

THE CHURCH OF ST URSULA BERNE



December 2012 - January 2013

St Ursula's Church Jubiläumsplatz 2, 3005 Berne, Switzerland

Chaplain

Ven Peter Potter

031 351 03 43

077 449 37 70 (emergencies only)

Honorary Assistant Chaplain **Youth Coordinator**

Linda Bisig

Paul Holley

Church Office: 031 352 85 67

Marriages, Baptisms and Funerals by arrangement with the Chaplain

Normal pattern of Sunday services:

8.30 Said Eucharist (2nd and 4th Sundays)

10.00 Sung Eucharist with Junior Church and Crèche

Our services follow the Church of England's Common Worship Order One (2000)

On the 2nd Sunday of the month, the 10.00 service is usually less formal.

See Calendar of Services inside for details of the next few weeks.

Services in Thun: see inside.

Services in Neuchâtel: at the Reformed Church at La Coudre (near the Chaumont funicular) See inside for service times.

Information: Mrs Jennifer Veenendaal, 032 841 64 32

ST URSULA'S BERNE

The church is one of the nine Swiss chaplaincies that have a resident chaplain (minister) and together form the Archdeaconry of Switzerland. This is part of the Anglican Diocese of Europe which stretches from the Canary Islands to Ankara, from Moscow to Morocco.

The church was built in 1906 on a site that had been given to the community by the British-Berne Land Co. An American lady, Mrs Castleman from St Louis, provided the bulk of the money for the building as a thank offering for the near miraculous recovery of her adopted daughter, who was treated at the clinic of the famous Professor Kocher.

The hall and the house were added in 1959. An English Missionary Society, the USPG, helped to support the church from its earliest days. Since 1977, however, the chaplaincy has been fully self-supporting, relying solely on its members and well-wishers for its financial support.

St Ursula's has a long tradition of ministry to all English-speaking people in the Canton of Berne and beyond. It also provides a home for Christians from many different denominations and cultural backgrounds. Regular worshippers are encouraged to add their names to the Electoral Roll and so play a full part in the life of the church. Details from the Churchwardens or any member of the Church Council.

See Calendar inside for details of this month's services
St Ursula's Church website: <http://www.anglican.ch/berne>
E-mail: berne@anglican.ch



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Chaplain's Message

The bells of waiting Advent ring

So begins *Christmas*, a famous poem by John Betjeman (1906-84). Advent is often regarded as a prelude – preferably to be kept as brief and as inconspicuous as possible – before the curtain goes up on the main event.

This is a pity because Advent has some important things to teach us – and, to my mind the Advent hymns and music have far more in them than some of the popular Christmas carols. I would rather have *Wachet auf!* than *Silent Night* any day (or night). Mind you, if you have ever tried to sing *While shepherds watched* to Lyngham or *On Ilkley Moor*, you will discover an earthy robustness more suited to the events described. And I have to admit, there's a nice story to *Silent Night*.

But, back to Advent. It is not just four weeks of waiting for Christmas but also, and more importantly, a time to focus on the coming of God's judgement and the final destiny of his creation. Being ready for that is a lot more important than making sure you've sent all your Christmas cards and got enough decorations for the tree.

This makes Advent pretty scary – and we keep it as a season of penitence, with dark colours, no *Gloria* or flowers. We move, though, in Advent from darkness to light. The collect for the season asks God to “give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness and put on the armour of light”. We ask that this may be “now, in the time of our mortal life”. In other words, we make the first step on our journey to this final destiny today (and every day). That is why Advent marks both the beginning of the Church's year and the end of all things.

We discover features of our own life stories in the themes and moods of Advent. What does it feel like to be waiting for the birth of your first child? (Yes, even men may catch on to this). Are other changes looming, that we both long for and fear? Are there steps we must take if we are to achieve our potential, and yet we hesitate to take them? Can we confront our fears, our doubts and overcome them? If we do not, we stay where we are and cannot step into the light.

Advent is far too important to miss. Its focus on our final destiny makes us ask big questions and invites us to see ourselves as characters in God's own unfolding story.

Peter

Dead or Alive?

Have you ever picked up a phone and found that the line has gone dead? But telephone lines are not living beings, and reports of their death may well be unfounded. In the same way, an actor may complain of a dead audience, a seeker after night-time entertainment may complain that the centre of a city is dead after ten o'clock, a road may come to a dead end.



These are figures of speech, of course, and centre on the idea that if something is dead, it is unresponsive – it does not react to stimulation. “The dead do not praise the Lord, nor do any that go down into silence,” in the words of Psalm 115:17.

But later writers and Old Testament prophets realized that this was not the whole story. After death there were opportunities to praise God and to enjoy God's presence. By the time of Jesus, this had developed into a belief in a resurrection – that the dead would be raised to a new life.

Not everyone shared this belief. The Sadducees – the fundamentalists of the time – found it unscriptural. They ridiculed it, with their question to Jesus about the seven brothers who had died successively, each marrying his dead brother's wife. Jesus cuts through the argument with the remark that God is “not God of the dead, but of the living.” (Mark 12:27)

We too can make this mistake, of focussing too much on life after death and too little on life now. It is all too easy to ignore suffering and injustice in the world and to believe things will be put right in the next world. It is all too easy to perform little pious deeds in the belief that God will reward us in the future, and even easier to judge other people's actions, which is something only God can do.

But Jesus did not only offer future salvation, but salvation now. The time is not only coming, but now is. Now is the time for real fullness of life. Now is the time for activity and joy and the new wine of the Good News. Now is the time for healing the sick, for raising the dead, for comforting the downhearted. Jesus, the good shepherd, has come so that we can “have life, and have it abundantly.” (John 10:10)

This is why we should not sit back and relax when our pathway to faith has led us to Christ. Nowhere in the Bible are we commanded to “count our blessings” (though doing so is no bad thing if it leads us to thank God for them!) If we have faith, we do not simply sit back smugly and wait for the coming of God's kingdom. We go and do something about it. We do not simply rejoice that we are redeemed and our sins are forgiven. Like a sick patient cured of a disease, we demonstrate our new-found health in healthy activity.

For “faith without works is dead” (James 2:26). God has redeemed us, and God's Spirit fills us, but like a living plant, if we are filled with the spirit, we will show the fruits of the spirit – love, joy, peace, and the rest, and we will infect others with them.

And so in winter, in the deadest time of year, we share that love, that joy, that peace at Christmas time. For God became Man to enable us not only to “have everlasting life” (John 3:14) but to “do the works that I do” (John 14:12). As we hear in the Christmas gospel reading, “what has come into being in him was life” (John 1:3b-4a), and sharing the joy of Christmas means not only sharing Christ's message, but also sharing Christ's life, and passing his joy on to others.

The widow living in poverty in Chad, the child sick with cholera in Bangla Desh, the family starving from famine in Darfur, the many whose life and livelihood are threatened by war in Syria, all of these are our neighbours. Until they too can share in the love and joy and peace brought by the Holy Spirit – in this life, and not just in the next – God's work shown forth in Bethlehem is not fully done. This Christmas may we work harder to share the lesson of the Christ child not just with our friends, but with the whole world. May they and we all come to share the fullness of the joy of Christmas.

- *Hector Davie*



FAQ: Was Jesus really born on 25 December?

The accounts of Jesus' birth are to be found in the Gospels according to Luke and Matthew. We read that the birth took place "when Quirinius was governor of Syria", which places it between 4 BC and 6AD, but there is no hint about what time of year.

In fact, as in Switzerland, animals were not kept out on the hills in winter in first-century Palestine. This makes it very unlikely that he was born in December. The truth in the stories about Jesus' birth is not to be found in their historical accuracy but in the significance of the events they present. In other words, they are there to tell the true meaning of Jesus' birth.



There are two possible explanations for the choice of 25 December as the date of Jesus' birth. First, it was the date of a pagan celebration in Rome, the festival of "Sol invictus", and the message is that Jesus has replaced the gods of the "old dispensation". The Early Church sent out the same signal when it built its places of worship on the site of pagan temples.

The second explanation, which is connected with the first, is that this is the time of the year when the longest night has passed and the days are just beginning to get longer. Nature is telling us that the light has not been overcome by the darkness (John 1:5). Our Christmas trees, evergreen when all the others are bare and dead-looking, illustrate the same message: *O Tannenbaum, wie treu sind deine Blätter.*

These are visual representations of John 1:6, "in him was life, and the life was the light of men" and it connects the birth of Jesus with his victory over death at Easter.

The winter setting then, may not have any basis in Scripture, but it does strengthen the impact of the stories and the message that they are putting across.

-PMP

A Word for the Month – Bethlehem



Where would you look for information about Bethlehem? The New Testament? The Old Testament? How about Google Earth?

We sometimes forget that Bethlehem was, and is, a real place – as real as Moosseedorf or Münsingen. And like Moosseedorf or Münsingen, it was a two or three-hour walk from the capital city. Indeed, if it were not for the conflicts in post-war Palestine, Bethlehem would by now have merged into Jerusalem and become a mere outer suburb. But as it is, the traveller heading up the hill southwards out of Jerusalem is met with all

the paraphernalia of a land divided by tension – walls, checkpoints, gates, mistrust, suspicion.

For two thousand years, since the non-existent year dot, Bethlehem has been a special place. In 326, the Emperor Constantine, whose mother Helena had been there on a pilgrimage, commanded the building of a splendid basilica. This church was demolished when the area was invaded by the Samaritans, but rebuilt later on the orders of Emperor Justinian. In 637, very soon after the Muslim invasion, Caliph Umar had an imposing mosque built next to it (for Jesus is honoured by Muslims as a prophet), and people of the two religions lived in relative harmony for the next four hundred years, until in 1099 the Crusaders captured the town and attempted to impose western ways not only on Muslims but on those following eastern Christian traditions. Their legacy survives today. But their physical rule was short, and the area passed back to Saladin, the Mamelukes and the Turks, until the Ottoman Empire was broken up after 1918. The rest is modern-day politics...

The town is known in Arabic as *Beit Lahm* – house of meat, and in Hebrew as *Beth Lehem* – house of bread. The original name possibly comes from a Canaanite God of the crops. The town and the area around it were also known as Ephrath, meaning fertile, and it is as Ephrath that it is first mentioned in the Bible, when Jacob's wife Rachel dies and is buried by the road to Ephrath (Gen 48.7). But it is in the Book of Ruth that Bethlehem has a central place.

Ruth is from Moab, but her husband is from Bethlehem, a son of Elimelech and his wife Naomi. Elimelech and Naomi had lived in Bethlehem “in the time of the judges”, but a famine had driven them to Moab. The famine passes, and Naomi returns to Bethlehem, and Ruth goes with her. By good fortune they get to know a local landowner, Boaz, and by Naomi's cunning matchmaking, Ruth marries Boaz. Their son, Obed, has a son called Jesse.

Bethlehem is the place and Jesse is the person the prophet Samuel is sent to when God chooses a successor to King Saul. Jesse brings all his sons to Samuel except the youngest, who is out keeping the sheep. But it is the youngest son whom God has chosen, “ruddy and handsome, with beautiful eyes,” and it is David whom God tells Samuel to anoint.

Fourteen generations later, Jesus too is born in Bethlehem. So Matthew and Luke tell us, and Matthew echoes Micah's prophecy that from Bethlehem “shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.” Just as David had been a shepherd king, just as the Psalms looked to “the Lord, my shepherd”, so the king from Bethlehem would bring in a reign of peace as the good shepherd (and it is poignant that Luke tells us of shepherds who are the first to hear the joyful news of the Messiah's birth).

Yet the Messiah is never known as Jesus of Bethlehem, but as Jesus of Nazareth, from the family of Joseph the carpenter. We know of his royal ancestry, his royal birthplace, in the back of our minds, but his place was among the meek. The baby cradled in a manger, the Son of Man with no place to lay his head, the bringer of good news rejected by those he came to save and condemned to a criminal's death was a son of Bethlehem, born of David's line – a king, yes, but a servant king.

- *Hector Davie*

Quotable Quote

Where is the Life we have lost in living?
Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?
Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?

From "The Rock"; T.S.Eliot

- *Dorothy Beriger*





CHRISTMAS BAZAAR 2012

This year's bazaar once again proved to be a very popular event with lots of visitors and a wonderful atmosphere throughout the 2 days of the bazaar.

A HUGE thanks to all the many, many people who dedicated hours of their time and skills both behind the scenes - before and after the bazaar - and to those who helped on the days themselves.

I hope everyone who helped and attended the bazaar had a wonderful and joyous start to the Christmas period.

Final figures are not yet available, but the Treasurer adds that with gross takings of over Fr23000, 2012 could prove to be a record-breaking year.

- Jana Kutesko, Church Office



*Merry
Christmas*





British Food Stall

Another great year for the food stall! And, as ever I owe 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 and of course to all my friends who sale after sale, year after year come and “play shop” with me. I appreciate every single one of you. 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 a fabulous 2013, and I look forward to seeing you at our next sale on Saturday, 2 March 2013.

- Jana Kutesko

The Bishop's Advent Appeal

The Bishop's Advent Appeal will be divided amongst two causes that have arisen as a result of unrest in today's world.

There has been a congregation of Sudanese refugees in Finland for a number of years. They are part of our diocese and have an Anglican priest of their own, the Rev'd Amos Manga. They had hoped to go back after South Sudan became independent last year but the continuing conflict has made that impossible for now.

The second is to support work among Syrian refugees in Turkey. There has been a Christian presence in Syria since New Testament times, but the churches there now are under threat because of the civil war.

For more details, look out for the flyer or poster available soon.

As in the past, we shall be donating 1000 francs from our charities and mission budget.

- PMP

Forte!

Hans-Karl Pfyffer has recently notched up forty years at the organ console in St Ursula's. He first became acquainted with English church music when he worked in Coventry and has remained devoted to it ever since. During these years he has given sustained and faithful commitment to the music at St Ursula's, with weekly organ practices as well as with the choir, and also keeping his musical knowledge up to date by attending courses organised by the Royal School of Church Music.

In addition to his commitment to St Ursula's he has also furthered the cause of the English choral tradition by taking a leading part in the annual Archdeaconry Choir Festival.

We are deeply grateful to Hans-Karl for this long record of devotion and send best wishes to him and Elisabeth.

- PMP



Tour of Biblical Sites

The Rev'd John Beach, the Rector of Emmanuel American Episcopal Church in Geneva, is organising a tour of biblical sites in Turkey from 19 April to 1 May 2013. They will visit places like Antioch, Cappadocia and Tarsus. For details, please see the website on

http://biblicalgrouptours.com/BGT201304-17B_txt.htm

or contact John on

rector@emmanuelchurch.ch

Advance Notice for Missions Sunday, 27 January 2013

Please note that on Sunday, January 27 we will be having our yearly Missions Sunday worship service followed by a Bring & Share meal with information stands about the various missions/charities we support.

We are hoping to have a speaker from the USPG in the UK (which is now known as Us!) come to be with us at St Ursula's for this Missions Sunday to preach at the service and to give a talk during the Bring & Share meal.

There will be more information about the Missions Sunday in the Sunday notices closer to the event.

- Cecily Klingler for the Charity and Missions Team

Electoral Roll Revision – Advance Notice

In 2013 we have to completely revise our Electoral Roll. This process takes place every six years, so I'm sure some of you will remember doing it before. It means that **everyone** has to (re-)apply to be a member of the Electoral Roll. So, even if you have been a member for 20 years or more, you must fill in an application form.

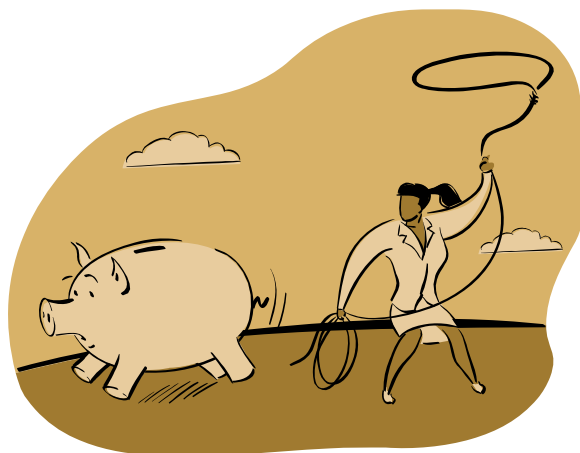
Application forms will be available from January. Please complete one as soon as possible (in January) and return it to me (preferably by putting it in my tray on the piano).

There will be more information about the Electoral Roll and what it means, along with the date of the AGM, in the next church magazine. In the meantime, if you have questions please talk to me or the chaplain.

- Electoral Roll Officer (Tricia Carrick)

Money Matters

Firstly, my warm thanks to those of you who have responded to October's pledge appeal, and especially to those of you who have offered to give a little more – for inflation keeps gnawing at what we have, and there are fewer and fewer opportunities for saving money if we are to continue making Christ known effectively. Our budget for next year predicts a shortfall in covering our needs: you can find a copy on the web at www.stursula.ch/Finance/2013Budget.html.



If you see a way of increasing our revenue, or of reducing our expenses, I – or any Council member – would be delighted to hear about it!

To allow you to reclaim tax (and so perhaps give more!), we set up a “charitable association” to look after all the work of the church not directly connected with worship. One cost cutting measure of several years ago seems to have led to some confusion, compounded by the wording of the annual pledge form. The church and the association have separate Postfinance accounts (30-4416-8 and 60-666488-7 respectively). If you pay money to these accounts over the post office counter, we do not get the whole amount – the post office takes a cut for the work involved. We get slightly more if we use orange payment slips, which means we do not get a copy of the slip, with your name and details of your payment, but only the number on the slip (I have to keep a record of the recipient of every slip). For technical reasons, the “account number” on these orange slips begins 01- and bears no relationship to what our real account number is.

This can be put very simply. If you pay electronically (or by standing order), use the real account number (30-4416-8 or 60-666488-7) **or** the details on the slip provided. Otherwise, simply use the slip provided. (The same goes for the Church's UBS account.) Thank you.

- *The Treasurer*

Chaplain's Notes

Advent

The Sundays of Advent are devoted to the Four Last Things: death, judgement, heaven and hell. The sermon on 2 December, in the series on the major doctrines of the Church, will be concerned with the Last Judgement.



Christmas Services

Christmas Day falls on a Tuesday this year, so some of us will have a busy few days. The first thing to note is that Sunday 23 December is the fourth Sunday of Advent and NOT Christmas! Advent is too important to be cut short so if you come on that day expecting to sing Christmas carols, you will be disappointed. Please note that the service on 23 December will start at 09.30 instead of the usual 10.00.

Last year's experiment of having a children's service in the afternoon of Christmas Eve and starting "Midnight" Mass at 22.00 was a great success. We shall be doing the same again this year.

It will be a busy time not only for your Chaplain but also for readers, sidespeople, helpers on the coffee rota etc, so please be ready and willing to help. It is a time of year when we get visitors and newcomers, so please do what you can to create a good impression.

Full details of our Christmas services are on the enclosed Christmas card.

Parish Christmas Party

This is a first. Well, sort of ... There have been other times when we have got together to enjoy each other's company. Whether you are a recent arrival at St Ursula's or an old hand, come and join the fun. There will be seasonal food and entertainment. The Party is on Saturday 1 December from 18.00.

Expat Expo

Thanks to everyone who helped out at this event back in September. Our stall made a good impression and it was important for us to be seen there. It was also useful to meet some of the other exhibitors.

The majority of visitors on the day had been here for five years or more, which suggests that Berne has a more settled expat community than other Swiss cities. We ran a quick survey to help us find out where expats in Berne get to know about what's going on. Interestingly the overwhelming majority said “by word of mouth”. So it really is up to us to spread the word!

Christian Unity Service

The annual service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is on Sunday 20 January at 10.00, at the Münster. St Ursula's will be taking part again and, as in the past, there will be no service here that day. We hope you will come along to the Münster to worship with our fellow Christians in Berne.

Supporting Mission

Our annual Missions service is an opportunity to learn more about the missions and charities that we support and to join with them in prayer. The service will be on Sunday 27 January, when our Gospel reading tells how Jesus stood up in the synagogue to read from the prophet Isaiah “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor”.

Baptisms in 2013

The four Sundays designated for Baptisms in 2013 are

10 February

19 May (Pentecost)

18 August

24 November



Baptisms traditionally form part of the Church's Easter celebrations and I am always happy to have a baptism on Easter Day. If there are special reasons (e.g. family members travelling from abroad), we can often arrange a baptism on other Sundays but you will understand that it is best not to have too many close together.

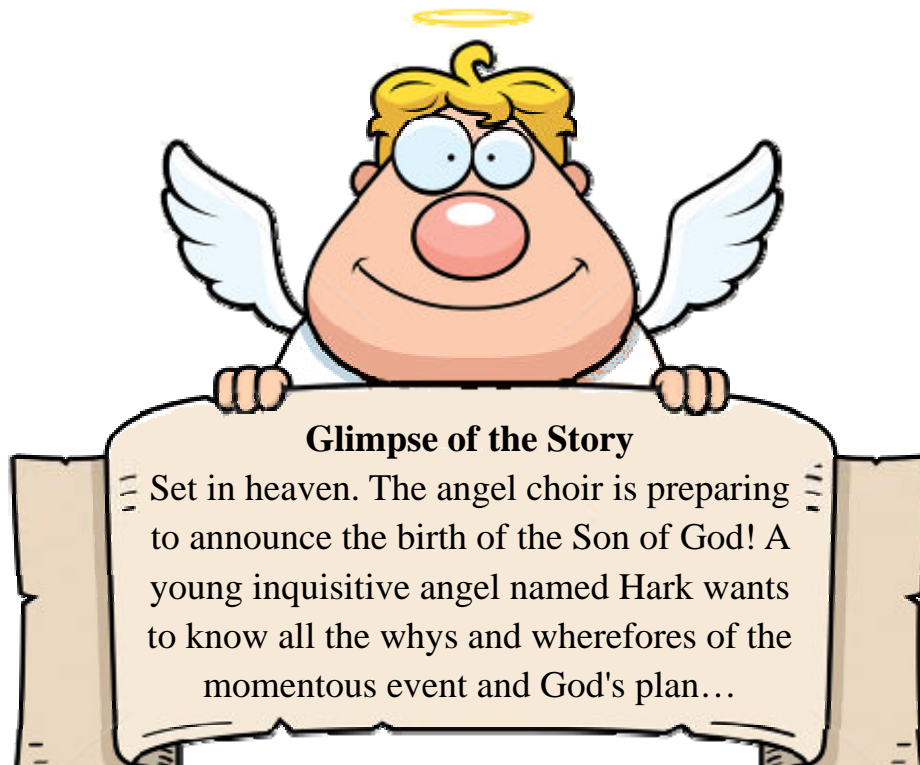
You can find more information about baptisms at St Ursula's on the church website.

Hark, the Herald Angel

is the title of this year's Nativity Play.

It takes place on Sunday 9 December at 10.00 in church.

You are warmly invited. Invite your family and friends too – flyers in the hall.



Thank you

Many thanks to all the (around 50) people – young and not so young – who have joined the angel choir, attended practices every Sunday and learned the music and their parts at home. Special thanks to Eva who has organised all the costumes and the props and to Raphael who is doing an excellent job with the sound system. Many, many other people have made their own individual contribution and I am very grateful to all. It is a great team effort and I look forward to the final result on 9 December.

P.S. A few people have suggested that we could prepare something together for Easter – let me know if you have any specific ideas.

- *Tricia Carrick*

Calendar of Services

2 December - Advent 1

10.00 - Eucharist
Jeremiah 33:14-16
1 Thessalonians 3:9-13
Luke 21:25-36

9 December - Advent 2

08.30 - Holy Communion
Baruch 5:1-9
Luke 3:1-6
10.00 - Nativity Play

16 December - Advent 3

10.00 - Sung Eucharist
Zephaniah 3:14-20
Philippians 4:4-7
Luke 3:7-18

23 December - Advent 4

09.30 - Holy Communion
Micah 5:2-5a
Hebrews 10:5-10
Luke 1:39-45

Christmas services – see the enclosed card for details of times, readings TBA

30 December - Christmas 1

08.30 Holy Communion
10.00 Sung Eucharist
1 Samuel 2:18-20,26
Colossians 3:12-17
Luke 2:41-52

6 January - Epiphany

10.00 - All Age Service
Matthew 2:1-12

13 January - The Baptism of Christ

8.30 - Holy Communion
10.00 - Sung Eucharist
with prayers for healing
Isaiah 43:1-7
Acts 8:14-17
Luke 3:15-17,21-22

20 January - United Services at the Münster, 10.00

No services at St Ursula's

27 January - Epiphany 4 and Missions Sunday

08.30 - Holy Communion
10.00 - Sung Eucharist
Nehemiah 8:5-8
1 Corinthians 12:12-20
Luke 4:14-21



Prayer Diary

1-8 December: First week of Advent

The fulfilment of God's promises

Victims of people trafficking

The Bishop's Advent Appeal

Those living with HIV/AIDS

9-15 December: Second week of Advent

Blessed be the Lord, who sets his people free

Our Nativity Play

UN Human Rights Day (10 December)

Reasons for hope

16-22 December: Third Week of Advent

Bear fruits worthy of repentance

All in hospital at this time

People attending Carol Services

People travelling

23 December: Fourth Sunday of Advent

"I am the servant of the Lord"

People facing Christmas alone

Those maintaining essential services over Christmas

Women about to give birth

24 December: Christmas Eve

Waiting

25 December: Christmas

Rejoice! The Saviour is born

26 December: St Stephen

The Church's solidarity with the persecuted

27 December: St John

"I have written these words that you may believe"

28 December: The Holy Innocents

Children at risk of harm

29 Dec: Thomas à Becket, Archbishop

Archbishop Rowan Williams and his successor, the Rt Rev'd Justin Welby

30 December – 5 January: First week of Christmas

"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts"

The peace of the world

Family life

God's blessing for the year to come

6-12 January: Epiphany

"We have seen his star in the East"

Faith to follow Christ

Christians in the Middle East

A proper use of our wealth and influence

13-19 January: Second week of Epiphany

The Baptism of Christ

Remembering our Baptismal promises

The Church's healing ministry

Places in the news this week

20-26 January: Third week of Epiphany

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The united service at the Münster

Churches Together in Berne (AKiB)

The World Council of Churches

27-31 January: Fourth week of Epiphany

"Good news to the poor"

The missions and charities we support

Our Pastoral Care Team

Holocaust Day (27 January)



For Your Diary

December 2012 & January 2013

Regular Weekly Events

Mondays	09.30 - 10.00	Morning Prayer
Wednesdays	09.15 - 11.15	Parents and Tots – not on 26 December or 2 January
Fridays	09.30	Patchwork - not on 21 and 28 December TBC for 4 January
Saturdays	09.30 - 11.30	Choir Practice – not on 29 December TBC for 22 December & 5 January

Other Events

Saturday 1 December	18.00	Parish Christmas Party
Sunday 2 December	10.00	Youth Group
	11.45 - 14.30	Nativity Service Rehearsal
Tuesday 4 December	19.30	Church Council
Friday 7 December	12.00 - 14.00	Advent Study Course
Sunday 9 December	10.00	Nativity Service
Tuesday 11 December	13.30 - 15.30	House Group in Stettlen
Thursday 13 December	19.30	Carol Service at Heiliggeist
Friday 14 December	12.00 - 14.00	Advent Study Course
Sunday 16 December	17.00	Neuchâtel Carol Service
Tuesday 18 December	19.00	Biel Carol Service
Thursday 20 December	19.00	Thun Carol Service at Göttibach
Monday 24 December	16.00	Crib Service at St Ursula's
	17.00	Christingle Service in Neuchâtel
	22.00	First Eucharist of Christmas
Tuesday 8 January	19.30	Church Council

Sunday 13 January		COPY DATE
Saturday 19 January	09.00	Archdeaconry Synod
Sunday 20 January	10.00	Ecumenical Service at the Münster
		NO SERVICE AT ST URSULA'S
Tuesday 22 January	20.00	Junior Church Teachers' Meeting
Thursday 24 January	09.00 - 11.00	Magazine Collating

Future Dates

Saturday 2 March	10.00	Book and Food Sale
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NEUCHÂTEL CHURCH

Minister in Charge: The Rev. Dianne Cox

We meet in the Swiss Reformed Church at La Coudre, Chemin du Crêt-du-Chêne, nearly opposite the funicular train station to Chaumont

Services are held twice monthly:

**10 am on the FIRST Sunday of the month: Communion service
Junior Church**

5 pm on the THIRD Sunday of the month: All-age Communion service

Contact: Mrs Jennifer Veenendaal
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

Thun Church

There is a fortnightly service (normally a eucharist) at the Reformed Church Hall in Bubenbergrasse in **Thun**. This is held at 19.30 on the first and third Thursdays of the month, usually combined with a Bible study. (It's best to check with the office first!)

Church Office: 031 352 85 67

Traditional Pumpkin Soup Lunch in aid of Cecily's Fund



Thank you very much indeed for supporting the Soup Lunch in November 2012.

We had a marvellous opportunity once again to achieve this great amount in fellowship with good company and an informal lunch of delicious homemade soup, cakes, tea and coffee.

A big thank you to all those who were helping and hosting this day: Corinne Bomonti, Mirella Sponsiello, Shelagh Brawand, Elfriede Bürgi and Hector Davie who kindly took over the technical part for the Powerpoint presentation about my trip to Zambia. Many thanks to those who were spoiling us with a yummy dessert. Also a special thank you to Family Thomann who kindly donated the pumpkin and to all those who attended this event on behalf of Swiss Friends of Cecily's Fund.

We would be delighted to welcome you again at a future Cecily's Fund event.

- Yvonne Bomonti, Berne Representative Swiss Friends of Cecily's Fund

Gift cards for friends and family

A school uniform **CHF 15.-** / A pair of school shoes **CHF 20.-** / A year at Bwafwano **CHF 45.-** / A year at primary school **CHF 45.-** / A year at secondary school **CHF 90.-** / Six months peer health education **CHF 430.-** / A year's teacher training **CHF 625.-**

Please contact Yvonne Bomonti either at church on Sunday or at yvonne@bomonti.ch

Junior Church News

Classes

From January 2013, Junior Church is reverting to three classes: Sparklers for 3-7 year olds, All Stars 7-11 year olds & Pilots 11-14 year olds. Children will in future only change classes at New Year and at the beginning of the school year.



Meeting Times

Junior Church normally meets every Sunday, starting with a time of worship with the whole congregation in church before going to its own classes. After a short opening prayer, the All Stars meet downstairs and the Pilots in the Upper Hall. On the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month, the children return to church at the Peace. On the other Sundays, their teaching continues until coffee time. On the second Sunday of each month, the members of the Pilots class take part in various aspects of the main worship and so remain in church for the whole service. Pilot children will be encouraged to arrive early when participating in a service.

Activity Club

The Junior Church Activity Club (ages 7 – 11) continues to meet approximately once a month for fun activities, some of which are also aimed to serve others. Please contact Françoise Hänggi (031 802 10 05) for more information.

Nativity Play on 9 December 2012

As you might already know, “Hark, the Herald Angel” is the title of this year’s Nativity Play. We have many adults, teenagers and children participating in the Play. Everyone is working very hard but it is also lot of fun to be at the rehearsals and see the commitment of everyone involved in the play.

Up-to-date information is available on our website. Please download the flyer on the website to invite friends and family to this special event!

<http://www.stursula.ch/Junior/hark.html>

We still need “backstage” helpers for 9 December. Please contact Tricia (031 535 53 28, pcarrick@hispeed.ch), if you can help.

Happy Birthday!

Congratulations to the Junior Church Children with birthdays in December and January:

Giorgio Pagano 5 on 10 December	Aydon Kuruvilla 1 on 4 January
David Eze 4 on 12 December	Sandy Colla 11 on 21 January
Annabel Hebeisen 11 on 12 December	Kilian King 8 on 24 January
Erin Cotter 13 on 13 December	Natasha Yueh 4 on 28 January
Samuel Klein 12 on 17 December	Jonathan Hebeisen 14 on 28 January



Ditch the Christmas List Says Mothers' Union



Mothers' Union (MU), an Anglican organisation with 4 million members in over 80 countries, is calling on parents to ditch the Christmas wish list this year, in order to lessen the stress of commercialisation on their family at Christmas.

Their research shows that 69 percent of parents said that Christmas lists create disappointment for children if they do not receive all the gifts that they have asked for. Parents buy their children gifts which they cannot afford (72%), and they worry about their bank statements and credit card bills after Christmas (also 72%). This puts unnecessary stress on families.

MU has produced a booklet, *Labelled for Life*, to help parents to talk to their child about commercialisation – it's about having a conversation with them about what do they think has made them want a particular item. Even at Christmas it's helpful to have a family discussion about money and setting a budget.

Labelled for Life is a simple, short guide that aims to give parents the confidence they need to handle issues around the commercialisation they face as a family. The booklet is priced £2 – simply to cover the costs of production and mailing and is available from Mothers' Union.

<http://www.themothersunion.org>

Charity of the Month – Cecily’s Fund



Cecily’s Fund is a UK-based charity enabling children to go to school in Zambia, especially those orphaned or made vulnerable by AIDS. Well over 10,000 young people are being funded by or have graduated as a result of this charity.

Basil Eastwood (former ambassador to Switzerland) and his wife Alison established Cecily’s Fund in 1998 in memory of their daughter Cecily who died in a road accident whilst working with AIDS orphans in Zambia.

At the end of June, Yvonne Bomonti, the Berne representative of the Swiss Friends of Cecily’s Fund and member of St. Ursula’s, joined a group of five travelling to Zambia. Led by Basil Eastwood, they they visited Cecily’s Fund Zambian Partner Organisations BISO, HODI and CHEP. Yvonne has given this account of their experiences.



Upon arrival in Lusaka, Zambia’s capital, we visited BISO Bwafwano Community School which is fully funded by Cecily’s Fund. We met Mrs Beatrice Choala (CEO founder of BISO), Mr Babala Kataso (BISO head of Education) and colleagues who reported on the situation. Mr Kataso showed us the classrooms and three new rooms being built. Cecily’s Fund has been support-

ing pre-school, primary education and feeding programmes for 756 children at Bwafwano, as well as primary and secondary education at government schools for 1094 children.

We attended a sports day at Bwafwano. It was lovely to see all the children giving their best. Whether they won or lost they were cheered on by classmates, friends and teachers. After each match the winning and losing team started singing and dancing. At lunchtime the children quickly lined up to wash their hands and faces and go to the school food bank. BISO provides a healthy lunch for every child, the only meal each day for many children.

It was amazing how despite everything the children sing and dance with all their hearts. But behind every smile, tears were near. To the little orphans, it doesn’t matter where you come from. They still want to reach out and hold your hand or give you a hug.

At the end of a wonderful afternoon the gold medals, sponsored by BPL (a UK company which supports Cecily’s Fund) were presented by Alex Harvey (for BPL) and Basil. The children’s faces showed how proud they were to receive the medals.

We ended our day with a chance to talk with Mrs Beatrice Choala and Danny, Vice Chair of BISO. BISO demonstrates the extraordinary efforts of Mrs Choala, a humble nurse, to respond to children's poverty. It was special to get to know about her work.

Next we drove north to Kitwe. In the evening we had a briefing supper with Charlene Bangwe Chama (Program Manager HODI Kitwe), Paul Kasoka (Programme Manager PHE Programme CHEP), Mr. Benedict Kambaila (District Education Board Secretary-DEBS) and his wife. The next morning we met the HODI team at their office. HODI runs an education program for Cecily's Fund. In 2012 Cecily's Fund supported over 6,000 children at primary and secondary government schools, teacher training schools and university.

Charlene, once herself supported by Cecily's Fund, is a very kind, ambitious and assertive young lady who knows about the children's everyday problems. She helps them and searches for training opportunities and apprenticeships. Cooperation with schools and teachers is especially important for the well-being of the children.

We also met Mr M.M. Kaonga, the head teacher of Justin Kabwe Basic School. We were able to talk to children supported by the Fund, and hear their stories and dreams for the future. The children may live with one parent or grandparent and many of them come to school without breakfast. Many said when they grow up they would like to become a teacher, nurse, doctor or lawyer.

In the afternoon we went to St Francis Secondary School at Itimpi near Kitwe. After this we had the opportunity to visit two young students at home. Our group went with Francis, an 18-year-old student who lives on his own, and he showed us his very small shanty. He works as a gardener in the early morning before leaving for school. He seemed a sensitive young man but determined to make his way in life.

The next day began with a presentation about HIV in Zambia by the Copperbelt Health Education Programme Director Roy Mwilu at the CHEP office. Cecily's Fund supports the training of 52 orphans as Peer Health Educators. They provide AIDS education for young people in school three days a week. We saw them in action at the Kampema Basic School where 163 students are supported by Cecily's Fund.

During lunch at the CHEP restaurant we met five Peer Health Educators who told us about what they do and their future plans. Hellen and Frank, who joined us at our table, are two young people who obviously love their work and would like to become teachers.

After lunch Paul Kasoka (the PHE Programme Manager) informed us about their targets and goals. With the help of volunteers from the university Paul would like to offer computer education to Peer Health Educators two days a week. He recognizes that jobs of the future will often require computer literacy. We visited the home of a PHE which he shares with his mother. His father and all his siblings died. He plays an instrument, leads a band and would like to become a teacher as well.

In the evening we had supper with Dr. Sixtus Mulenga (patron of Cecily's Fund) and his wife. They founded and run a school in the Copperbelt. Dr. Mulenga is a geologist, a central figure in the Zambian mining industry and manages underground and open pits. He endeavours to create new jobs for Cecily's Fund school leavers.

The next day we visited Kitwe College of Education and Mufulira Training College, where students shared their life stories and future plans with us.

In the afternoon we went to the place where Cecily's parents, Alison and Basil, had planted a flame tree in memory of their daughter in the garden of the school where she had taught. Below the tree is a rock inscribed "In memory of Cecily Eastwood 'Lady in Red' d. 2.6.1997", and bearing an account of her tragic story. It was moving to stand under the beautiful tree and reflect.

Back in Lusaka we had a farewell supper with Charlotte Harland (Chair of HODI) whose husband is Guy Scott, Zambian Vice President. Mr Scott outlined Zambia's situation and development plans, and the challenges for the new government, which was peacefully elected in 2011.

The following day we returned to Europe. We had heard memorable stories from young people of their courage and determination to change their own lives, recognizing education as the only way to escape poverty. We thank Molly Brech (Director of Cecily's Fund) for organising such an excellent program and Basil for leading the group so smoothly.

Zambia is **one of the poorest** countries in the world and has one of the highest proportions of orphans – **1.6 million children** in a population of **just 13,5 million** people. Many parents have died as a result of AIDS. We **cannot replace parents** but we **do everything we can** to help these children.

With your help, we are working to ensure that **children are well-educated**.
Many thanks! www.cecilysfund.org

- *The Charity and Missions Team*



Other Events

Ecumenical House Group in Liebefeld

“God custom-designed you with your unique combination of personality, temperament, talents, and background, and He wants to harness and use these in His mission to reach this messed-up world”.

Bill Hybels & Mark Mittelberg, *Becoming a Contagious Christian*

The ecumenical House Group meets on the following dates at 19.30

Wednesday, 12 December (fellowship)

Wednesday, 9 January

Wednesday, 23 January

We continue our study of the Beatitudes.

Please contact Brian or Lynn Morgan (031 971 13 36, 079 415 26 19 or bmorgan@bcmconsult.ch) for further information.

Daytime House Group in Stettlen

“When we truly begin to grasp that our fellow disciples, no matter what their earthly circumstances may be, are our brothers and sisters in Christ, it will begin to move our hearts with God-like compassion as it challenges us to give and forgive, to share and to care for those around us”.

John Belham, *Lord, teach us to pray*

The Daytime House Group will meet on the following dates at 13.30

Tuesday, 11 December

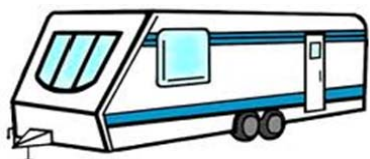
Tuesday, 8 January

Tuesday, 22 January

We will continue with a study of the Lord’s Prayer.

Please contact Brian Morgan (Leader) (031 971 13 36) or Linda Bisig (Host) (031 931 63 86) for further information.

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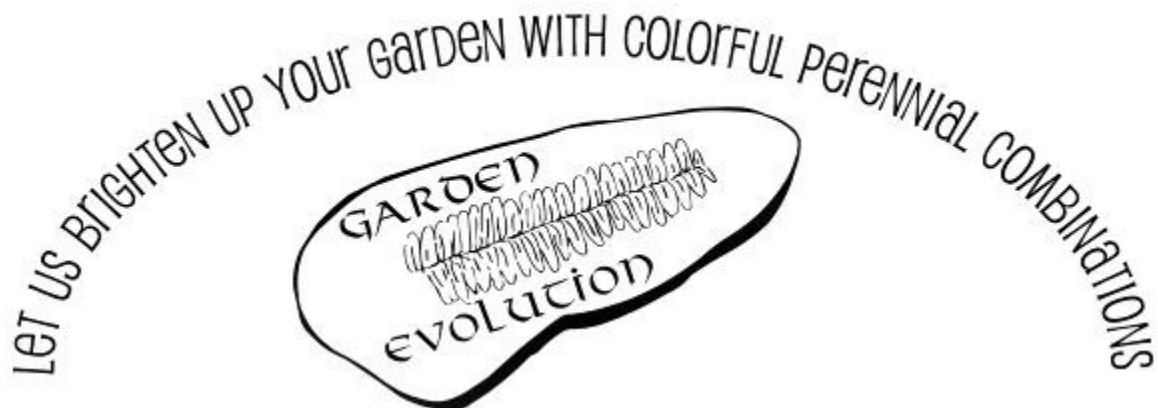
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Graham Tritt, President, tel. 031 829 34 79, email g.tritt@gmx.net

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www.angloswissclubs.ch

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A Baby in an ox's stall?
The Maker of the stars and sea
Become a Child on earth for me?
.....
No love that in a family dwells,
No carolling in frosty air,
Nor all the steeple-shaking bells
Can with this single Truth compare –
That God was Man in Palestine
And lives to-day in Bread and Wine.

From "Christmas" by John Betjeman