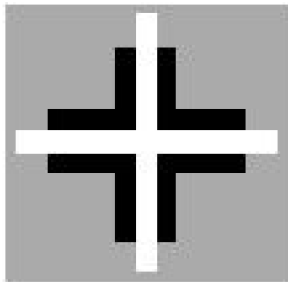


DEUTSCHER  
GOTTESDIENST



GERMAN  
CHURCH SERVICE

*First Sunday of every month (except July and August) at 2:00 PM at*  
CENTRAL ST. MATTHEW UCC 1333 S. CARROLLTON AVENUE NEW ORLEANS, LA 70118

E I N L A D U N G

ZUM GOTTESDIENST IN DEUTSCHER SPRACHE

**Am 11. SONNTAG NACH TRINITATIS, dem 1. September 2019, um 14 Uhr**

und

**AM REFORMATIONSFEST, dem 6. Oktober 2019, um 14 Uhr**

und

**Am 20. SONNTAG NACH TRINITATIS, dem 3. November 2019, um 14 Uhr**

Jeweils danach gemütliches Beisammensein mit Kaffee un Kuchen.

Liebe Freunde des Deutschen Gottesdienstes!

»Wenn der HERR nicht das Haus baut, so arbeiten umsonst, die daran bauen« (Psalm 127,1). I write you from the beautiful city of Barcelona, where under a grant for continuing education, I am undertaking a study of the works of the celebrated architect Antoni Gaudí. Gaudí is best known for his revision of the plans for the Basilica of the Holy Family (*Sagrada Familia*), which was originally intended to be built according to the neogothic style popular in the nineteenth century. This decision by the basilica's first builder is evident if one visits the very traditional sepulchral chapel where today Gaudí is buried. However, soaring high above that original construction is a strange, and beautiful edifice that one hundred and thirty years later continues to defy convention and expectation as cranes ceaselessly build ever-higher spires piercing the Catalanian skies.

Gaudí wrote that all human design finds order and stability from »das große Buch der Natur.« This emphasis is evident not only in the architect's preference organic curves and the near total prohibition of straight lines, but also in his wild inclusion of sculpted animals (gigantic snails and salamanders on the church's façade) and arboreal motifs, such as the basilica's forest canopy colonnade. Having spent some time in the *Sagrada* already this week with plans to return, as well as to visit Park Guell and others of his projects, I believe I can see more clearly what Gaudí was trying to teach through his genius and what we today may still learn. Gaudí envisioned this temple as a way to put people back into connection with nature, to confront the people of Barcelona with a reminder (at once both playful and serious) that we are a part of God's creation and made to serve divine purpose. Our places of worship, where we encounter this creative and loving God, ought not divorce us architecturally or iconographically from our essential nature as creatures of God. Rather, they should inspire us to care for the world given into our stewardship, treasuring it as we would treasure, build up, and restore a beautiful church building such as the *Sagrada* or one closer to home, like Central–St.Matthews. In close examination of the façade, one notices that the statues covering every available square inch of the temple's exterior lose their fantastic detail when the sculptor creates their faces. These "blank slates" are designed for you and me to find ourselves in this creation and story. There are no likenesses of nobility or patrons, or other "important" people of the age, instead what one finds is a celebration of our common humanity: an affirmation that regardless of status or degree, we are all God's children and a part of his great family.

If you have not already done, so please take this opportunity to renew your membership to the German Church Service. Your generosity helps secure a spiritual home for German speaking residents and visitors of southeastern Louisiana. God bless you for your support!

Ich wünsche Ihnen ein glückliches und sicheres Labor Day Wochenende und hoffe Sie dann zu sehen.

Ihr,

Pastor Richard Easterling+

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