



Siegelbach, Germany
July 25, 2026

Dear friends,

I closed my last newsletter at the end of January mentioning our upcoming trip to the army base in Grafenwöhr, Bavaria, where I was in contact with a group of Lutherans. Some of our members in Kaiserslautern would also soon be moving to the Grafenwöhr/Vilseck area. We worked with our contacts in Grafenwöhr—including Renatus Voigt, the SELK pastor in Nürnberg—to locate Lutherans and invite them to the service. We had 14 in attendance at our first Divine Service! I told the folks there I would come once per month (it's a 4 hour drive from Kaiserslautern) until something else could get worked out. At Easter, a group of eleven from Grafenwöhr came out to Kaiserslautern. Two of our main contacts in Grafenwöhr—Harrison Sieck and Keven Boatman—put in a lot of effort to organize slots at the chapels and invite their friends to church. At the end of May I was able to hand off our little Grafenwöhr congregation to LCMS Army Chaplain Rob Kraft. He will be able to hold down the fort as we recruit a civilian pastor to take over when his time is up. Grafenwöhr, like Spangdahlem, is a great opportunity to work through our U.S. military contacts to reach other English-speakers and from there the local German-speaking communities. There are no SELK congregations within one hour of either Grafenwöhr or Spangdahlem.

I continue to travel to Spangdahlem weekly to hold services at the base chapel. Usually a few folks from Kaiserslautern accompany me, which makes the 1.5 hour drive not only bearable but even fun! Abel Wilson often reads from an article or book we can discuss on the way. We're now working on better advertising at Spangdahlem. Moving onto base was the best thing we could have done. Without that decision we would be down to one family now. The conflict in Iran has complicated things. The fighter pilots who were attending when I last wrote were all deployed to the Middle East. We pray for them and their safety every Sunday. In the meantime, we are excited to report that Pastor Tim Sandeno will be arriving in January to take over from me. He is a retired naval pilot and I'm confident his daily presence in the area will really get things moving. We plant and water; God will give the growth!

God certainly gave us growth in a beautiful way at the Easter Vigil service where we had six confirmations. Three sons of our congregation went through our usual youth catechesis program, and three were adult converts. Adam was stationed here with the Army and met his wife, Noelle, a native German. I took them both through marriage counseling, which included basic catechesis. They also attended our Confessions Study regularly. I performed the church wedding for Adam and Noelle in March and then confirmed them at Easter. They have since moved to Grafenwöhr, where they will be active members of the congregation. Adam is excited to help organize over there what he has learned here, including men's group and Confessions study. Noelle wants to help get a women's group organized and her German background will go a long way in German-language outreach in the area. With Adam and Noelle you can see how all our work here in Germany is connected.

The last confirmand on Easter was Jazz—a Bosnian who has lived in Germany for the last 25 years. He called me on the phone last year just wanting to talk to a pastor. Then he started attending our Wednesday evening service and Confessions Study, which became his catechesis, along with his personal passion for theological reading. Jazz fought in the Bosnian civil war and still suffers from the effects. After a year with us we determined together it was time for him to officially join the Lutheran Church. Due to his medication, Jazz is not able to come to Sunday morning services, but he attends every evening activity we offer, which

makes our Wednesday evening Divine Service that much more important. In February, I performed the blessing of a civil marriage for Jazz and his Croatian wife.

For years we have been using *The Lutheran Hymnal* (1941) as a supplement to *Lutheran Service Book* so we can enjoy the number of hymns in TLH that did not make it into LSB. We first received a couple boxes of TLH from Emma's home congregation, St. Barnabas in Sault Ste. Marie, MI. Then Deaconess Caroly Brinkley from the Military Project out of the Ft. Wayne seminary offered us several more boxes she recently acquired, and we gladly accepted! We're hoping they can be used at Grafenwöhr, Spangdahlem, and our other church plants as a supplement to LSB. The latest shipment of TLH is from a generous donation of St. Paul's in Preble, Indiana, where I did my two years of fieldwork service. For our Wednesday evening services we have been using TLH exclusively, just so I can get used to the differences. We also use the King James Version for the readings and are calling it our "throwback service." Every Wednesday, I am now reminded of the training I received at St. Paul, Preble under Pastor Brege and how much the congregational life there influenced my own ministry. I love when God brings things full circle.

Speaking of deaconesses, when I last wrote I announced the installation of our vicar. Now I can announce the installation of our deaconess intern, Anika Slayton. We first met Anika when she stayed with us as a student from Concordia Chicago at Westfield House in Cambridge, England. Anika was sent to Leipzig, Germany for her deaconess internship, but with the double language barrier there were questions about how productive such a limited internship could be. The work in Leipzig requires both fluent German and Farsi language abilities, two hurdles that were simply not possible to overcome in a 1.5 year internship. The LCMS Eurasia Region, Concordia Chicago, and Anika determined together that a move to Kaiserslautern would be the best use of the remaining time for Anika's internship. Here there is no language barrier, though she continues learning German. In Kaiserslautern, Anika is also able to volunteer at our local Christian coffee shop, Rhema cafe, which gives her a big opportunity to work on her counselling and Christian outreach skills. She is also able to help at Hope for Life, the crisis pregnancy center in our area. Besides all that, Anika will help with Sunday School, women's group, organizing potlucks, and much more. She has already helped us revive our congregational newsletter after a two-year dormancy. We look forward to the next year with both a vicar and a deaconess intern.

A large part of the springtime was spent organizing our first annual Conference on Church & Ministry. It has become clear that among the conservatives in the Missouri Synod as well as in our European partner churches, the main issues of difference involve controversies we assumed were settled by past generations, for example, the doctrine of church and ministry. In January I began preparing for the conference, asking contacts to present, and writing my own paper on the theologian Franz Delitzsch. The conference would be heavily biographically-oriented. Basically each paper would discuss the life and times of a particular theologian along with how they taught the doctrine of church and ministry and what that means for us today. Andrew Preus presented on C.F.W. Walther, Jonathan Rehr on Wilhelm Loehe, Samuel Abliganz on A.F.C. Vilmar, Alex Schneider on Adolf von Harless, and Jean Haessig on the French theologians Friedrich Horning and Wilber Kreiss. If you'd like any of the papers just let me know! Altogether we had 70 participants from 7 different church bodies. The excitement about the conference and hope for future conferences was unexpected! We're now planning and looking forward to our next annual Conference on Church & Ministry next year. It was especially a blessing for us to have Andrew and Leah Preus and Regional Director David Preus stay with us.

In May on our way to Grafenwöhr we went first to Wittenberg to meet up with a group of students from my alma mater, Lutheran High School South in St. Louis. A few years ago, the campus pastor, Joe Cox, stayed with us while attending the Apologetics academy in Strasbourg, France. I mentioned then how I traveled to Europe the first time with Lutheran South in 2009 because I thought that if I became a Lutheran pastor I would rarely have the opportunity to travel. That initial trip sparked a love for Europe that only increased as the years went on. I couldn't stop seeking opportunities to study over here, which eventually led to my call through OIM to Kaiserslautern. Without that first exposure to Europe with Lutheran South in 2009, I don't think I would be here today. It was so wonderful to meet the students, tell them about my

background, and hopefully plant a seed in some of them to go into church work or even become missionaries one day. From Wittenberg we traveled to see the C.F.W. Walther sites in Saxony. In Zwickau, we visited with an old friend, Pastor Gottfried Herrmann, of the Saxon Free Church (the LCMS's first partner church, celebrating 150 years this year). My hope is to bring Pastor Herrmann to Kaiserslautern next year to present at our Church & Ministry conference.

Last weekend, we had the opportunity to visit with Pastor Wolfmueller's tour group of about 150 people. We met up with the group at the Holy Ghost Church in Heidelberg, just like we did a few years ago. There I was able to introduce myself to the group and tell them a bit about our work in Kaiserslautern. As I was speaking, I noticed Steve and Debbie Kukuk a few rows back. They were founding members of KELC in 1985! Steve and I were in contact for the 40th anniversary of KELC. We have met each other several times in Wittenberg, where the Kukuks volunteer for Wittenberg English Ministry. It was a pleasure to meet their son and even grandson, who plans to attend seminary next year. Sometimes the LORD shows us how everything is connected and that the works of a Christian are never in vain. The LORD has done so much through families like the Kukuks to see to it that His Word of reconciliation is preached all over the world. That's how God is working in your life too! May He open our eyes to see all the wonderful things He's accomplishing in and through us.

Otherwise, everything at church is running like usual. We have men's group twice per month where we are studying the "Magdeburg Confession." The women's group has also been meeting twice per month and just finished studying Ecclesiastes. We still have Confessions Study every Wednesday after midweek Divine Service. Prison Bible Study is going well with the same rate of men coming in and going out—all touched in some way by the Gospel of Jesus Christ! I also suddenly had a lot more hospital visits with a premature baby born in the congregation, whom I baptized at the hospital. We also had a member's aunt visiting town. She had a heart attack and died a few days later in the hospital. I was able to minister to this woman and her family at the end of her life. These are again examples to me of how the work here is the same kind of work your pastor in the U.S. does, the only major difference being that we are overseas.

And for exciting personal news, we can announce here that our third daughter is due at the end of November! Please keep Emma and the baby in your prayers for a safe and healthy delivery and quick entrance into the Kingdom of God in Holy Baptism. Thank you all for your support, for your prayers, and for your interest in our work among the U.S. military, English-speakers, and everyone else the LORD brings into our lives. The work continues to increase here along with the many blessings the LORD gives to carry out the tasks He has given us to do.

Jesus be with you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rev. Nathaniel Jensen". The ink is dark and the handwriting is fluid and personal.

The Jensen Family



Our first service in Grafenwöhr. We met in the annex and used our Spangdahlem equipment from Carolyn Brinkley, including communion ware and hymnals. Notice the pictures of the “Four Chaplains” above our makeshift altar.

The pictures below are representative of Grafenwöhr and Spangdahlem.





Easter Vigil confirmations.

In May I filled in for a pastor friend at the SELK congregation in Ulm. They meet in the chapel where medieval German mystic Heinrich Seuse is buried.

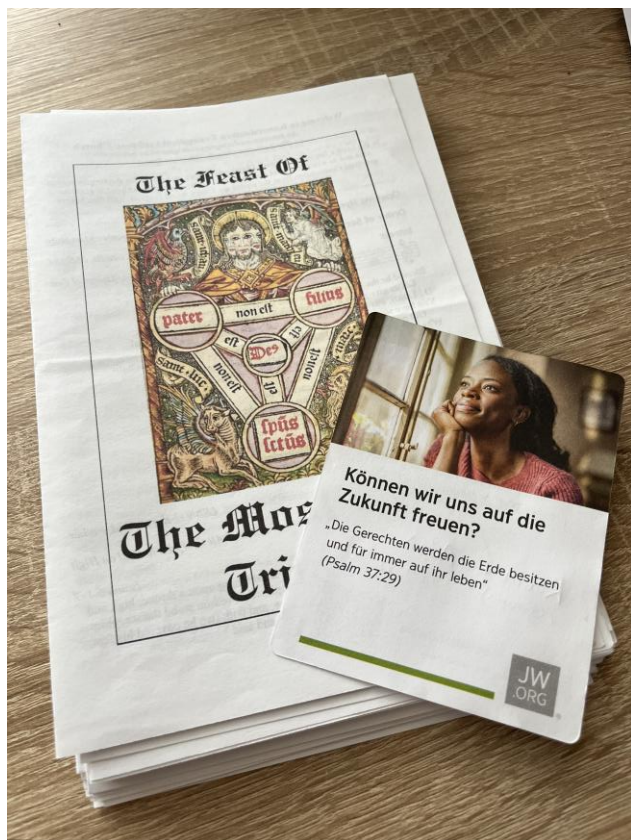
Every year we commemorate the Rogation days between Rogate Sunday and Ascension. We hike into the woods or fields and pray a litany. This is at a castle in Hohenecken.





Every year we have a party for the Eve of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist. It's a great opportunity for the congregation to gather together around God's Word.

As I was working on my sermon for Trinity Sunday, the Jehovah's Witnesses rang the doorbell. I chatted with them for quite some time about our Triune God and the love He shows to us in Jesus. This occurrence was remarkable because door to door proselytizing in Germany just doesn't happen.



Agatha with her friend, Phineas, at Baumholder (Army installation) celebrating America's 250th in a German military helicopter. Our dear friends, the Kirchhoffs, just moved back to the U.S.





In front of St. Mary's in Wittenberg, where Luther preached, with a group from my Alma Mater, Lutheran High School South in St. Louis.



With my dear friend, Pastor Gottfried Herrmann, in Zwickau.

One Sunday we arrived at Spangdahlem Air Base and realized I left the chapel key on my other key chain, so we had our service outside. Thankfully we travel with "church in a box," so we can celebrate a beautiful Divine Service no matter where we end up. It was inspiring to look up during the Service and see the moon! The sound of F-16s taking off soon reminds us where we are.





Handing off our Grafenwöhr church plant to LCMS Chaplain Rob Kraft. May the LORD bless the work in this place for many years to come!



At the beginning of May we had a visit from Erik Lunsford and Megan Mertz, both of LCMS communications. Erik and I have known each other for some time since we were both members at Peace in St. Louis. We actually first met at the Corpus Christi conference in Prague in 2018 and have seen each other for various events throughout Europe and the United States. Megan is a reporter and she wrote a beautiful article on our work in Kaiserslautern for *Lutherans Engage the World*. I'll send it out along with this newsletter.



Part of the group from our first annual Free Conference on Church & Ministry. We hosted 70 participants from 7 different church bodies. Consider joining us next May!



Installation of Deaconess Intern Anika Slayton (notice the TLH in use during our midweek Divine Services).



Baby girl #3 is due Nov. 24th! Please keep her and Emma in your prayers!



To support the LCMS through the work of Pastor 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.

You can also support the Jensen family through: MISSION CENTRAL: 40718 Highway E16, Mapleton, IA 51034-7105. Mark checks: Nathaniel Jensen #A10798-69485