

St Ursula's Church Magazine

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Chaplain's Message

Your Church Council has been discussing mission.

We are agreed that we should give this greater prominence in the coming year. We want to do this for positive reasons. First, because we believe we have something valuable to share and second, because Jesus told his Church to "go and make disciples" (Mt 28:19).

As with many important tasks, proper preparation is vital. We do not want to rush into doing things simply because they seemed like a bright idea at the time. We need to discern where the needs are, what is likely to succeed and how we can do it well. Before long we shall be giving everyone the opportunity to get involved.

If you read any books on mission and evangelism, a key feature that emerges is the importance of relationships. People want to feel they belong. Hearing testimonies or intellectual arguments in favour of Christianity come later. How, then, do we present ourselves as a community that is a beacon of the love of God? Get this right and we shall be a magnet drawing people together.

The Christmas message is that, in the birth of Jesus, God came among his people. Our mission also consists of bringing God among his people. This means that it may be more important to be a Christian in the workplace, surrounded by people who do not know him (cf. John 1:10), than to spend our time in the safer environment of housegroups and bible study. Similarly, bazaars and other social events may be more effective means of mission than overtly religious activities.

Relationships are vital because (as I never tire of saying) there is no such thing as a lone Christian. We need the company of other Christians and the worship of the Church to sustain us. We need to experience for ourselves in the weekly Eucharist that God has come into the world, that he is embodied in our lives. He enters our lives through bread and wine and we become God-bearers, bringing him into the lives of others.

As one of our Christmas prayers says, "may the light of faith illumine our hearts and shine in our words and deeds". That sounds like a pretty good mission statement to me.

Peter

The Bishop's Christmas Letter, 2010

Not long ago I came across a Christmas meditation by Michael Stancliffe, a fine preacher whose ministry encompassed time as Speaker's Chaplain in the House of Commons, and later as Dean of Winchester. In this meditation he points out that the Christmas story is concerned with small things.



'At the heart of it is a human being at its smallest, and that newborn child is surrounded by no greatness – no palace, no pomp, no grand people. Nor had the first to join that little group anything impressive about them – shepherds on night duty don't look princely – and it was only later that more imposing personages put in an appearance. Christians believe that what happened in that small setting was of cosmic significance.'

The birth of Jesus at Bethlehem which we celebrate at Christmas is the burning glass which concentrates in the vulnerable fragility of a new-born child the immensity of the Divine Love by which all things were made and which holds the vastness of the universe in being. What is God like? God is like – indeed God is – this totally dependent, tiny bundle of life. That bundle of life grew unseen in Mary's womb, and that unseen growth to birth was also where God was. In *'Once in royal David's City'* we sing of the child of Bethlehem that 'day by day like us he grew' – but like us that growth was from the moment of conception, from before being born as well as the child growing to maturity. The real Feast of the Incarnation, of God emptying himself and coming down to the lowest part of our need, is not Christmas, the Feast of the Nativity, but the Feast of the Annunciation, of God taking our human nature in the womb of the Blessed Virgin. When Christians hail Mary as the *Theotokos*, 'the God-bearer', it was because it was her unique vocation to be the one in whose body God chose to dwell, to be one with us. As an ancient hymn puts it:

*How blest that Mother in whose shrine,
The great Artificer divine,
Whose hands did frame the earth and sky,
Vouchsafed as in an ark to lie.*

It is because God is with us as unborn life before he is with us as the child of Bethlehem, that we rightly are concerned to reverence unborn life, and to

protest at the attitudes so prevalent in our society which regards such life as disposable.

William Blake saw eternity in a grain of sand. Julian of Norwich saw all that was made as a small hazelnut. We see the love of God in this vulnerable child, and, as a wonderful prayer puts it, 'knowing the love of God made visible, we are caught up into the love of the God we cannot see.' In our human experience of love we at one and the same time know most fully the person whom we love and who loves us, and at the same time know that this is a mystery which can never be fully known, never fully expressed in words. Charles Williams, the friend of C.S.Lewis and J.R.R.Tolkien liked to say that we ought to pause over how we so easily speak of 'being in love' and remember that in saying this we are saying no less that we are held *in* love. At Christmas as we come to adore the God who reaches out to us in the weakness and humility of a child, we are in an even greater way held in love, the love which came down at Christmas and which is far greater than anything that we can imagine or express. As so often the poets point us to the heart of the matter, as Richard Crawshaw does in his *Hymn of the Nativity*:

*Welcome all wonders in our sight Eternity shut in a span,
Summer in winter, day in night,
Heaven in earth, and God in Man;
Great little one! Whose all-embracing birth
Lifts earth to heaven, stoops heaven to earth.*

And what is this about? Christopher Smart asks 'where is this stupendous stranger?' and finds his Lord and Saviour in a manger.

*O most Mighty! O MOST HOLY!
Far beyond the seraph's thought,
Art thou then so mean and lowly
As unheeded prophets taught?*

He comes at last to the truth and the mystery of Bethlehem.

*God all-bounteous, all-creative,
Whom no ills from good dissuade,
Is incarnate, and a native
Of the very world he made.*

As God gives himself into the world in love, so he gives himself in love into our lives, sharing his life with us in the Bread and Wine of the Eucharist, that we may be transformed into his likeness and be the bearers of his love into the world he created and sustains. A more recent Christian poet, R.S. Thomas, writes of communion at a Hill Christmas in Wales.

*They came over the snow to the bread's
Purer snow, fumbled it in their huge
hands, put their lips to it
like beasts, stared into the dark chalice
where the wine shone, felt it sharp
on their tongue, shivered as at a sin
remembered, and heard love cry
momentarily in their hearts' manger.*

This Christmas, as we come to worship and adore the Child who is Emmanuel, God-with-us, and receive him in the Eucharist may his love cry in the manger of our hearts, transform our lives and strength us to live and pray for the peace of the world and the unity of the holy churches of God.

May God bless you, and may you, and all for whom you love and care, have a holy and a joyful Christmas.

- *Geoffrey Gibraltar*

Nativity Service

The annual Nativity Service will take place on **Sunday 12 December at 10:00**. It will be a celebration of the birth of Christ with readings and carols. Some of the older children will become characters in the story and tell it from their character's perspective in their own words. As the story unfolds, the younger children will set up the crib scene.

So come along and enjoy a different way of looking at this familiar story. You may have already seen the flyers in the hall or on the website. Please use these to invite people to this special service.

As always, we need extra adults to help e.g. with sorting out costumes, with helping the children to practise their parts or their readings. If you can help please contact Jana in the office – the rehearsals will be after the services on 28 November and 5 December.

- *Tricia Carrick*



Chaplain's Notes

Churches together for anniversary

The Swiss national ecumenical body (*Arbeitsgemeinschaft Christlicher Kirchen in der Schweiz* or AGCK) will be 40 years old in 2011.

There will be a national celebration in the autumn, probably in Lucerne. It will be a service of thanksgiving for everything that churches have been able to accomplish together during this time.

Choirs and music groups from churches across the country are invited to take part and there is also a website, which gives further information, www.agck.ch. You are also invited to send in a statement (two or three sentences with your name, and your age and a photograph if you wish) about what ecumenism means to you.

Welcome back

The Revd Penny Franks, who recently did a six-month placement at Château d'Oex, will be returning there on a longer-term basis. She will be licensed as assistant chaplain for All Saints Vevey and St Peter's Château d'Oex on 11 December. Please keep Penny and the two congregations in your prayers.

Training and sharing

There will be a meeting for all who assist with the chalice on Sunday 12 December, after the Nativity Service. It is an opportunity to learn more about this important task, as well as to share experiences.

Important debate at Synod

The Archdeaconry Synod on 29 January will be discussing the Strategic Review of the Diocese. Our diocese covers one-sixth of the world's land surface and it is growing! New congregations are starting and existing ones are expanding as more and more English speakers move to live and work abroad.

To help manage these developments, the proposal is to create four full-time archdeacons. Their main concern will be for strategic issues while purely local matters will be dealt with by part-time area deans. The intention is to phase in the plan as and when archdeacons' posts become vacant. Funding for the four

new posts will have to be shared between the chaplaincies and central church funds.

The Diocesan Synod debated the Review at its meeting in May (see "Synod Digest" at <http://www.europe.anglican.org/news>)

It was accepted in principle, subject to hearing the views of Archdeaconry Synods and adequate finance being available.

A Word for the Month - Nazareth

Joseph – the one of Technicolor Dreamcoat fame – was well-known for his dreams. His New Testament namesake – also, to believe Matthew rather than Luke, the son of a Jacob – was also a dreamer. An angel tells him in a dream that his fiancée is bearing a child “from the Holy Spirit”. After the Magi's visit, an angel warns him in a dream to flee to Egypt. After Herod dies, an angel appears to him in a dream and tells him to go to the land of Israel. And when he is frightened to return because King Archelaus' reputation is as bad as his father Herod's, an angel warns him and he goes away to Galilee. There he settles in a town called Nazareth, “so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, 'He will be called a Nazorean.'”

So Matthew tells us. Luke's account is different, and if what the New Testament says is important to us, we will not linger on the differences or try to explain them away, but will dig into the two narratives to find the true message that both writers are trying to convey – to understand the real Good

News. And for both writers, the Good News is this: Prophecy is being fulfilled. The Messiah, the Christ, God's Anointed Son has been born in the person of a humble Galilean carpenter's child.

So the Gospels fix Jesus' ministry firmly in Galilee. But its significance lies eighty miles to the south, in Jerusalem, and a few miles further, in Bethlehem. For just



as Jesse's son, David, had been born in Bethlehem, so God's chosen Messiah would also come from Bethlehem. This is the message Matthew and Luke are both telling us.

Nazareth was not well-known in Jesus' time. It is not mentioned in the Old Testament, or by contemporary writers. It was certainly not a town – at the most a small village a couple of hours' walk to the south of Sepphoris, one of the larger cities of Galilee. No main road ran through it, and the son of the village carpenter will have had few opportunities to visit the cosmopolitan city to the north. During the week he would have worked, and on the Sabbath, he would have rested. In any case, Sepphoris was more than a Sabbath day's journey away. Nazareth was hardly a place at all.

So we have the report in John's Gospel of Nathaniel's remark, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Yet this was the name Jesus bore. He was Jesus of Nazareth to the crowds who flocked to see him (Mark 10:47). He was Jesus of Nazareth to Pilate and to those who crucified him (John 19:19, Mark 14:67). It was the name by which he identified himself to Saul on the road to Damascus. Even the early Christians were known to the Romans as "the sect of the Nazarenes" (Acts 24:5).

But if Nazareth is not mentioned in the Old Testament, what's this in Matthew's Gospel about fulfilling prophecy? Almost certainly, Matthew was recalling Isaiah's words (Is. 11:1): "A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots." Isaiah looked forward to rescue in a time of crisis, and after crisis had finally struck and the nation had been carried off into exile, future generations looked forward to God's anointed one decisively intervening in the world. The writers of the New Testament felt strongly that Isaiah's prophecies spoke about Jesus.

The word for shoot in Hebrew is *nazar*, and Nazarene both means "like a shoot" and underlies the meaning of the place name Nazareth.

Much of Jesus' ministry took place around the Sea of Galilee, in and near Capernaum, some five or six hours' walk away from Nazareth. But we do not talk of Jesus of Capernaum, or even Jesus of Bethlehem. It is the shoot, it is Jesus of Nazareth whom we worship, the Nazarene, the new life from the line of Jesse. For in him, we are heirs of the promises to David, to Abraham, and to God's ancient people of the Old Covenant. So it is that we can join in the carol at Christmastime: "The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight!"

- *Hector Davie*

FAQ: Why the different colours?

The Church's year is divided into seasons, each one of which is "colour-coded". You see the different colours in the priest's vestments (see FAQs October 2010) and in many churches in the decorated pieces of cloth hanging in front of the altar or the lectern.

The colours reflect the mood of the season.

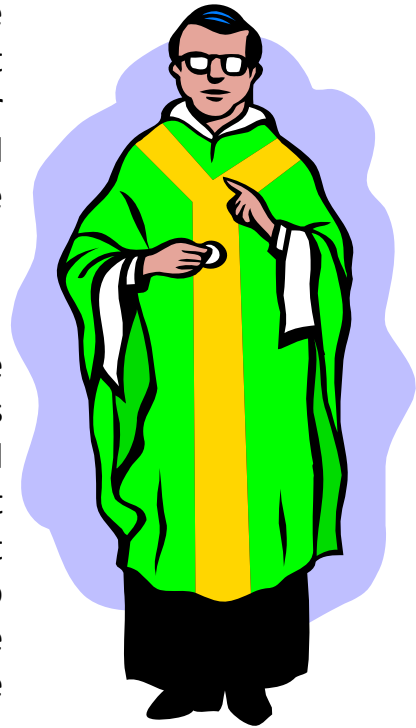
Purple, a sombre colour, is used during the seasons of Advent and Lent. These are the seasons when we spend time considering our life-style and quietly preparing ourselves for the great celebration that is to come. This mood of restraint and reflection is also the reason why there are no flowers in church in Advent and Lent. Being at the dark end of the spectrum, purple is often the colour for funerals.

White, by contrast, is for celebration. It is used at Christmas and Easter, as well as on saints' days and other great festivals like Trinity Sunday and the Transfiguration. Sometimes it is used for funerals to signify the hope of the resurrection.

Red is the colour of fire. For this reason it is worn at festivals associated with the Holy Spirit, especially Pentecost. It is often worn at the ordination of people to the priesthood and at confirmations to signify the gift of the Holy Spirit on these occasions. It is also the colour of blood, so it is used in Holy Week and on the feast-days of martyrs.

Green, as we know in this environmentally-aware age, is the colour of nature and growth. By the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the disciples were given the means to grow the Church. This is basically the focus of the period between Pentecost and Advent (the "Sundays after Trinity"). By listening to the unfolding story of Jesus' earthly ministry in those weeks, we are being trained to carry on growing in our discipleship and to play our part in the growth of the Church in our day.

- PMP



Killing Jesus

Christmas is near. Our thoughts go to the young girl riding into Bethlehem, heavy with child, to the shepherds and the angels, to the magi with their gifts, to the joy that overcame those who stood around the manger. This is the season of peace on earth and goodwill among all, the season of holly, of mistletoe, of merriness and jollity. So why write an article with such a frosty and unjoyful title?

The holly which the pagans revered for its glowing red berries amid the winter gloom reminds us with its prickly leaves that pain too is part of this world. And the Christmas stories in our Bible are not all joy, peace and goodwill.



The magi brought royal gifts, yes, but one of those gifts was myrrh. Myrrh is a fragrant spice used to anoint something royal (Ps. 45:8), something holy (Ex. 30:22-29), but chiefly used to embalm the dead (John 19:39-40) – Christian tradition has seen this gift as a prophecy of Jesus' forthcoming death. And forty days

after Jesus' birth, Luke's Gospel tells us, his mother presented him in the Temple as the Law required. There Simeon not only declared Jesus to be “a light for the Gentiles, and the glory of Israel”, but also prophesied to Mary that “a sword will pierce your own soul too” (Luke 2:35).

In the midst of joy, a reminder of sorrow to come: this was the paradox of Jesus' earthly life, from his welcome by the magi, from his welcome by Simeon, right through to his welcome by the crowds on Palm Sunday. When we read in the Gospels about Jesus' life, the theme of Jesus' death is never far away.

In Luke 20 Jesus tells a parable. A landowner plants a vineyard and lets it out to tenants. When he sends his servants to collect some of the fruit as rent, the tenants beat them, wound them and send them away empty-handed. So the owner decides to send his son. The tenants spot a chance to get the vineyard for themselves, and so they kill the heir.

Of course, their plan goes wrong, just as it does with Jesus' death, which turns out not to be an end but a beginning. But the story is a reminder that the birth of Jesus has two sides.

On the one side is the confident reminder; “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory” (John 1:14). On the other, the reminder that “the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.” (Mark 10:45).

We are all children of God, and made in God's image. The baby in the manger, the preacher on the mount, the healer of the blind and lame, the man suffering on the cross, Jesus was God in every way, and was human in every way. But the Devil could not defeat him, and even death could not overpower him.

Here is one message for us at Christmastime. Like the baby in the manger, we are flesh and blood. Like the baby in the manger, we are vulnerable. Like the baby in the manger, we are surrounded by dangers. They need not be so direct as the plotting by the Jewish authorities to take Jesus' life. But they are just as threatening.

There is the pain of sickness. Jesus healed the sick, restored those whose minds were distorted, he fed the hungry, he even raised the dead. “He has filled the hungry with good things,” proclaimed Mary. But in this world, millions do not know where their next meal is coming from. Millions suffer from cholera, from malaria, from infection, from mental illness.

There is the pain of despair. Jesus gave reassurance to those who had lost hope, he made friends of outcasts, he healed those whose illness had lasted for many years. But for many people, things go wrong, expectations go unfulfilled, plans go quite differently to what we intended.

There is the pain of waiting. Jesus' message was that the time was coming and had now come when even the dead would find life, and those who found life would worship God in spirit and in truth. “Today,” he told the crucified thief beside him, “you will be with me in Paradise.” But even in a world that craves an instant fix for everything, real solutions vanish into an uncertain and distant future.

At Christmas, let us not only share the joy of Christ's birth. Let us get closer to Christ and share in his work. Let us work to fill the hungry with good things, to rid the planet of disease, to avert the threat of environmental catastrophe. Let us work to cast out despair and to bring hope. In union with the baby in the manger, let us seek God's kingdom now.

- *Hector Davie*



Charity of the Month: Cecily's Fund

www.cecilysfund.org



Why Support Cecily's Fund?

Zambia is one of the poorest countries and only Zimbabwe has a higher percentage of orphans in Africa. Although HIV treatment is now more widely available and new infections are slowing, in the Copperbelt where Cecily's Fund's work is based, a quarter of children under 15 have lost one or both parents. Research shows that school dramatically reduces the risk of children becoming HIV positive, gives emotional support and skills to earn a living. Obvious when you think about it. Or put it another way: *education is a powerful 'social vaccine' against HIV.* But it's not a quick fix and this is where Cecily's Fund, now in its twelfth year of operation, comes in - by making a long-term commitment to support vulnerable children throughout their school career.

Achievements in 2010

Despite the recession, Cecily's Fund supporters (and that includes Swiss Friends of Cecily's Fund) have helped to raise MORE than last year – enough to provide stability and continuity for over 9,500 children for another school year. But each year it is a daunting prospect to raise sufficient funds to keep this valuable work going strong. This is made so much easier by friends and supporters, inspired by Cecily's indefatigable parents, Basil and Alison Eastwood, who have built up the team and infrastructure to do just that. For the second consecutive year, Cecily's Fund has been awarded first prize for online Reports and Accounts by the Institute of Chartered Accountants for England and Wales. This confirms the Cecily's Fund's accountability and transparency, and the financial award of £2,000 will greatly benefit the charity's work.

Fundraising Highlights 2010

A variety of schools and colleges, groups such as Rotary, companies and corporate sponsors, churches and individuals have been generous and inventive in raising money for Cecily's Fund, in the UK, USA and Switzerland. An example of how the church in the UK is active for Cecily's Fund was set by the Rt Revd Colin Fletcher, Bishop of Dorchester (in the diocese where the Eastwoods live) and his daughter Pippa who both took part in The Great South Run, Europe's most popular 10 mile race on 24 October. The Bishop came 10,089th, i.e. about half-way down the field of participants, and raised over £3,000 for Cecily's Fund

In Switzerland, the congregation and friends of St Ursula’s Church in Berne continue to boost the profile and support the work of Cecily’s Fund with events during the year: a Lenten lunch, an Autumn pumpkin soup lunch and a stall at the Christmas bazaar, as well as selecting Cecily’s Fund as ‘charity of the month’ in December. Schools in Lausanne and Neuchatel are also supporters, as well as many individuals. Undoubtedly the fund-raising highlight is in December, with the annual performance at the Theatre du Passage in Neuchatel by Diva Opera, one of Britain’s top chamber opera companies. This year on 12 December it’s a sparkling performance of Bizet’s *Carmen*, with the opportunity afterwards to meet the cast members over an apero, the best possible example of how fund-raising can be fun too. Thanks to a generous individual donation, all profits from the performance go to Cecily’s Fund.

A Heartening Story of Hope:



Brave at his graduation from Teaching Training College, with his proud Aunt

Like many other Zambian orphans, the aptly named Brave thought there was no hope for him when he lost his parents and his home. Swiss Friends of Cecily’s Fund’s supporters helped him to go to school and to teacher training college. Now he is employed as a science teacher in a government school. He can afford to rent his own house and looks after his younger brother and cousin. He has also set up a youth group at his church to help orphans and vulnerable children in his congregation. Brave is living proof that by giving hope to one vulnerable Zambian child, we help them give hope to many others.

What You Can Do

Education is a long term commitment and Cecily’s Fund relies on regular donations to keep its commitment to support children right through their school career.

Donate:

Fr45 a year pays for primary education for one child

Fr90 a year pays for secondary education for one child

Fr625 a year pays for teacher’s training for one Cecily’s Fund school graduate

Single donations are also welcome:

Fr430 pays for training and six months of peer health education sessions

Fr15 buys a school uniform

Fr20 buys school shoes

The children of Zambia are thankful for every donation!

Deposit to: Credit Suisse, 8070 Zurich, Account: 80-500-4

In aid of: Swiss Friends of Cecily's Fund

IBAN: CH16 0483 5035 8091 8100 1

Pray for Cecily's Fund

By asking 'what can we do to help' in our collective purpose to give glory to God, we go beyond private prayer and attending Church services, in bringing the message of God through a variety of ways. By giving, we grow in our *own* understanding of the nature of God and sustain our *own* hope for the future. The Old Testament theologian Walter Brueggemann coined a simple but excellent term 'Newness after loss', i.e. nothing stands still, even in a seemingly hopeless situation. We pray that the orphaned and vulnerable children supported by Cecily's Fund who have suffered so much trauma and disruption in their short lives, by having the chance to go to school, experience their own 'newness' and gain courage to make 'new' sense of their lives.



Christmas cards

Now on sale! Pack of **6 cards** designed by Sabita Banerji, inspired by traditional Zambian embroideries and appliqué work. The text inside the cards reads: *Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year. Fr6.*

Perfect gift for friends and family for Christmas

It is never easy choosing gifts for friends and family who already seem to have everything they need or could possibly want. But with our special gift cards, you can make the gift of education to an orphaned or vulnerable Zambian child on their behalf. For Christmas cards and gift cards please contact Yvonne Bomonti either at church on Sundays or at yvonne@bomonti.ch

- *Yvonne Bomonti & Hilary Sharp, Swiss Friends of Cecily's Fund*

Cecily's Fund Traditional Pumpkin Soup Lunch 2010

Thank you for supporting the soup lunch in November.



Also a big thank you to all those who helped and hosted: Martin & Shelagh Brawand, Sharon Bachmann, Chloë Hodler and Corinne Bomonti. Thanks to Elisabeth Pfyffer and Diana Lohri for spoiling us with a yummy desert. Also a special thank you to Liz Perrett who donated hand-knitted socks, wonderful scarves and wristlets which could be bought for a

donation. People like you make it make events like this a success for Cecily's Fund. You all did a great job!

We had the pleasure of welcoming various people from the Old Catholic Church, who are involved in the charity "Partner Sein": Dirk Juttner from England who is an Advisor for African Aid Projects in Tanzania, Dr. Max Flückiger who is a consultant and Christoph Schuler its project leader. We thank them also for their generous donation.

We raised **Fr850** for the orphans in Zambia and we couldn't have done it without you.

What can we do with such a generous donation?

For example:

Fr60 enables a child to go to primary school for a whole year by providing a school uniform, shoes, books, pens and all school fees and exam costs.

So our **Fr 850** could supply **14** children with these essential items.

Thanks also to Hector Davie who kindly took over the technical part, so that we could watch Hilary Sharp's marvellous pictures from Zambia which were enriched by her wonderful, interesting talk about her trip. Many thanks to Hilary!

I hope to welcome you at another event on behalf of Cecily's Fund. Don't forget our traditional "**Lenten Soup Lunch**" which will take place at St Ursula's on **Saturday 23 April 2011**.

- Yvonne Bomonti in behalf of Swiss Friends of Cecily's Fund

Junior Church News

Meeting Times

The Junior Church normally meets every Sunday in the year, unless there is a special All-Age service. It begins with a time of worship with the whole congregation in church. After this, all the children and teachers meet together in the hall for a brief introduction, prayer and to collect our gifts for Tear Fund. From 2011 we will be running three classes: Sparklers for children aged 3 to 7+, Trailblazers for children aged 7 to 11 and Pilots for those aged 11 to 14+. Every Sunday the Sparklers return to church at the Peace. We will let your children know of any changes in groups.

Lessons

Green is the colour of the Season after Pentecost. Symbolizing growth, it reminds us that we are growing in God's way as a people of faith. The empowering spirit of God, received by the first disciples on Pentecost, blows amongst us, renewing Earth and filling its people with courage and care. The stories we have been looking at until now have focused on God's love in times of exile and hardship, on the different functions of prayer and on Jesus' ability to change personal and social reality. We are reminded that as we, the church, stride and strive toward God's vision for Earth and all its creatures, we are supported and nourished by each other, by God's all-embracing love and by faith stories of long ago and today.

Activity Club: Apple picking

In Activity Club during October, we met one Saturday afternoon to help on an organic apple farm picking apples. Our first attempt was washed away by heavy rain but a week later a smaller group of us met spontaneously to pick apples. Our kids were up the trees, shaking branches and sorting the good from the bad. We picked an amazing 9 crates in 2 hours. The farmer was very pleased with our results and handed the children each a bottle of freshly pressed apple juice. Our final meeting this year was on November 20, after the Christmas Bazaar. We met for an evening of pizzas and bowling, as well as to say goodbye to Tina, Thenjiwe, Josie and Jonathan. Activity Club in 2011 will be led by Françoise, Sharon and Jana.

Nativity Service

This year's nativity service has been organised as an outreach event with invitations hanging in suitable locations through Berne for children to come and participate if they are interested. Rehearsals are after church on Sunday, 28 November and 5 December from 11.30. Children should please bring a

sandwich with them. The Nativity Service is on Sunday, 12 December at 10.00. The service tells the traditional story but this year participants will be writing their own parts, telling the story through the eyes of their characters. All children have been given a song sheet with the carols selected and we ask parents to please practise these songs with their children (listen to a CD, go through the words).

- *Françoise Hänggi*

Congratulations to our Junior Church Children with Birthdays

in December and January

David Eze 2 on 12 December

Annabel Hebeisen 9 on 12 December

Erin Cotter 11 on 13 December

Samuel Klein 10 on 17 December

Sandy Colla 9 on 21 January

Jonathan Hebeisen 12 on 28 January



Meet the new Youth Coordinator



I've already met many of you, but for those I haven't, let me introduce myself. I'm from San Diego, where I grew up (for the most part) and where I went to university to study sociology and religion. I met my husband at Cambridge (UK) when I did a university abroad program there. After graduating, I joined him in England. We lived in Bath for 3 years before he got a research position at the University of Berne back in 2006. We moved to Paris for a short time, but thankfully returned to Berne earlier this year. It's good to be back, and I'm very excited to be the new Youth Coordinator at St Ursula's.

In the next year I hope to work with the teens to develop a dynamic and exciting Youth Group. Typically we'll meet two Friday nights a month. These nights will be activity based - getting out into the community and socializing in varied ways, learning new things and meeting interesting people. Of course we'll also meet two Sundays a month during the service for Bible study and fellowship. If you'd like to talk to me about the Youth Group, you can find me on Facebook, or just come say hi!

- *Mary McKinley*

Calendar of Services

5 December– Advent 2

10.00 Sung Eucharist

Isaiah 11.1-10

Romans 15.4-13

Matthew 3.1-12

12 December– Advent 3

8.30 Holy Communion

Isaiah 35.1-10

Matthew 11.2-11

10.00 Nativity Service

various readings

19 December – Advent 4

10.00 Sung Eucharist

Isaiah 7.10-16

Romans 1.1-7

Matthew 1.18-25

24 December – 23.00 First Eucharist of Christmas (Midnight Mass)

Isaiah 52.7-10

John 1.1-14

25 December – Christmas Day

10.00 Carol Service

Luke 2.1-7

Luke 2.8-14

Luke 2.15-20

11.30 Holy Communion (said)

Isaiah 62.6-12

Luke 2.[1-7]8-20

26 December – Christmas 1

10.00 Eucharist

Isaiah 63.7-9

Hebrews 2.10-18

Matthew 2.13-23

2 January – Epiphany

10.00 Sung Eucharist

Isaiah 60.1-6

Ephesians 3.1-12

Matthew 2.1-12

9 January – Epiphany 1

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Informal Eucharist

Isaiah 42.1-9

Acts 10.34-43

Matthew 3.13-17

16 January – Epiphany 2

10.00 Service at the Münster

23 January – Epiphany 3

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Eucharist

Isaiah 9.1-4

1 Corinthians 1.10-18

Matthew 4.12-23

30 January – The Presentation

10.00 Sung Eucharist

Malachi 3.1-5

Hebrews 2.14-18

Luke 2.22-40

Neuchâtel Church

Chapelle des Charmettes, Rue Varroz 1

Services are held twice monthly :

10:00 am on the FIRST Sunday of the month: Communion service

Children meet for Junior Church at 10:00 in the Villa Yo-Yo and join their parents in church for Communion.

5:00 pm on the THIRD Sunday of the month : Family Communion service

Contact: Mrs Jennifer Veenendaal (Church warden)

Telephone 032 841 6432

Read the monthly magazine on the website, or, to receive a paper copy, phone Rosemarie Zimmermann, 032 853 2986.

www.neuchatel-church.ch

For Your Diary

December 2010 & January 2011

Regular Weekly Events

Mondays	09.30 – 10.00	Morning Prayer
Wednesdays	09.15 - 11.15	Parents and Tots – <i>not on 22 and 29 December</i>
Fridays	09.30	Patchwork - <i>not on 24 and 31 December</i>
Saturdays	09.30 - 11.30	Choir Practice – <i>not on 25 December and 1 January</i>

Other Events

Friday 3 December	12.00 – 13.30	Advent Study Course
	19.00 – 20.30	Advent Study Course
Sunday 5 December	10.00	Youth Group
	11.30 – 14.00	Nativity Service Rehearsal
Tuesday 7 December	19.30	Church Council
Thursday 9 December	19.00	Contemplative Prayer at Brian Morgan's
Friday 10 December	12.00 – 13.30	Advent Study Course
	19.00 – 20.30	Advent Study Course
	19.00 - 21.00	Youth Group Meeting
Sunday 12 December	10.00	Nativity Service
	11.30	Chalice Assistants' Meeting
Tuesday 14 December	19.00	Biel Carol Service
Wednesday 15 December	19.00	Thun Carol Service at Göttibach
Thursday 16 December	19.30	Berne Carol Service at Heiliggeist
Friday 17 December	12.00 – 13.30	Advent Study Course
	19.00 – 20.30	Advent Study Course
Sunday 19 December	17.00	Neuchâtel Carol Service
Thursday 23 December	19.00	Contemplative Prayer at Brian Morgan's
Sunday 9 January	10.00	Youth Group
Tuesday 11 January	19.30	Church Council
Thursday 13 January	19.00	Contemplative Prayer at Brian Morgan's

Friday 14 January	19.00 - 21.00	Youth Group
Sunday 16 January	10.00	Ecumenical Service at the Münster

COPY DATE

Tuesday 18 January	19.30	Junior Church Teachers' Meeting
Friday 21 January	19.00 - 21.00	Youth Group
Thursday 27 January	09.00 - 11.00	Magazine Collating
	19.00	Contemplative Prayer at Brian Morgan's
Saturday 29 January	09.00	Archdeaconry Synod
Sunday 30 January	10.00	Youth Group

Future Dates

Saturday 5 March	10.00	Book and Food Sale
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Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Next year's AGM will be held on **Sunday 27 March 2011 at 12.00**. There will be an invitation to the AGM in the next magazine (at the end of January), but please note this date **now**. We hope many members of the congregation will be able to attend this important church meeting.

- Tricia Carrick (Council Secretary)

Prayer Diary

1-4 December: First week of Advent

O Wisdom – the Word of God

Bible translators

Seasonal chaplaincies in St Moritz, Wengen and Zermatt

Those living with HIV/AIDS

5-11 December: Second week of Advent

O Adonai - God the law-giver

The Bishop's Advent Appeal (for Haiti)

UN Human Rights Day (10 December)

Judges and law-enforcement personnel

12-18 December: Third Week of Advent

O Root of Jesse - God for all nations

Children at risk

People attending Carol Services

People travelling

19-24 December: Fourth Week of Advent

O Key of David - God who sets us free

People facing Christmas alone

Those maintaining essential services over Christmas

The homeless

25 December: Christmas

Rejoice! The Saviour is born

26 December – 1 January: First week of Christmas

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly"

The Church's solidarity with the poor

The peace of the world

God's blessing for the year to come

2-8 January: Epiphany

"We have seen his star in the East"

Finding Christ in the unexpected

Christians in the Middle East

Offering our gifts and talents in Christ's service

9-15 January: First week of Epiphany

The Baptism of Christ

Remembering our Baptismal promises

The teams and groups that support the life of the church

Places in the news this week

16-22 January: Second week of Epiphany

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The united service at the Münster

The Willibrord Society

PartnerSein

23-29 January: Third Week of Epiphany

The call of the disciples

Junior Church and Youth Group

Newcomers to our churches

Our Archdeaconry Synod

30-31 January: The Presentation of Christ

That our eyes may see his salvation



Archdeaconry Choir Festival 2011: Planning ahead

The Archdeaconry Choir Festival 2011 will be held at St Ursula's Church. The 2006 Festival was held in Berne, and after having been to Zurich, Geneva and twice to Lausanne, St Ursula's turn for hosting the Festival is coming up again.

After several consultations the date has been agreed: the last weekend in May 2011. The choirs will start on the evening of Friday 27 May with a first choir practice, continue on Saturday 28 May with an all-day choir practice, and contribute to a sung Evensong on Saturday and to a sung Communion Service on Sunday 29 May. Any singers who are interested and wish to join the choir will be very welcome.

On Sunday afternoon it is hoped to sing hymns and psalms under the leadership of the Festival Music Director. This singing afternoon will be open to anyone who is interested in joining.

More details will be made available early in 2011. Please contact Hans-Karl or Elisabeth Pfyffer (Telephone 026 4920 326)

- Hans-Karl Pfyffer

Contemplative Prayer

Life, once in union with God, is what God wants it to be. It is full of surprises. You can be sure that whatever you expect to happen will not happen.
'Open Mind, Open Heart' by Thomas Keating

Contemplative prayer meetings will be held at the Centre for Prayer in Liebefeld (Falkenstrasse 2) on 9 and 23 December and 13 and 27 January, 19.00 for refreshments, 19.30 to 20.30 for prayer.

- Brian Morgan



Ecumenical House Group Welcomes New Members

The next meetings of the house group will be 1 December, 15 December, 5 January and 19 January and will be held at my house (Falkenstrasse 2, 3097 Liebefeld). Meetings start at 19.00, lasting for two hours plus. The program will continue to follow the well tested house group procedure: hymns and songs of praise, opening prayer, study and prayer requests for others and ourselves. We are currently studying Mark's Gospel and will continue with this. I am hoping that members will volunteer to prepare and lead the study part from time to time, should they feel so called.

Please inform me if you would like to join this house group or require more information at bmorgan@bcmconsult.ch (or 031 971 66 81) and we look forward to welcoming many new members.

Blessings from Brian Morgan

British Food Stall

Once again I want to say **A BIG THANK YOU** to all those who help me with this stall – to the shoppers who ensure that I get food to sell on such a regular basis, to those who make all the delicious jams, marmalades and pickles, to those who help move the boxes & boxes of food from and back to the attic at every sale, to all my family both here and in the UK for their tolerance and patience as well as their shopping, and of course to all my friends who continue to come and “play shop” with me. I appreciate every single one of you and without you ALL the food stall just wouldn't be possible.



And, of course, not forgetting all our loyal customers who patronise the stall and support St Ursula's by doing so - THANK YOU!

I wish you all an excellent Christmas and 2011 and I look forward to seeing you at our next sale on Saturday, 5 March 2011.

- *Jana Kutesko*

Christmas Bazaar 2010

As this is being written, we are still preparing for this year's bazaar. Preparations are in full swing and once again there is a group of dedicated troopers doing their utmost. Maxine and I would like to thank each and every one of you for your input, be it as new ideas, practical assistance or simply your time and presence at the workshops. Simply, thank you.



We will have been blessed with a wonderful Christmas lunch, thanks to the dedication of Sharon and Toni Bachmann, not forgetting of course, Toni's popular Raclette dinner on Friday evening.

We would also like to thank our generous donors, especially CMX gift shop Bern, Britshop.ch, Root, and of course, Michael Jones of British Cheeses. Many thanks for sharing this day with us.

To all the stallholders and their teams, our grateful thanks. And most surely also our thanks to the white-bearded gentleman who graced our bazaar.

Our thanks, too, to all the movers and shakers who stacked chairs, carried tables up and down stairs and helped with the heavy furniture.

Last but not least, our thanks and acknowledgement to Jana for her 'back office' organizing, also to Tricia for the super slides and the many little things we needed to have done.

Each and every one of the team has once again made the whole bazaar a time of fellowship and sharing.

We wish you a reflective Advent season, and a Happy Christmas.

Christmas Bazaar Co-ordinators

Maxine Wildhaber

Lynn Robb

STOP PRESS: The takings of this year's bazaar totalled over Fr22,000—our second best year ever!

Christmas Bazaar 2010 in Pictures



The total takings amounted to **Fr22,236.95** (including Fr355 from "non-church" stalls). Takings (net unless otherwise stated) from the individual stalls were:

Books	2610.95
Bottle Stall + Tombola	889.00
Bric à Brac	400.00
Cakes	680.00
Cards + Gifts	828.20
Children's Activities	73.90
Floral Decorations	800.00
Food (gross)	8852.50
Guess the Weight of the Cake	94.00
Mulled Wine	201.00
Patchwork	3020.50
Raclette + Restaurant	3034.90
Toys	397.00





Many hours are spent preparing wreaths and Christmas cakes for the bazaar



Friendly faces in the fellowship hall



Xmas treats at the British food stall



People of all ages enjoy St Ursula's Christmas Bazaar



Church Council Report

Council met on 5 October and 2 November and covered a number of topics:

In October the budget for 2011 was approved – this will be presented at the AGM. A draft was sent out with the pledge letters and the changes are small. As always, the financial situation was discussed. Our income remains below budget, so we are likely to end the year with a deficit.

There is now a new fridge in the kitchen. The ceiling tiles in the hall will be replaced, but this needs to wait until we know what to do about the lighting – we hope to find a solution that costs less and is more environmentally friendly.

In October an expert came to look at our sound system. He did some tuning of the system and moved the control box to the other side of the church so that the beamer can also be operated from the same place. We are still learning exactly how everything works, which takes time, but we should have a better system in the end.

The church's weekend away went very well. Council agreed to provisionally book the same location for 9 – 11 September 2011. A final decision on whether to go ahead with this event next year will be made once the feedback from this year has been evaluated.

Council was pleased to hear that Allison Masciadri had volunteered to coordinate the "book" part of the book sales. Allison made some improvement proposals, all of which were accepted.

Youth work, Junior Church and the Nativity service required some discussion at these council meetings. You will find more information about each of these at other places in the magazine.

Council decided to spend some time discussing mission / outreach. This occupied a significant part of the meeting on 2 November and an extra council meeting will be held on 23 November to continue the discussion. Several booklets are being circulated so that council members can read them to gain ideas. After the next discussion, it is planned to consult the whole congregation as part of the decision process for determining the way forward.

As always, many other topics were discussed – far too many to mention in this brief report, but please ask if you would like to know more. Contact a council member – the list is at the back of this magazine or on the web site. The next council meeting is on Tuesday 7 December.

- *Tricia Carrick (Council Secretary)*

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BISHOP'S ADVENT APPEAL 2010

As Christmas approaches I write to commend to you my Advent Appeal for this year, which I hope you will support generously. This year the money raised from the Appeal will be divided between two excellent and worthwhile causes.

One is to give continuing and targeted support to the needs of those in Haiti whose lives were devastated by the earthquake at the beginning of the year, and for which the special appeal to the Diocese raised over £26,000. This was sent to Haiti through Christian Aid for immediate emergency relief: food, water, shelter and medicines. But the needs do not cease and we have been asked by Bishop Zaché Duracin of the Diocese of Haiti (an Anglican diocese which is part of the Episcopal Church) to support the reconstruction of one of the schools in a slum area outside Port au Prince which was totally destroyed. So it is good that half of what we raise this Advent will go to the reconstruction of the Institution Mixte Notre Dame de l'Annonciation, one of the diocesan schools. The school is located in the area of Martissant, one of those most desperate slums surrounding the capital. There are 150 children in that school. According to the Bishop this school now lacks everything. The Priest-in charge of the Parish and the school is the Reverend Jean Fils Chery. He is a brilliant and dedicated young priest, whom Bishop David met when he was doing his graduate studies in the Matanzas Ecumenical seminary in Cuba. He was ordained to the diaconate just before the earthquake and to the priesthood last July.

Within our own Diocese we have Anglicans from the Sudan who live as refugees in western Finland, having escaped violence and suffering in their home country. They come together for worship as the White Nile Congregation in Vaasa, Oulu and Kokkola, led by Fr Amos Manga (himself a refugee from the Sudan). There are several hundred families who gather from wide distances, with the church community being a vital support both spiritually and practically. With elections in Sudan on 9 January 2011 to decide whether Southern Sudan will eventually become an independent nation, the Anglican community of Sudanese Christians in Finland wants to be ready for the future and prepare its young people now. At present they speak Finnish in school and Arabic at home, whilst English will be the official language of the new South Sudan. The White Nile Congregation is asking for our support this Advent to set up an educational project so that the congregation can organise an English language project – by paying for books, materials, transport and tutors. In this way the Advent Appeal will help one of our congregations with a specific practical need, and also contribute to the building of a potential new nation.

I commend these two worthwhile projects to your prayers and to your practical support. Money collected for the Advent Appeal should be sent, as usual, to the Diocesan Office.

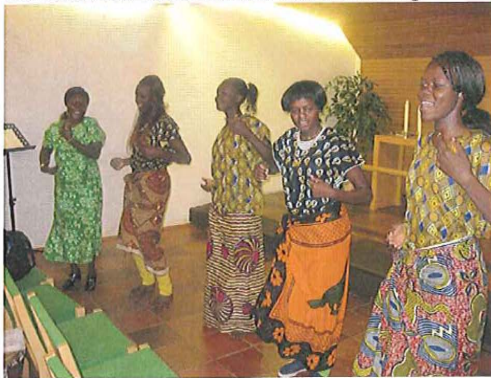
With every blessing,
+GEOFFREY GIBRALTAR

The White Nile Congregation Vassa, Finland. Baptism at Vassa, Archdeacon Jonathan LLoyd, with Fr Amos Manga at The White Nile Congregation Eucharist at Vaasa. The liturgy is conducted in Finnish, Arabic and English.



Members of The Mothers' Union of The White Nile Congregation, meeting with Archdeacon Jonathan LLoyd.

The Eucharist starts and ends with Sudanese dancing



A young member of White Nile Congregation enjoying supper after the Eucharist



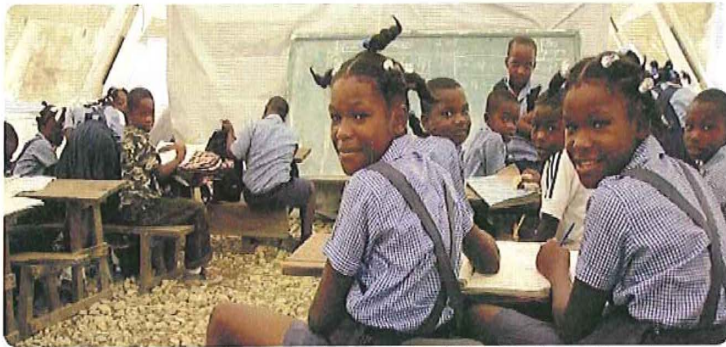
Archdeacon Jonathan LLoyd and Fr Rupert Moreton (Anglican Chaplain in Finland) with Moses Mamer and Owen Ndoromo of The White Nile Congregation, pictured after The Nordic/Baltic Synod Eucharist, Church of The Holy Spirit, Tallinn, on 24 October 2010.



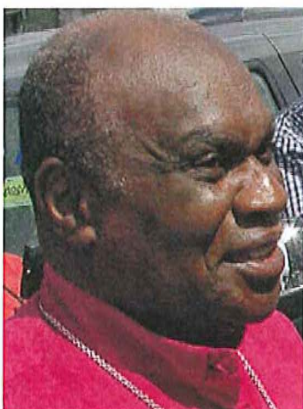
HAITI - Institution Mixte Notre Dame de l'Annonciation



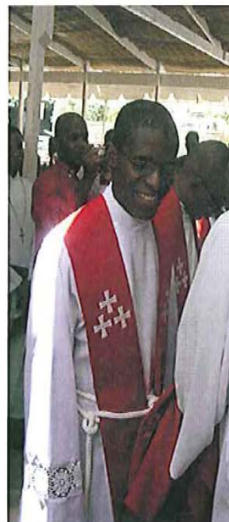
A makeshift classroom after the earthquake



Children in temporary classrooms in a tent city following the earthquake



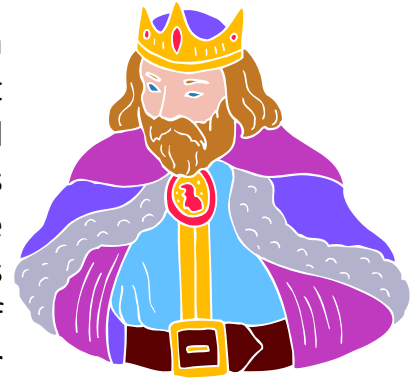
Bishop Zaché Duracin of Haiti



The Revd Jean Fils Chery at his ordination to the priesthood in July 2010

Short Story: The Successor to the Throne

Once upon a time there was a mighty king. He was a good king and ruled the people justly and with great compassion. As he was getting older he realized that it is time for him to take rest and let one of his sons become the successor to the throne. But the old king was confused about which of his sons would fit the best for this responsible job. Of course, all his three sons were smart and had their leadership qualities. But whom should he choose? The king had sleepless nights because of this matter.



One day the king called his sons. He gave one bag to each son. Then the king said: "A magician gave these bags to me. In each bag there are five magical balls. Every ball has a name written on it. The first ball is called **treasure** and stands for the riches and pleasures of this world. The second ball is called **family** and represents all relationships to your loved ones. The third ball is called **faith** and stands for your relationship with God. The fourth ball is called **health** and stands for a healthy life. The fifth ball is called **people** and stands for the happiness of the common people who live in our kingdom. The balls are priceless because with a magical spell you can gain what is written on the ball. I want you to keep your bag safe as the balls can break very easily." The sons were very happy that their father had given them such precious gifts and they kept them very carefully. Some months passed by and they had almost forgotten about the bag with the balls.

One night the king's servant ran to the first son and said "Oh my prince, the neighbouring king and his army attacked us overnight. All your brothers and servants died. The king sent me to you so that at least you can flee with him. He ordered me to hand over this letter to you." The young prince quickly read the letter of his father "Son, take nothing but the precious bag I presented you some months back. Take out the five balls and read the names carefully. Throw the least important on the floor with full force with the intention to break it. Thereafter fill the bag with those balls which are not destroyed. I will wait at the royal garden for you" So the prince did as his father had commanded and ran hastily to the garden. He was very surprised to see his brothers standing near the king and they were equally surprised to see him. "I am sorry to have tricked you but it seemed to be the only way to find a just decision." The king admitted that this was a test to find out who fits best as successor. Then

the king said: "Each of you had five balls which looked all alike but each was of different material. I asked you to throw away the least important with the intention to destroy it. Whoever of you has five balls remaining is going to be the next king because I know he will rule wisely." The second son came forward and presented all five balls. The other two sons were amazed. The king knew what they were thinking and revealed to them: "My sons, don't look so puzzled. Four of the balls were made out of clay. Only the ball called treasure was made out of rubber. If you try to throw it away it will bounce back. So it doesn't matter if you decide to be without treasure for a while. But the other balls called family, faith, health, people were made out of clay. If you drop one of these, they will be irrevocably scuffed, marked, nicked, damaged or even shattered. A king should always know that riches will come and go. The pleasure of this world will pass away. But if you drop one of the other things you are destroying your life and, most probably, also the lives of others. Most important is to cling on to faith, as only God will enable you to juggle all the balls. He will prevent the balls from falling down and being scattered. He will help you to have peace within your families, to be healthy, to gain happiness for the common people in your environment and to gain His blessing in all you do. Faith is the only way to keep all the balls intact until the end."

Matthew 6:33: But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

- *Archana Chittazhathu*

Mr. Whiskers the Niesen Fox

In April 2011 a new children's book in English will be launched. It is called *The Tale of Mr. Whiskers the Niesen Fox* and is suitable for children from the ages of 3 to 9 years old. In German the book will be published under the title *Die Geschichte vom Niesenfuchs*. Judith Josi tells the story of a fox (he really did live on the Niesen!) whose evening task was to light the beacon at the top of the mountain, which can be seen from near and far. The story combines an imaginary world with the real animal world of the Niesen and the children's play village at the top of this well-known mountain in the Bernese Oberland. The 40 pages are magically illustrated by Karin Widmer, a freelance children's book illustrator. A group of women volunteers have helped to support this project, the proceeds of which will go to the Children's Cancer Research Fund of the Insel Hospital, Berne. Price: English soft cover: about Fr25.

The author, Judith Josi Calderwood, a retired English teacher, was born in England and moved in her twenties to work for United Nations in Geneva, where she met her Bernese husband. They married and moved to Berne, where they had three children. Close family ties to the Niesen played an inspiring role in creating this story.

The illustrator, Karin Widmer, studied graphic arts at Berne School of Art. She worked for Zytglogge Verlag, a Bernese publisher, as illustrator and designer of children's books, CDs and book covers, and in 1991 was awarded the Graphics Prize for Young Adults at the Children's Illustrated Book Fair in Bologna. She is now a freelance illustrator and was chosen to design the European special postage stamp 2010 with the theme "Heidi".

Just send an e-mail to judith.josi@muri-be.ch if you are interested in reserving a copy or for more details ring 031 951 54 94.



Books

As some of you may already know, I have taken over as Book Co-ordinator from Sue Higson who moved to Germany last summer. Over several years Sue did a marvellous job sorting through the hundreds of books that arrive between book sales and preparing the book cases ready for the next sale. She has left me with a great team of committed ladies, for which I am very grateful.

The book team wishes to improve the quality of our sales (and move with the times) so as to attract even more people. We have therefore decided that, in future, we shall only be including the following items:

- English paperbacks in good, clean condition
- Hardbacks in good condition
- DVDs
- CDs



We regret that we can no longer accept German books, videos or cassettes. Please do not donate tatty or dirty books, either. All these items do not sell well and St. Ursula's is left to dispose of them at a cost to the Church.

If you have any questions about donating books or would like to help on the book team, please do not hesitate to contact me.

- Allison Masciadri

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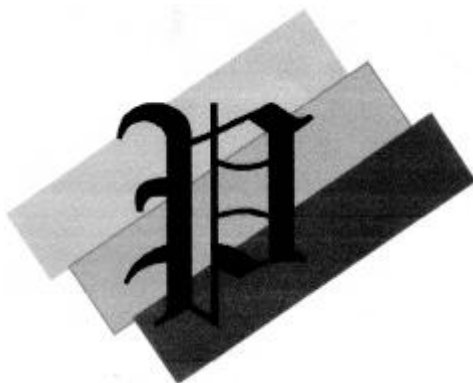
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Graham Tritt, President, tel. 031 829 34 79, email g.tritt@gmx.net

International Club of Berne, 3000 Berne, www: icberne.2ya.com

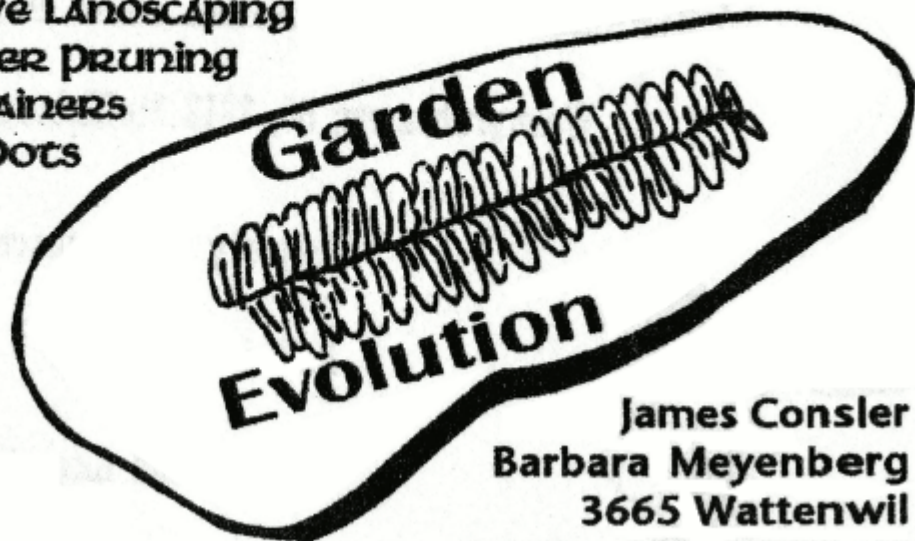
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www.angloswissclubs.ch

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(or a New Year's Resolution)

for members of the
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who gather around
the Lord's Table

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to the glory of God the Father;

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read the Bible regularly
attend the Eucharist faithfully
commend the Christian faith,
fashioning my life according to the example of Christ
give generously, as God has given to me."

