

THE CHURCH OF ST URSULA BERNE



December 2014 - January 2015

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

Chaplain

Ven Peter Potter

031 351 03 43

079 922 71 30 (emergencies only)

Honorary Assistant Chaplain

Linda Bisig

Associate Priest

Revd Mark Pogson

Youth Coordinator

Mary McKinley

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 All in Church Together.

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

Services in Thun: 19.30 on the first and third Thursdays of the month: Eucharist and Bible study. Contact: church office 031 352 8567

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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"How terrible the world is....."

How often do we hear that, not least in the intercessions in church? But I wonder what God thinks when we tell him that. After all he made the world and that's what we think of it!



It is too simple to say "God made it but sinful humanity spoilt it". Quite apart from the fact that this does not take natural disasters into account (or "acts of God" as insurers used to call them), it overlooks the fact that God made us too. If we are not careful we can end up like the Cathars, mediaeval heretics much beloved of Dan Brown and the like, who believed that the created world, especially human beings, was evil. In its extreme forms this heresy also taught that the material world was the creation of an evil, but lesser, god.

The Christmas story has something very different to tell us, however. It does not deny the presence of evil in the world - just look at Herod! But it also tells us God loved his creation as it is, with all its faults (John 3:16,17, echoing Genesis 1:31). The coming of Jesus into the world is not God's desperate Plan B, nor is it the action of a vengeful God looking for someone to carry the can. The life and ministry of Jesus, right from the recorded circumstances of his birth, tell us that God looks at his creation very differently and he is showing us how to do this too.

We always hear the prologue to John's Gospel at one Christmas service, usually Midnight Mass. This wonderful piece of writing is full of light. Points of light shining in the darkness. We see more points of light elsewhere in the Christmas story - Joseph, refusing to see Mary disgraced; the innkeeper, sometimes portrayed as a minor villain in Nativity plays, but he was doing his best in difficult circumstances; the people who must have helped the Holy Family on their long journey to Egypt and took them in when they got there. In other words, there *is* goodness in the world, if we are prepared to look.

Of course, terrible things are happening in Syria, South Sudan, in the countries stricken by ebola. We all know some unpleasant, even wicked, people. But this is not the whole story. Side by side with these things there is another story to be told, one that features the good people we know, the acts of kindness we have received and situations turned around (like the famine-struck parts of Ethiopia that gave rise to the song “Do they know it's Christmas. Feed the world”. Because people responded generously to their plight, those regions are now fertile and prosperous).

The story of Jesus' birth literally helps us to see the light.

May your Christmas and 2015 be full of joy, goodness, peace and light.

Peter

The Witness of the Manger



The modern world is a busy world. Churches want to be busy too. But they can sometimes become hyperactive – a study course here, a prayer group there, alive with missionaries, evangelists, people distributing tracts, people organising praise festivals and children's beach services. The more that goes on, the more they are doing for God, so they think. And while we are not “justified by our works”, all these things, and more besides, are good, and useful, and have their place.

For the task of the church is to spread the Word, “making disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.” (Matt 28:19-20) In this, we carry on Christ's work. In the words of Teresa of Ávila, “We are his body now, and he has no hands but ours.”

All things belong together, and what God is, and Jesus, so is the church, and so are we (or should be!). And God, as the story of creation at the beginning of the Bible tells us, is not perpetually busy, for on the seventh day, God rested.

Throughout the Old Testament, patriarchs, kings, priests and prophets, men and women, busied themselves speaking God's word to a largely unresponsive people, a people of unclean lips (Isaiah 6:5), who trampled the heads of the poor into the dust of the earth (Amos 2:7), who dealt falsely and cried "Peace, peace" when there was no peace (Jeremiah 6:13-14). All this preaching, all this busy activity in reminding people of what God wanted for the people, fell on deaf ears. People were no nearer to God in the days of Herod the king than when they had made the Golden Calf for themselves in the wilderness.

God could have sent a thunderbolt. Instead, God sent a baby. Or more exactly, God became a person, who, like all of us, entered life small, poor and vulnerable. So vulnerable that the infant Jesus had to make do with a manger for a bed, so poor that the first people to visit the new-born child were shepherds, whose status in Judea was on the level of garbage collectors in parts of India today.

To those with eyes to see, the baby was God, who had "become flesh and lived among us" (John 1:14), in an act of "self-emptying" (Philippians 2:7) – the promised Messiah and Lord (as the angel had told the shepherds (Luke 2:10)). The busy haranguing by the prophets, nagging people who were not following God's word, was over. They no longer needed to say "This is the word of the Lord", because here, in the manger, was the Word of the Lord in person.

The word of the Lord was no longer a set of instructions to be followed, but a person to be followed, and when we say in our services "This is the word of the Lord" we do not mean "Here are instructions from God" but "We have listened to something that shows us, through Jesus, what God is like." Jesus did not come to nag us about our wicked ways, he came as a saviour (as the angels told the shepherds), to bring forgiveness for our wicked ways.

The Bible says nothing about whether the night was calm and silent (if indeed it was night-time when Jesus was born – the first mention of night comes with the shepherds, whose night was far from calm and silent!). But the baby in the manger is there to remind us that God is not all thunder and lightning, prodding and punishing. Amid the busy bustle of the world, there is a place for the peaceful contemplation of the Christ-child, for standing and waiting is service too.

-Hector Davie

FAQ: Where can I find the Book of Wisdom?

In October and November the first reading was sometimes taken from this book and people have been puzzled because it is not in their bibles. This is because it is one of the books of the Apocrypha, which is often printed between the Old and the New Testaments but is left out altogether in some versions of the Bible.

Why is this? After the exile in Babylon, many Jews emigrated to other areas around the Mediterranean. After a few generations many of them could no longer speak Hebrew and their native tongue was whatever the local language was. This is the situation described in the account of the first Pentecost in the Acts of the Apostles, when the "devout Jews" gathered in Jerusalem spoke many different languages but could not understand the native



Aramaic of Peter and the other apostles. The common language of the time was Greek, just as English is the international language today.

These expatriate Jews (known as the Diaspora) still kept their religion and therefore needed a Greek translation of the Bible. This was completed in 132BC. The question was, though, what to include in this new translation? In those days the Bible was not a single book as we know it but a collection of scrolls kept in a special cupboard in the synagogues. And not all the cupboards had the same scrolls! After lengthy discussion the rabbis in the Diaspora decided to include some scrolls that were not found in the Jerusalem synagogues. These were mainly texts written after the Exile, such as the Wisdom of Solomon, Tobit and Judith.

After the destruction of the Temple in AD70 this Greek text was the version used in the synagogues and was also the one followed for Christian translations, such as the Latin version called the Vulgate, revised editions of which are still in use. The new translations produced during the Renaissance and the Reformation, however, referred to newly discovered Hebrew manuscripts as well as the Greek texts. Most of these translations did not include the Apocrypha and they were adopted by Protestant churches keen to distance themselves from the Latin Vulgate. Interestingly, most editions of the King James Bible included the Apocrypha until the early 19th century. The plots of two of G.F. Handel's oratorios (*Judas Maccabeus* and *Susanna*) are both drawn from books in the Apocrypha and the canticle *Benedicite* in the Book of Common Prayer consists of verses from the Greek version of the Book of Daniel. Many modern versions of the Bible, like the NRSV, come in editions that include the Apocrypha and it can be found in online reference works like Bible Gateway.

All this goes to show that the Bible as we know it did not drop ready-made from heaven but its genesis is the product of many centuries of discussion, argument and prayer about what should and should not be included.

-PMP

A word for the month – Santa

This is not going to be an article about the cheerful old man with a long fluffy beard, immortalised from the late 1920s onwards by Coca-Cola's advertising department in Haddon Sundblom's paintings. Nor about the red-nosed reindeer created by Robert L May in 1939, who cruised effortlessly to the top of the charts in 1949. If you want to know why people are obsessed with stockings, chimneys, gift-wrapping, yule logs and roast turkey in the dead of winter, come to our Christmas Party at church on 5 December – don't look here!



And it is not going to tell you (much) about the fourth-century bishop of Demre (then called Myra), on the south-west Turkish coast, who became the patron saint of sailors, merchants, archers, repentant thieves, children and pawnbrokers. We do not know whether he actually put gold coins in poor children's shoes, or tossed bags of money through the windows of girls whose father could not afford a dowry for them, but we do know that in America in the 1820s, the story of St Nicholas merged with the quite different story of Father Christmas. And here we are today.

This is about saints. Who are they, what are they, and are they relevant for us today? Well, we are all saints. The word “saint” simply means holy, and we, the baptised, are God's holy people. When the Bible uses the word “saint”, which it does over a hundred times, it means us, the countless millions who follow Christ now, and who have followed him through the ages. “The prayers of the saints” (Rev 5:8) are our prayers; the work of the saints (Eph 4:12) is our work; “the needs of the saints” (Rom 12:13) are our needs, and the needs of the Christians around us.

But, as *Animal Farm* might have observed, some are more saintly than others. We say to someone “You're a saint!” when they have done something particularly selfless. People who showed selflessness in serving Christ stood out as worthy of special mention. Stories might be told about them. Churches might be built near their graves. This happened with the apostles, the early missionaries who brought the Good News to the heathen

world. It happened with martyrs, whose death witnessed to their faith in Christ; with confessors, whose witness was just as strong, but who were not killed for their faith; with teachers (“doctors of the faith”); with people (such as Francis of Assisi or Benedict of Nursia – or Nicholas of Myra, indeed) who led an exemplary and holy life.

Over the centuries, beliefs and practices grew up around the saints. People treasured their remains, people compiled stories about them, people wrote prayers asking that we might be like them. It was thought that their prayers were more powerful than ours, and, based on the references in Revelation to the prayers of the martyrs, the idea of patron saints grew up, with the idea, for example, that St Crispin might have a better insight into the needs of shoemakers than the cobblers themselves, or St Jude the Apostle might have better words than those who prayed in situations of despair.

This led to a dangerous situation. People who felt that the saints could pray better than they could themselves ended up asking the saints to pray for them rather than praying to God directly in the name of Jesus. Only a sophisticated theologian could see the difference between “invoking” the saints - asking for the saints' prayers - and actually praying to them.

The Reformation put a stop to this, and the Church of England reduced its list of saints to those who were mentioned in the Bible (though the early Books of Common Prayer included a calendar listing a few other saints whose special days marked important markets or legal events).

Today we have a more balanced approach. We acknowledge that there are people who are, or were, especially holy, and we sometimes set days aside to reflect on their life and work. But saints are not essentially holier than we are – indeed, it has been said that one qualification for being a saint is not being fully researched. They are just like us, but they are something more. They are people through whom we can look and see what God is like.

-Hector Davie

Chaplain's notes

Important dates for the New Year



Baptisms

We normally designate four Sundays for baptisms, so that they can be evenly spread throughout the year. In 2015 they are:

11 January

12 April

5 July

4 October

We can arrange baptisms on other days if family circumstances make these dates difficult (e.g. relatives travelling from abroad).

Prayers for healing

We have established a pattern of having prayers for healing during the 10.00 service on four Sundays in the year. You can come forward for anointing and individual prayer, either for yourself or on behalf of someone you know. In 2015 we shall be doing this on:

1 February

10 May

23 August

18 October.



'The Possible World'

This is a new course produced by CMS (Church Mission Society), one of the charities we support. The course includes a DVD which presents the stories of people who have followed Jesus' call to be a disciple.

We have ordered enough copies to hold several groups meeting in people's homes, so it will be possible to have sessions at different times and on different days. You can choose which suits you best. We aim to start at the latest by the week beginning 18 February.

There will be a meeting after the 10.00 Eucharist on Sunday 25 January for all those interested, especially prospective group leaders. The Charities Team will provide a simple bread & cheese snack for the meeting. We shall also have a concluding meeting after church on 29 March (Palm Sunday) when all the groups could come together and present their conclusions and their ideas for any resulting actions.

Our **Missions Sunday** falls in Lent this year and, most appropriately, our guest preacher is to be Bishop Henry Scriven, who is on the headquarters staff of CMS. He will be able to give us some first-hand knowledge of the stories contained in the course. Please make a note of the date for Missions Sunday – 8 March.

-PMP

Adult confirmation group starting soon

We shall be having a Confirmation at St Ursula's in the summer and the teenagers' group is now well under way. There will be a separate group for adults starting in January with meetings about once every three weeks, times to be arranged to fit when people are available. These days it is increasingly common for people to be confirmed as adults, often because they have found their way into the Church later in life. Where appropriate, we can also arrange to combine confirmation with baptism if you were not baptised as a child.

We shall be exploring Christian teachings and looking at worship and other aspects of Church membership. It is a chance for people to explore these issues, or refresh their knowledge, in an adult context. Although the mainstream churches now recognise each others' baptisms, Confirmation in Anglican practice is not the same as the ceremony with the same name in the Swiss Reformed Church. So, if this is what you did in your early teens you can still be confirmed by a bishop in our church.

If you feel this is for you, or you would like to find out more, please let me know as soon as possible and we will arrange an introductory meeting.

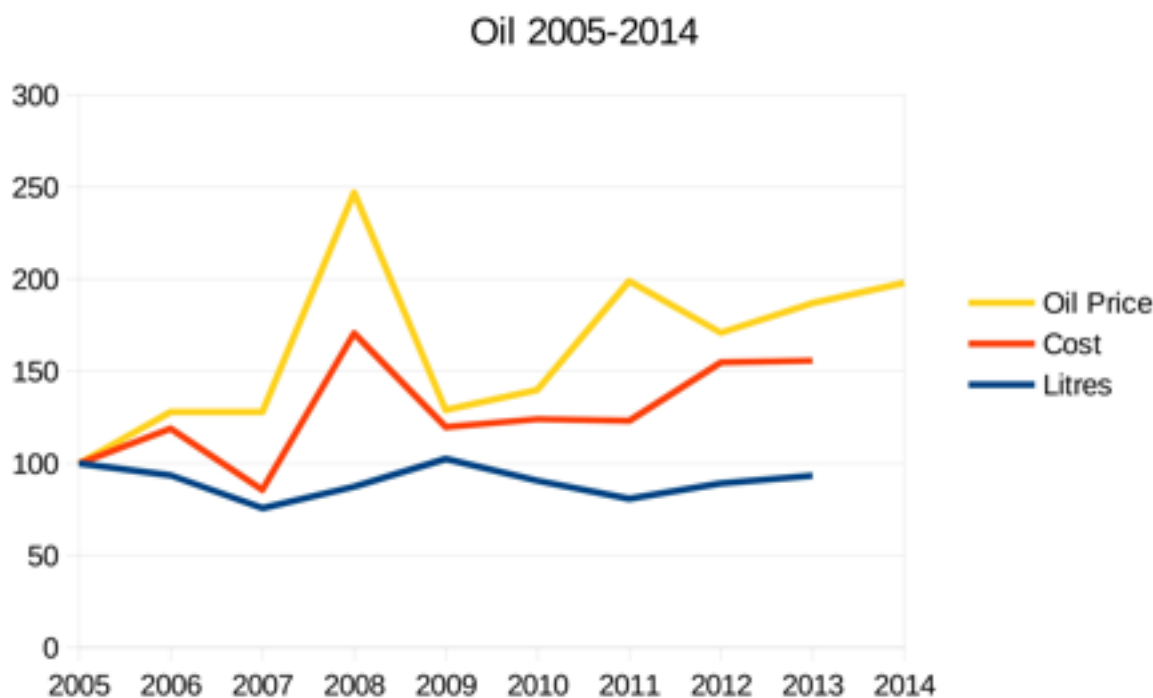
-Peter

A Heated Discussion Point

Throughout this winter, a team led by Hans Goepfert will be monitoring the energy we use in church – not just how much we use, but how we use it and how much of it we waste, either by losing heat out through the doors, walls, windows and roof, by heating or lighting unused spaces, or by making things warmer or brighter than they need to be.

The chart below shows the oil we have been using – 9176 litres in 2005. Over the years, it has varied according to how cold the winter has been, but it hasn't sunk much. Above is the price of oil, which has varied much more, as supply, demand and politics have dictated, so that last year we spent over Fr8700 on oil alone – plus the cost of maintaining our heating system. In addition, we spent over Fr3400 on electricity (and a further Fr1840 on water).

We need your support to keep the church “user-friendly”. There is obviously a better ecological solution out there than providing everyone who comes with thick blankets, but all solutions cost money. We hope we can rely on your support. Watch this space!



-Hector Davie



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

Visitors were treated right at the entrance to an impressive array of Christmas Wreaths and

decorations in the church porch followed by a church full of inviting craft stalls including (as ever!) a wonderful display of patchwork and quilts.

We had a very informative welcome stand letting visitors know about St Ursula's with information about the charities we support.

We had a popular bric à brac stall which also sold a good selection of cards.

Our cake stall in the Upper Hall, once again, proved a huge hit with most of the cakes already sold by the end of Friday.

The food stall had a good selection of British food with lots of Christmas treats and was busy throughout the bazaar.

Our raffle also proved a hit with lots of prizes on offer.

We were treated to a delicious raclette on Friday night and a big selection of scrumptious treats throughout the bazaar from the restaurant.

Downstairs, we had a superb selection of books along with toys, tombola and a very popular stand selling mulled wine and mince pies.

A HUGE thanks to all the numerous people who dedicated hours of their time and skills both behind the scenes and on stalls - before, during and after the bazaar.

I would particularly like to thank all those who undertook to organise and run a stall.

I hope everyone who helped and attended the bazaar had an excellent and festive start to the Christmas period. Final figures are not yet available, but we expect that final takings will exceed Fr 22,000 – an excellent result.



*-Jana Kutesko
Church Office*

Bishop's Advent Appeal 2014

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

One year after the tragedy off Lampedusa

I am writing this letter on the anniversary of the Lampedusa migrant shipwreck. On 3rd October 2013, a 20 metre fishing boat carrying migrants from Africa caught fire and sank just off the southernmost point of Italy, killing over 360 people. The tragedy was marked by a day of mourning in Italy. The European Commissioner for Home Affairs said: "let's make sure what happened in Lampedusa will be a wakeup call to increase solidarity and mutual support and to prevent similar tragedies in the future."

The plight of migrants crossing the sea to the Italian coast

Following the Lampedusa tragedy, the Italian government has launched the Operation "Mare Nostrum" with a wide scope to save and rescue persons in distress at sea. Despite this impressive operation, many other tragic incidents have happened and still happen in Greek, Italian, Spanish, Cypriot or Maltese waters. These tragedies remind us of the plight of



all those fleeing war and conflict - people desperate to find sanctuary in the relative safety of Europe. At the present time, we are particularly conscious of those escaping cruelty and destruction in the Middle East, particularly refugees from Syria and Iraq.

In this light, I present to you my first Advent Appeal as Bishop with the intention that our European diocese can express solidarity with some of the most vulnerable people in Europe.

The Sant'Egidio Programme for asylum seekers arriving in Sicily

This project aims to give emergency help to those who land off the Sicilian coast, to raise awareness of their rights as asylum seekers and eventually

to help their integration in Italian society. It focuses particularly on young people and children.

Sant'Egidio intervenes in the following major areas:

- Emergency help at harbours (Lampedusa, Crotone and Augusta): distributing food, first-aid kits, blankets, clothes and hygiene products.
- Community support and education: literacy and language courses, counselling, assisting with celebration of religious festivals, support to victims of trafficking.
- Funerals: support to identify remains; networking with Orthodox, Coptic, Muslim, Roman Catholic and Pentecostal clergy and communities for funerals and burial for people who died during sea voyages.

Staffing

The Sant'Egidio project working on this project is made up of:

- 8 Sant'Egidio volunteers with responsibility for co-ordinating the work
- 20 foreign (non-Italian) volunteers mostly from new member states
- 4-6 cultural mediators.

Costs

The estimated cost of running the project for 24 months is 30,000euros. The money is used for: mediation services, transport costs for volunteers, aid materials, costs involved with identification of remains and tracing families.

Overall, this is a low cost project where our Advent Appeal could make a huge difference!

Who is involved?

Sant'Egidio is a pan-European lay Roman Catholic community with particular concerns for the plight of the poor. I have the highest opinion of Sant'Egidio, and the link person with the Anglican Church, Monica Attias, is known personally to me.



The project has been proposed by Archdeacon Jonathan Boardman and the Rome chaplaincy.



Please do consider this project for your charitable giving and/or bring it to the attention of your mission committee. This is a very practical way in which our diocese can come to the aid of some of the most vulnerable people in Europe at the southernmost tip of our continent. Money collected for the Advent Appeal should be sent, as usual, to the Diocesan Office.

With every blessing,

+ Robert Gibbler in Europe

Ecumenical House Group in Liebefeld

“Understanding the beginning is the beginning of understanding”

We are studying “Unshakable Faith”
by Rick Joyner.

The Ecumenical House Group meets
on the following dates at 19.30:

Wednesday, 10 December 2014

Wednesday, 7 and 21 January 2015

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

Address: Falkenstrasse 2, 3097 Liebefeld





Invitation to



St Ursula's

Christmas Party

Friday 5 December

18.00 - 20.30

(stay for as long or as short as you like!)

Finger Food & Drinks provided
Entertainment including a seasonal quiz

**YOUNG, OLD AND ALL IN
BETWEEN ARE WELCOME!**



No registration necessary, but signing up helps us with the catering - please contact the church office.

If you'd like to help with the entertainment, whether it be musical or your special "party piece" please tell Maxine or the church office.

Readings December 2014 and January 2015

7 December - Advent 2

10.00 Sung Eucharist
Isaiah 40:1-11
2 Peter 3:8-15a
Mark 1:1-8

14 December - Advent 3

08.30 Said Communion
Isaiah 61:1-4,8-11
John 1:6-8, 19-28
10.00 Nativity Play

21 December - Advent 4

10.00 Sung Eucharist
2 Samuel 7:1-6,10,11,16
Romans 16:25-27
Luke 1:26-38

24 December - Christmas Eve

16.00 Crib Service
Luke 1:26-31,38
Luke 2:1-7
Luke 2:8-16

22.00 First Eucharist of Christmas

Isaiah 52:7-10
John 1:1-14

25 December

09.15 Holy Communion
Hebrews 1:1-4
Luke 2:1-7
10.00 Carol Service
Isaiah 52:7-10
Luke 2:1-16
Titus 3:4-7



28 December - Christmas 1

8.30 Holy Communion
10.00 Sung Eucharist
Isaiah 61:10-62.3
Galatians 4:4-7
Luke 2:15-21

4 January - Epiphany

10.00 Sung Eucharist
Isaiah 60:1-6
Ephesians 3:1-6
Matthew 2:1-12

11 January - The Baptism of Christ

08.30 Holy Communion
10.00 All in Church Together
Acts 19:1-7
Mark 1:4-11

18 January - Epiphany 2

10.00 United Service at the Münster

25 January - Epiphany 3

08.30 Holy Communion
10.00 Sung Eucharist
Jonah 3:1-5,10
1 Corinthians 7:29-31
Mark 1:14-20

Prayer Diary

FOR DECEMBER 2014 AND JANUARY 2015

The prayers for Advent are based on
the hymn *O come, O come Emmanuel*



1-6 December: First week of Advent

O Wisdom – the Word of God

Bible translators

Children at risk (St Nicholas, patron saint of children 6 December)

Those living with HIV/AIDS (World AIDS Day 1 December)

7-13 December: Second week of Advent

O Adonai - God the law-giver

The Bishop's Advent Appeal (for the Sant' Egidio Community))

UN Human Rights Day (10 December)

Judges and law-enforcement personnel

14-20 December: Third Week of Advent

O Root of Jesse - God for all nations

Seasonal chaplaincies in St Moritz, Wengen and Zermatt

People attending Carol Services

Victims of the ebola outbreak

21-24 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

28 December – 2 January: First week of Christmas

"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end"

The Church's solidarity with the poor

The peace of the world

God's blessing for the year to come

3-10 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

11-17 January: First week of Epiphany

The Baptism of Christ

Remembering our Baptismal promises

People preparing for baptism and confirmation

Places in the news this week

18-24 January: Second week of Epiphany

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The united service at the Münster

The Willibrord Society

PartnerSein

25-31 January: Third Week of Epiphany

The call of the disciples

Junior Church and Youth Group

Newcomers to our churches

Our growth in faith (Conversion of St Paul, 26 January)



For Your Diary

December 2014 & January 2015



Regular Weekly Events

Mondays	09.00 – 09.30	Morning Prayer
Wednesdays	09.15 - 11.15	Parents and Tots (not on 24 & 31 December)
Fridays	09.30	Patchwork (not on 26 December & 2 January)
Saturdays	09.30 - 11.30	Choir Practice (not on 27 December & 3 January)

Other Events

Tuesday 2 December	19.30	Church Council
Friday 5 December	12.00 - 14.00	Advent Study Course
	18.00 – 20.30	St Ursula's Christmas Party
Sunday 7 December	08.30	Church Breakfast
	10.00	Confirmation Class
	11.30 – 15.00	Nativity Service Rehearsals
Wednesday 10 Dec.	19.30 - 21.00	Ecumenical House Group in Liebefeld
Thursday 11 Dec.	19.30	Carol Service at Heiliggeist Church
Friday 12 December	12.00 - 14.00	Advent Study Course
Sunday 14 December	10.00	Nativity Service Youth Group after the service
Thursday 18 Dec.	19.00	Thun Carol Service at Göttibach
Friday 19 December	12.00 - 14.00	Advent Study Course

Sunday 21 December	10.00	Youth Group
Christmas Eve	16.00	Crib Service at St Ursula's
	22.00	First Eucharist of Christmas
Christmas Day	09.15	Said Eucharist
	10.00	Christmas Carols
Tuesday 6 January	19.30	Church Council
Wednesday 7 January	19.30 - 21.00	Ecumenical House Group in Liebefeld
Sunday 11 January		COPY DATE
	10.00	Youth Group
Sunday 18 January	10.00	Ecumenical Service at the Münster
		NO SERVICE AT ST URSULA'S
	10.00	Confirmation Class
Wednesday 21 Jan.	19.30 - 21.00	Ecumenical House Group in Liebefeld
Thursday 22 January	09.00 - 11.00	Magazine Collating
Sunday 25 January	10.00	Youth Group
	11.30	Junior Church Teachers' meeting
	11.30	Study Course Information Meeting
30 January 09.00 -	13.00	Book Sorting
Future Dates		
Saturday 7 February	10.00	Archdeaconry Synod
Saturday 28 February	10.00	Book and Food Sale
Sunday 8 March	12.00	Missions Sunday – Bring & Share Lunch
Sunday 21 June		Confirmation Sunday

Church Breakfasts

The monthly Sunday Church Breakfasts continue to be popular, with around 20 people attending each time. The dates for the next breakfasts are 7 December and 4 January.

Everyone is welcome. Just come along from 8.30 – no need to sign up or bring anything. Cereals, bread, butter, jam, marmalade, croissants together with tea, coffee and orange juice will be there waiting for you.



-Tricia Carrick

Happy Birthday!

Congratulations to our Junior Church children with birthdays in December and January

David Eze 6 on 12 December
Annabelle Hebeisen 13 on 12 December
Samuel Klein 14 on 17 December

Aydon Kuruvilla 3 on 4 January
Kilian King 10 on 24 January



Teens in Our Church



Looking around our church after a service, it's clear that our congregation is made up of diverse parts. Different nations, different ages, different backgrounds... Yet how many Sundays do I talk to someone new - someone I don't

normally talk to? Unfortunately, not many. In the church hall, we naturally drift over to the people "like us". During tea and coffee time, mothers swap stories about their kids and British ex-pats bond over the weather, while the teenage girls check their mobile phones in the corner and the boys go outside to play football. Everything seems normal, right? But by limiting our Sunday chats to our peers whom we know already, we're missing out on something huge - getting to know the teens who are giving up their precious lie-ins to come to church!

The teenage years are a time when we experience some of life's most difficult issues for the first time. Our teens are facing some real adult problems without our even knowing it, yet they don't have the valuable past experiences to guide their decisions. Maybe the teen in the corner looks self-confident, but is that hiding self-doubt? Maybe the youth who baked the cookies seems like he doesn't want to talk to you, but maybe he could really use some encouraging words today.

Below is a poem written by a teen about what it's like to be a teen. We all remember what it's like, but it's easy to forget in our day to day lives. Hopefully soon you will have the chance to volunteer at an event beside our church's teenagers, and then you can take the opportunity to share your unique life experiences with them, and learn more about theirs.

-Mary McKinley

The Face Behind

by Anonymous

Masks to hide the bitter truths, masks that make you blind.

Masks that I am afraid to take off, and none of them is "we".
For pretending is an art that is second nature to me.

True, I give an impression that I am all secure,
That everything is sunny with me, and life a vibgyor.*

But please don't believe me, oh please help me find.
Find the truth beneath the lies, find the face behind.

I need your hand, even when I say it's the last thing I want.
Need you to say those soothing words when silence is all I flaunt.

So when it's the same old, phony, rubbish song am playing....
Just try to hear those words that I am not saying.

* the key for rainbow colors: Violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange and red..
Source: Family Friend Poems

Youth Confirmation Class

The youth confirmation class continues to meet regularly with good attendance by the young people. In October and November we have been discussing various topics around the life of the church – like “why go to church?”

Our last meeting this year is on 7 December and we will look at some aspects of the Church's year.

In the first part of next year we plan to look at what it means to be a Christian. And, once again, we hope that many of you can help – we invite you to come and talk to the young people about some aspect of your Christian faith. Maybe how / why you became a Christian, what it means to you in your everyday life, or perhaps something special that you have experienced. If you would like to take part, please contact me.

-Tricia Carrick

St Ursula's Charity and Missions Review

For many years St Ursula's Church has set aside 10% of the pledged giving for charitable and missionary work.

The task of the Charity and Mission team is fourfold:

1. To draw up a proposal towards the end of each year for council as to how to allocate these funds
2. To keep in contact with the organisations we are supporting
3. To pass on news to our church family about the organisations through articles in the church magazine, displays in the church hall or by direct contact
4. To help our church family pray faithfully for the people we support with our gifts

Our aim is to update you about one of our missions through our bi-monthly magazine articles as well as displays on the hall notice board.

This past year St Ursula's has been privileged to have visits from:

- Piotr Wołochowicz from the Family Life Mission in Poland
- the Eastwoods from Cecily's Fund
- Rev Reuben Byomuhangi, Programme Coordinator of the Water and Sanitation project from the Diocese of Kigezi, Uganda with Rt Rev George Bagamuhunda, Bishop of Kigezi
- Robert Amstutz, representing Partner Sein on our Missions Sunday 2014.

We very much appreciate the prayer support of our church family. We also encourage groups or individuals in our church congregation to specifically support one of our church charities or organisations. For example, we have an active Friends of Cecily's Fund team here at St Ursula's, which organises events such as the Soup Lunch & concerts for additional fund raising and information. The Youth Group worked hard to help raise funds for Ruby Wildhaber who left in October to take part as a volunteer in a Raleigh International program in Tanzania. The Junior Church support the Uganda

and Sanitation project of TearFund Schweiz not only with their Junior Church collections but also with special activities such as a cookie and syrup making session for our Harvest Festival auction. Our Harvest Festival auction is a lively fundraiser for TearFund Schweiz (for the Uganda Water & Sanitation project).

Our Missions Sunday with a focus on our Missions with a speaker has become established as a regular annual event. Our next Missions Sunday and Pot Luck meal will be on 8 March 2015.

Prayer focuses to help you pray specifically are often included in our magazine articles. You will find more information and updates on the Charity and Missions notice board in the church hall about the various charities and organisation we support.

If you would like more information about any of our charities or missions please do contact one of the Charity and Mission team members (Peter Potter, Esther Funkhouser-Hutchison, Donna Goepfert, Cecily Klingler, Hector Davie and Pieter Perrett).

Local Charity or Mission Organisations supported at St Ursula's:

⌘ Partners (*Partner Sein*, Old Catholic Relief Organisation) with whom we work together closely

⌘ *AKIB Passantenhilfe, Heilsarmee* (Seev Levy) is run on behalf of the Bernese churches by the Salvation Army, offering advice and support to people locally without fixed homes

⌘ *Zentrum 5*, a meeting and self-help centre for immigrants and others, run with the support of the Bernese Council of Churches

⌘ Discretionary (to be used locally by Chaplain)

Regional Charity or Mission Organisations

⌘ Family Life Mission: Piotr and Mariola Wołochowicz and their team train men and women in Christian family life in Warsaw, Poland

⌘ Church Times 'Train a Priest Hardship Fund'

International Charity or Mission Organisations

⌘ Church Mission Society

⌘ Us (was known as USPG!) whose projects cover everything from wells for villagers to bicycles and books for evangelists

⌘ Refuge Egypt: All Saints Cathedral Cairo, Egypt, the Anglican community in Cairo and their "Helping Program" work with the refugees there who have fled from persecution in Sudan and elsewhere

⌘ Child Development Centre founded by Professor da Silva in Talagolla, Ragama in Sri Lanka

⌘ HLID, Holy Land Institute for the Deaf in Salt, Jordan

⌘ Cecily's Fund, Zambia supports and educates Zambian children who have been orphaned by AIDS

⌘ Life Skills Project (Sakh'ulutsha), run by Scripture Union, South Africa;

⌘ TearFund Schweiz (Junior church project)

For this year we have also allocated 400 Sfr for the support of the Foundation for Relief and Reconciliation in the Middle East - supporting the work of Canon Andrew White and providing humanitarian relief in Iraq through St George's Church and Clinic in Baghdad.

Charity and Mission prayer focuses for Dec/Jan are:

- Prayer for the local charities or missions we support around Bern
- Prayer for the regional charities or missions we support in the UK and Poland
- Prayer for the various international charities and projects we support in Cairo, Jordan, Sri Lanka, Uganda, Zambia, South Africa, Baghdad or globally
- Pray that our church family may provide generous financial support as well as active and regular prayer support

-Cecily Klingler on behalf of the Charity and Missions Team

Bishop's Christmas Message 2014

The nine lessons and carols service from King's College Cambridge is listened to by millions of people all over the world. It is one of England's most distinctive and successful religious exports! For me, the service has especial resonance, because this was the college where I studied as an undergraduate and so the distinctive sound of the treble voices and fulsome reed organ stops brings back happy memories of student life.

Eric Milner-White introduced the nine lessons and carol service in 1918. He had been appointed as Dean of King's at the age of 34. He developed the carol service because his experience as an army chaplain during the war had convinced him that the Church of England needed to introduce more imaginative worship. The nine lessons and carols format quickly became popular (indeed – how quickly do innovations become 'traditions'!) and is today widely copied and imitated. In our European chaplaincies 'the carol service' is now one of the best loved services in the whole year and delighted in by people of many different nationalities.

The beauty of our Christmas music has the ability to touch and soften the hearts of those who would not respond to a more prosaic declaration of Christian truth. But offering a delightful aesthetic experience is not enough. We long that people would encounter God! And if Milner-White were alive today, I am sure he would again be urging us always to be vigilant to the need imaginatively to portray the extraordinary story of the birth of the Saviour in a way that would impress upon its sceptical 21st century hearers the incomparable meekness and majesty, suffering and glory of the first Christmas.

We need again to feel the shocking reality of God becoming incarnate in conditions of extreme vulnerability and deprivation. For, as the evangelists tell us, God's Son was born in a feeding trough far from home as the first child of an unmarried, and presumably very scared young mother. From his birth he was hunted down by a mad and bad tyrant. Whilst still small, he and his parents were forced to migrate into neighbouring Egypt where I suppose they lived as refugees. I always find it striking that in Matthew's account of Christmas, the first half of chapter 2 which relates the adoration

of new-born King by the magi, is counter-balanced by the second half which graphically relates the attempts by the hostile powers of his day to end this would be King's young life before it has scarcely begun.

2014 has been marked for many of us by commemorations of the outbreak of World War 1. It may be significant that Milner-White composed his carol service after war-time service both in Italy and on the Western Front. He certainly knew how to reclaim beauty from brokenness.

In our own time, we are massively aware of the tragedy of war. It is reckoned that about 14 million people have been displaced by the conflicts in Syria and Iraq. In Lebanon, one in four of the population is now a refugee. We Christians, whose Saviour began life as a refugee, have particular responsibilities to do what we can to help and to urge our governments to act together to provide aid. And we pray earnestly for those many men, women and children who face a winter without adequate food or shelter.

It is in this sobering international context that this Christmas we celebrate in word and in song the great and wonderful mystery of the incarnation, the enfleshment, of God's Son.

I am very aware that the Christmas season puts particular opportunities and pressures in the way of our chaplaincies. We are typically receiving lots of visitors who don't normally darken the doors of our churches. At the same time, many regular church members are away at Christmas itself, visiting family or friends. So those that remain have to work especially hard to keep everything running and to provide a cheerful welcome. Whether we have the resources of a great church or cathedral or something far more modest, it is the authenticity of what we do and the warmth of our welcome that makes the biggest impact. So to all those who sustain and enable our worship over Christmas I give my warm and sincere thanks: to our clergy, lay readers and leaders, musicians, welcomers, wardens, caterers and cleaners.

And may the God whose message of peace was sung by the angels to herald the birth of his Son, bring his peace to our hearts, our homes, our families and our world over this Christmas time.

+Robert Gibraltar in Europe



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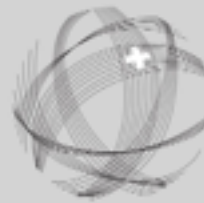
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