

# NEWS



## The United Methodist Church in Graz

Recently a good friend of mine asked me what are we doing about Sunday Services during these times. I told him that we offer Sunday Service via zoom and simultaneously have Sunday Service in church where it is possible. We have come up with a security concept which, in addition to the governmental regulations like FFP2 masks, 2 meters distance and no singing, also will include antigen tests which are not older than 24 hours.

Besides this we also offer a third possibility – house worships every week which include liturgical elements and usually two sermons.

Lapidar, my friend, replied, well the Sunday Services with a mask and without singing, they don't really work, they don't give much pleasure. The video services

are not appealing because you are only half there and not focused, because you just cannot celebrate in your home like you can in church.

One can view this as an individual opinion. Although he did not criticize me, it touched me personally and I thought to myself, hey! What is this all about? Do you think I find this funny? For someone who tries week

after week to make the best out of the situation and many times thought about how we can get together in the congregation during the pandemic, well his complaint really got on my nerves. Really.

Again, the image of the half full or half empty glass came to mind. Either one is happy that the glass is



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still half full and one can enjoy another half glass of wine or one complains that the glass is already half empty and soon will be empty.

It is a matter of perspective.

But let us keep this question in mind: Has anything at anytime improved through complaining?

I should probably differentiate here between complaining and complaining.

Let me try the following distinction: complaining as a cry for help or to make contact is really okay. I am not feeling well, I am suffering, I need support and I do not want to be alone. What you cannot know is really how I am doing, therefore I am saying it out loud. This complaining is good and important and should always be possible.

However, when complaining is about, „everything is negative“, then this is a different. Here I refer to an expression of feeling but not from an emergency but from a discontent.

A discontent, a dissatisfaction that accusingly and passively demands an improvement in the situation without one's own part being noticed.

What could we do better together would be for me the active question. If I do not have the capacity then I would hope for the following signal – okay – it is not as nice as it was before the pandemic, but we will get through this together.

Which real soccer fan stays at home to watch TV because it is raining or too cold outside? The conditions are not optimal? Who stays away from the game only because the own team lost, regardless of how it happened?

Dear friend if you do not partake in the Sunday Service because the conditions are only partial – not optimal, do you think this promotes your relationship to God?

I ask myself this.

And not because I want to point my finger at you, but because I have exactly this same concern when I think of you and people who feel like you.

What happens when we are not a part of this but turn away from it?

We humans forget most skills when we do not practice them. With the exception of riding a bike. But think about languages, musical pieces with an instrument or calculating in high school.

That is why I advocate for the half-full glass!

Let's be true, "fans", who do not play football but want to stay in a living relationship with God.

*Frank Moritz-Jauk*

## 17.01 Ecumenical Worship Service on the Day of Judaism

This year's worship service on the Day of Judaism on January 17, 2021, could not be celebrated as an attendance service due to the pandemic. However, since the problem was recognised early, we were able to engage our Zoom technology team from Graz, consisting of the Choi brothers, to stream this worship service. In the preparation, we, that is the Graz Committee for Christian-Jewish Cooperation (*Grazer Komitee für Christlich-Jüdische Zusammenarbeit*), wanted to address both the pandemic and the situation surrounding the attack on the president of the Jewish community in Graz. What is needed in such a situation? This is how the title 'Courage, courage', from



the French for 'Courage, courage', came about. Taking Exodus 1:15-22 as a starting point, where the two courageous midwives Shifra and Puah are mentioned, former Bishop Dr. Michael Bünker made the currency clear in a brilliant sermon. Greek Orthodox singing, Methodist prayer and Protestant organ music, as well as readings and intercessions made for a very rich and absolutely worthy service that hopefully was enjoyed by many. Christian Leibnitz as chairman of the Ecumenical Forum of Christian Churches in Styria (*Ökumenisches Forum [ÖF] Christlicher Kirchen in der Steiermark*) participated in the organisation of the service and therefore made clear that the ÖF supports the intention of this service: all Christians should recognise that our common roots lie in Judaism and that we are invited to a loving and respectful interaction with each other.

## Birthdays

We wish all members and friends, who celebrate their birthday in March or April God's blessing! God accompanies you and us and for that we are grateful!



## January 23, Ecumenical Worship Service Leibnitz

The annual ecumenical worship service in Leibnitz could also not go ahead this year because of Covid-19. Here the organisers took a different approach and invited the participants to produce videos of their short sermon and their liturgical tasks. This material was then joined together for a worship service and made available via a YouTube channel. The result was an interesting, entertaining format, and a worthy and good worship service.

## 27.01. Christmas Tree Activity

A big thanks goes out to our Methodist youth, who not only took down the Christmas tree, but also took the decorations off the tree and disposed of it! In the times of the pandemic it is really difficult to carry out joint activities and that this



was possible despite wearing a FFP2 mask really deserves respect. And the reliability with which you were there when you were asked and needed as youth is also a valuable experience for the whole congregation.

## 09.02. Beginning of Faithtraining

On February 9, we began our faith training. The name "faith training" is intentionally playing with the association to training in sports or in the gym; being and staying fit in faith requires practice. We are happy to provide the space to practice and exercise the "faith muscles", every Tuesday evening starting at 7pm.

In these eight sessions we warm up with different topics and Bible texts, and then face challenging questions of our time in an appreciative exchange. An opening prayer and a 10-minute impulse provide the introduction to each unit. And with the publication of this church NEWS we have already trained in 4 units and are looking forward to each person who also feels the incentive to keep fit in faith!

## Sunday school

FINALLY SOSCHU AGAIN! Since the re-opening of our services in mid-February, we are also celebrating Sunday School again with respect to the general rules: Testing, spacing, masking, also no so-schumonatsong, but with joy and lots of fun. Everyone who wants is invited - there is enough space.

However, so that everyone can be present, we have learned from the adults. From Sunday 07 March we will broadcast the Soschu on ZOOM.

## Prayer chain

There is scheduled once again a Prayer Chain, from 8.00 pm, Good Friday to 8.00 pm, Easter Saturday, to which an invitation will be sent in good time via Doodle. Those of us participating will sign up and pray for one hour, so that there will be a continuous prayer chain.



## Climate protection group

The climate protection group met with Ms. Stenglein from Klimabündnis Steiermark and selected and decided on a number of measures from the collection of ideas. The group now consists of 6 people but is still open to interested people, which means that you can still participate or contribute ideas at this time. Please just contact the pastor.



Hyo Jung Bang has returned to her home in South Korea. For one year she was with us in Graz, and although she could not finish her studies because of the Corona - Pandemic, we shared beautiful fellowship together in the church. We will miss her beautiful voice. All the best and God's blessings, 안녕!

**Due to the Covid-19 situation it can happen again and again that events are cancelled. For more information, please visit [www.emk.at](http://www.emk.at) or contact the pastor or responsible contact person. Thank you!**

## Events

### Faithtraining

Every Tuesday of the month  
07:00 pm, via Zoom or in the Devotionsroom

### Wednesday Circle

Every Wednesday of the month  
10:30 am, via Zoom as telephoneconference

### Prayer group in the Devotion Room

Fridays at 9:30 am and Sundays at 9:15 am

### Youth

postponed  
Kontakt: Ali und Alissa

### Prayerevening

maybe on 24. April 2021 at 07:00 pm in church,  
please ask the pastor

### Women

„Aufgerichtet zwischen Himmel und Erde“

Wednesday 7. April 2021 at 3:30 pm

Easterwalk through Graz

Kontakt: Felizitas Petau

### Choir

postponed

Kontakt: Suyoung Ham

### Korean speaking Bible Study

Every Sunday at 12:30 pm

### Chinese speaking Sunday Service

Every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday at 3:30 pm

### Chinese speaking Bible Study

Every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday at 3:30 pm

picture reference:

page 1, page 2 left and page 3 above right: Pixabay , page 3 bottom right: Coon Young Kim-Gross, all other pictures: Frank Moritz-Jauk.

# Sunday Services

Su 07.03. Acceptance Membership Zoom	9:30	<b>Sunday Service with Holy Communion</b> Sermon: Frank Moritz-Jauk	2. Mose 20, 1-17 1. Corinthians 1, 18-25 John 2, 13-22
Su 14.03.	9:30	<b>Sunday Service</b> Sermon: Frank Moritz-Jauk	4. Mose 21, 4-9 Ephesians 2, 1-10 John 3, 14-21
Su 21.03.	9:30	<b>Sunday Service</b> Sermon: Gerhard Weissenbrunner	Jeremiah 31, 31-34 Hebrews 5, 5-10 John 12, 20-33
Su 28.03.	9:30	<b>Sunday Service</b> Sermon: Sonja Herler	Isaiah 50,4-9a Philippians 2,5-11 Mark 11,1-11
Fr 02.04. Good Friday	18:00	<b>Sunday Service</b> Sermon: Frank Moritz-Jauk	Isaiah 52, 13-53, 12 Hebrews 10, 16-25 John 18, 1-19,42
Su 04.04. Easter	9:30	<b>Sunday Service with Holy Communion</b> Sermon: Frank Moritz-Jauk	Acts 10, 34-43 1. Corinthians 15, 1-11 John 20, 1-18
Su 11.04.	9:30	<b>Sunday Service</b> Sermon: Frank Moritz-Jauk	Acts 4, 32-35 1. John 1,1-2,2 John 20, 19-31
Su 18.04.	9:30	<b>Sunday Service</b> Sermon: Ute Frühwirth	Acts 3, 12-19 1. John 3, 1-7 Luke 24, 36b-48
Su 25.04.	9:30	<b>Sunday Service with Holy Communion</b> Sermon: Frank Moritz-Jauk	Acts 4, 5-12 1. John 3, 16-24 John 10, 11-18
Su 02.05.	9:30	<b>Sunday Service</b> Sermon: Frank Moritz-Jauk	Acts 8, 26-40 1. John 4, 7-21 John 15, 1-8

