

SERVING THE LORD IN

K-TOWN, GERMANY

NEWS FROM JENSEN FAMILY



December 2021

Landstuhl, Germany
December 15, 2021

Dear friends,

So much has happened since we last wrote! On Sunday, October 17, I was installed as pastor of Kaiserslautern Evangelical Lutheran Church. The director of LCMS Eurasia, Rev. Krikava, preached. It was an honor to distribute Christ's Body and Blood with Rev. Tiews, who served the vacancy at KELC until our arrival. Also in attendance were Rev. Schuschke from Trinity, Frankfurt, two LCMS chaplains, as well as Rev. Heinz from our partner church in France and Rev. Ramme, who has accepted a call to serve our German partner church's congregation in Kaiserslautern.

The day after my installation, Emma and I went to look at an apartment in Landstuhl. We loved what we saw and decided to jump on it right away, especially considering how fast the rentals go here and the number of people looking at the same apartment. We ended up signing on the place that same day. What a joy to see members of KELC come together to help us move in! Having permanent housing was a necessary first step before completing other things like applying for our visas, registering a car, and so forth. We were so thankful to have gotten housing taken care of quickly so that everything else could fall into place.

You might be familiar with Landstuhl because of the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center (LRMC). We live in Landstuhl-Atzel, a few minutes away from the US military hospital. Down the street is a small chapel looking out over Landstuhl. From there we can see airplanes landing and taking off at Ramstein Air Base, the McDonald's sitting on property formerly owned by KELC, and Burg Nanstein, the castle of Franz von Sickingen. Sickingen led the Knights' Revolt and was a defender of Martin Luther. Emma and I enjoy walking to the chapel and contemplating the history of the region.

On the night of my installation, I purchased a car from one of our families moving back to the United States. It has been quite a process getting the car registered in the German system. First it had to go through German customs and pass various inspections. The entire process took one and a half months. Life is much easier now that we have a car! Public transportation in Germany is helpful, but it has its limitations. We were not able to get to church by ourselves on Sunday mornings and had to rely on members for much of our mobility. Now we can return the favor!

Our theme for this Advent season has been the Great "O" Antiphons (LSB 357). At each Sunday Bible Class and Wednesday Evening midweek service we have been discussing an antiphon leading up to Christmas. In this email, I am also sending out our first congregational newsletter. You can read all about the "O" Antiphons there. Our midweek services are held in members' homes. We have a light supper followed by a Vespers service. The sermon is a discussion on the "O" Antiphon for the day and we use the "O" Antiphon where it belongs right before the Magnificat. We also sing the respective verse from "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel."

Plans are also well underway for our Christmas services! I will preach in German for our sister church's congregation in Kaiserslautern, St. Michaelis (this is the church whose building we rent). Then we will have

our English service of Lessons and Carols, with special involvement from the children of the congregation. We will contemplate the Old Testament prophecies of Christ's birth and hear about their fulfillment in the New Testament, all while singing our favorite Christmas hymns. Christmas Day will be a regular Divine Service, and on the Sunday after Christmas we will have the opportunity to celebrate St. Stephen's Day. We are also hoping to have a small New Years' Eve Service, possibly in a member's home. We will contemplate God's mercy upon us in the previous year and pray for His grace to accompany us throughout the year of our Lord 2022, as well as observing the Feast of the Circumcision and Name of Jesus.

Coronavirus restrictions are ever-changing in Germany and always seem to be getting more restrictive. There is a draconian "lockdown of the unvaccinated," meaning those who are not vaccinated against Covid-19 are only permitted to enter places that provide "essential" services, such as the grocery store or the doctor's office. These policies have little or nothing to do with public health, but are rather designed to pressure mature, thinking adults into vaccinating themselves and their children. Government offices, public transportation, and religious services in our region require proof of vaccination, recovery, or a negative test for entry. The government does not consider religious expression to be absolutely essential. Please keep us and our congregation in your prayers as we maneuver the burden the German government is placing upon us.

With the tighter Coronavirus restrictions has also come the closure of beloved Christmas Markets all around Germany. The Frankfurt Christmas Market, however, remains open. This led to a wonderful opportunity last weekend! Our sister congregation, Trinity Frankfurt (served by LCMS missionary Rev. Gary Schuschke), puts on a Choral Vespers every year at the Alte Nikolaikirche in conjunction with the Christmas Market. This year, one of our members and a dear college friend of Emma's, Hannah Swenson, played organ, Emma played violin, and I had the honor of preaching the German sermon on the real meaning of Advent and Christmas. And we were able to enjoy the Christmas Market!

Jesus be with you,

Rev. Nathaniel Jensen

The Jensen Family



My Installation at KELC



Emma & Hannah



Preaching at the Alte Nikolaikirche, Frankfurt



There are many opportunities to serve as short-term or GEO missionaries. Check out the current list and download an application at lcms.org/service. Click on "Service Opportunities."

To support the LCMS through the work of Rev. Nathaniel and Emma Jensen, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
P.O. Box 66861
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861

Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Mark checks "Jensen-Germany Support." Gifts can also be given securely online through the LCMS website, on my online giving page at lcms.org/jensen.