings, with sufficient disinfection facilities and the prescribed mouth-and-nose protection, we were nevertheless very happy to be able to celebrate together again!

After this service was transmitted throughout Austria via our homepage or the Zoom video conference program, we were able to celebrate Holy Communion afterwards. The Holy Communion also was celebrated in an unusual and new form.



With floor markings for individuals and shared households. But also here it was possible to realize the essential contents of the Lord's Supper, and to welcome the recep-

tion and fellowship with God and with each other under the given conditions.

Each and everyone was addressed with his or her own name and so it was possible to communicate closeness and unity.

Keyword communication: The procedure of how we want to celebrate Holy Communion was already announced by email on Friday and also explained in detail before the celebration of Holy Communion. This meant that all participants were well acquainted and could make their decision calmly and in advance. Nobody was taken by surprise and this was certainly an essential factor for a harmonious communion.



Closed session on AK 04.06.

The closed session of the Pastors of the Annual Conference 2020 took place on June 04.

Most of the pastors had gathered in Vienna for this purpose and Bishop Patrick Streiff, Superintendent Wilfried Nausner and Michael Nausner had joined in via Zoom.

An important background of the meeting was the farewell of Matthew Laferty, pastor of the English-speaking congregation in Vienna (in the front right of the picture).

Matthew will be director of the ecumenical affairs office of our church in Rome. With a personal video of each of us and two huge gift baskets, we had to let him leave. Over the years he has become a kind and valued colleague.

We wish him God's blessing and much strength and joy in his new task!

Birthdays

We wish all members, friends and acquaintances who have a birthday in July, August or September all the love, God's blessing, and his gracious and benevolent company in the new year!



Farewell to www.emk-graz.at

At the end of June we will say farewell to our own homepage and begin to give a huge thanks to Gerhard Weissenbrunner! He put in years of tireless and self-sacrificing effort into keeping our homepage.

However, in the last years, the double track between www.emk.at/graz and www.emk-graz.at has become an increasing problem. Where does one find what? What is current? We have decided to take the step and are most at home with www.emk.at/graz.

From the Parish Council

On May 22, the Parish Council had its first, „Garden Meeting“. Here was the opportunity to exchange experiences and challenges with COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, the procedure for resuming church service was determined.

On June 22, we were able to hold the board meeting, which had been planned for March. The focus of the meeting was about property management.

Choon-Young Kim-Gross gave us an insight into her work. This way tasks and responsibilities became transparent. Also, problems and challenges combined with wishes and improvement for the future were discussed.

Just like all the individual areas of our congregation, we are thankful for the work which she has done as well as for the conversation. By doing this we are able to plan and think ahead with those involved and thus ultimately for the community. Choon-Young is not only the Property Manager, but she is also our Ecumenical Representative.

We also talked about the current state of affairs specifically about the wish to start an ecumenical group or ecumenical circle.



Masks - yes or no?

The legal regulations are clear: Since June 15 masks do not have to be worn while practicing religion. One meter distance must still be maintained. For our careful sisters and brothers as well as for people for whom the ease has come to quickly, we will nevertheless have a mouth-nose protection zone in our church. Those who come a bit earlier or leave a bit more casually after the church service will hopefully find here the protected area, she or he needs in order to celebrate.

Absence

Local pastor Frank Moritz-Jauk is on holiday from 17.08. to 05.09. In urgent cases, district lay referent Ute Frühwirth can be reached at 0650 3216841 and SI Stefan Schröckenfuchs at 0699 11484210

Events

Theological Talk

Every 1st Tuesday of the month
6:30 pm, Devotion Room

Wednesday Circle

Every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month
10:00 am, Devotion Room
starting again in september (09.09.)

Prayer Group in the Devotion Room

Every Friday 9:30 am and Sunday 9:15 am

Youth Group

Every Sunday with their own Program.
Contact: Michel Gnigler

Korean speaking Bible Study

Every Sunday at 12:30 pm

Women

Every 1st Wednesday of the month
3:30 pm, Devotion Room
starting again in september (02.09.)
Contact: Felizitas Petau

Choir

starting again in september

Chinese speaking Sunday Service

Every 1st and 3rd Sunday at 3:30 pm

Chinese speaking Bible Study

Every 2nd and 4th Sunday at 3:30 pm

Prayerevening

always on the last Saturday of the month
7:00 pm in the Main Church.

Sunday Services

Su 05.07. Ice eating in the yard	9:30	Sunday Service with families Responsible: Sundayschooleam	Genesis 1:1-2:4a 2.Corinthians 13:11-13 Matthew 28:16-20
Su 12.07.	9:30	Sunday Service with Holy Communion Sermon: Frank Moritz-Jauk	Genesis 25:19-34 Romans 8:1-11 Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23
Su 19.07.	9:30	Sunday Service Sermon: Sonja Herler	Genesis 28:10-19a Romans 8:12-25 Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43
Su 26.07.	9:30	Sunday Service Sermon: Frank Moritz-Jauk	Genesis 29:15-28 Romans 8:26-39 Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52
Su 02.08.	9:30	Sunday Service with Holy Communion Sermon: Christoph Petau	Genesis 32:22-31 Romans 9:1-5 Matthew 14:13-21
Su 09.08.	9:30	Sunday Service Sermon: Bruno Gasper	Genesis 37:1-4 Romans 10:5-15 Matthew 14:22-33
Su 16.08.	9:30	Sunday Service Sermon: Frank Moritz-Jauk	Genesis 45:1-15 Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32 Matthew 15:21-28
Su 23.08.	9:30	Sunday Service Sermon: Gerhard Weissenbrunner	Exodus 1:8-2:10 Romans 12:1-8 Matthew 16:13-20
Su 30.08.	9:30	Sunday Service Sermon: Ute Frühwirth	Exodus 3:1-15 Romans 12:9-21 Matthew 16:21-28
Su 06.09. Congregational Lunch KJ-Day	9:30	Sunday Service with Holy Communion Sermon: Frank Moritz-Jauk	Exodus 12:1-14 Romans 13:8-14 Matthew 18:15-20

picture reference:

page 1: Birgit Foelsche-Gnigler, page 2, left above: Gerhard Weissenbrunner, left down below: Felizitas Petau, right above: Martin Obermeir-Siegrist, right down below: Frank Moritz-Jauk, page 3: Mona El Falaky on Pixabay

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