

THE CHURCH OF ST URSULA BERNE



June - July 2021

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

Chaplain: Revd Helen Marshall

chaplain@stursula.ch

031 351 03 43

Day off: Friday

Lay Reader

Archana Jacob

archana@stursula.ch

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 more informal.

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

Services in Thun: 18.30 on the first and third Thursdays of the month at Chapelle

Romande, Frutigenstrasse 22: Eucharist and Bible study.

Contact: Church Office 031 352 85 67

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: www.stursula.ch

E-mail: berne@anglican.ch



St Ursula's Church Magazine

VOL 40/3

June - July 2021

Published & printed in Berne by St Ursula's Church/Hergestellt in Bern durch St Ursula's Church
Appears 6x a year/wird 6x jährlich herausgegeben

Annual Subscription Rates:
Fr22 including inland postage
Postfinance Accounts 30-4416-8 (Church), 60-666488-7 (Charitable Association)

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NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

During the current pandemic, some of the events scheduled here may be postponed or cancelled. Please check with the Church Office (031 352 85 67) or on the Church website (www.stursula.ch) for recent information.

COPY DATE

for the August - September 2021 magazine is

11 July 2021

Please send copy to magazine@stursula.ch

COLLATING DATE: Thursday 22 July 2021

From the Chaplain

Dear Friends,

We all know that 1 January is New Year's Day; our calendar year runs from January to December. However, the academic year begins in September and ends in June, and the UK tax year, for complicated historical reasons, begins on 6 April. The church year is different again and begins on Advent Sunday (4 Sundays before Christmas) and ends with the festival of Christ the King (in late November).

But why do we have a church year at all? The church year helps us to remember all the key events of our faith and to understand how they fit together.

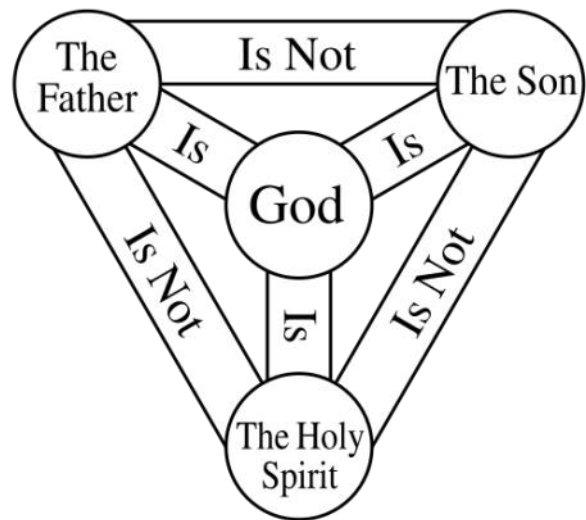
In the season of Advent, we hear the message of the prophets who prepared for the coming of Christ; at Christmas, we reflect on the birth of Jesus and the meaning of the Incarnation; in Epiphany, our focus is on the revelation of Christ's glory to the world; in Lent, we remember Jesus' temptations in the wilderness, his self-denial and obedience; in Passion Week we reflect on his suffering and death; in Eastertide, we rejoice in his resurrection; in Ascensiontide, we remember Jesus' return to the Father and we pray for the coming of the Spirit, which we then celebrate at Pentecost. Having reflected on the work of God through the ministry of Jesus, the Son, and the giving of the Spirit, we then consider the nature of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, on Trinity Sunday, the week after Pentecost. (I will say more about this below.) In recent years, a new season has been established in many churches in September called 'Creation Season' when we focus on God as Creator and pray for the protection of the environment.

There are also periods during the church year which we call 'ordinary time' which are not in any particular season. The longest period of 'ordinary time' is the period after Trinity Sunday until the festival of Christ the King in late November. During these periods of 'ordinary time' we follow sequences of readings from the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke in a three-year cycle, which focus our attention on Jesus' ministry and teaching.

Occasionally, people ask me why we need to remember things at certain times of the year when, for example, we can celebrate Jesus' resurrection and the presence of the Spirit any time. That is true, but going through the church year helps us to reflect on the full range of the core beliefs of our faith afresh, year by year. We are reminded of all the

main phases of the story of God's purposes in Christ, and through this constant re-telling we are drawn into that story again and again.

As I write this, we are approaching Pentecost and Trinity Sunday. By the time we reach Trinity Sunday (30 May), we will have heard afresh this church year that God is the Creator who has made all things; he is the God who called the people of Israel into covenant with him; the God who spoke through the prophets and then came among us in his Son; the God who reconciles the world to himself through Christ's death, passion and resurrection; and the God who sends his Spirit on his disciples to continue his mission in the world.

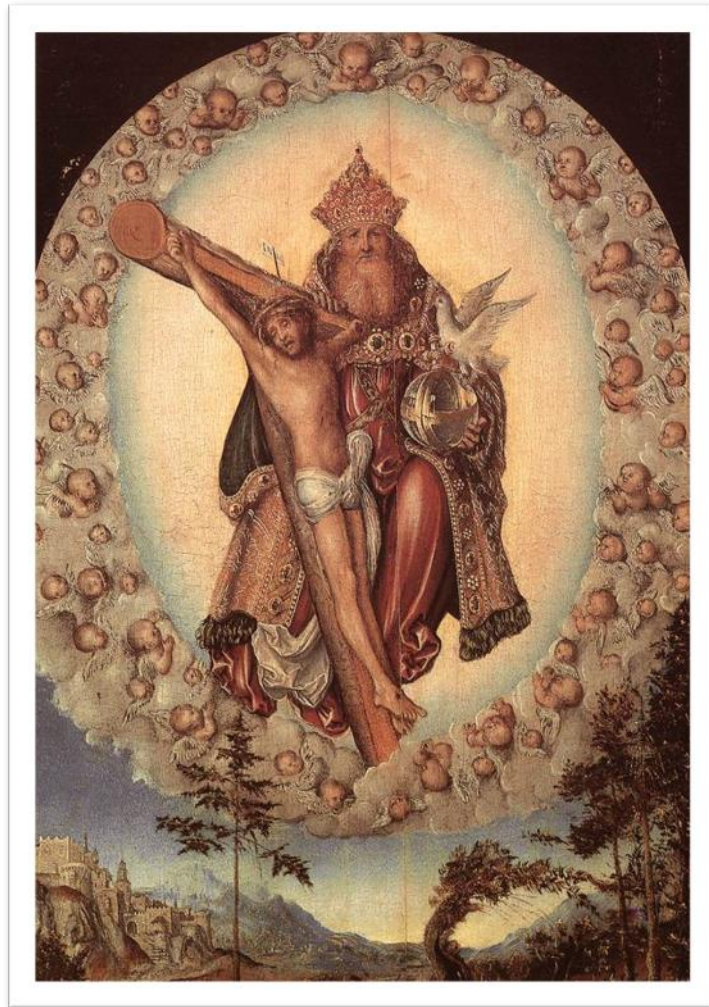


Who is this God? Our trust is in the One God revealed as three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In a sense, Trinity Sunday is the high point of the church year, when we affirm our faith in the Triune God whose purposes we have seen in creation, in the Incarnation, death and resurrection of the Son, and the giving of the Holy Spirit. All that we have heard about God's purposes in the rest of the church year builds up to this affirmation. We are Trinitarian Christians, and this is embedded in our liturgy and worship, week by week. We are all baptized in the name of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. When we confess our sins, we receive forgiveness in the name of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and at the end of our Eucharist we receive the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Belief in God the Trinity has generated a great deal of very complicated writing. But the heart of the matter is something simple and of profound relevance to us all. The doctrine of the Trinity tells of a God who is love within God's very being. God is constituted by loving relationship. There is a movement of love between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit which then overflows to the whole world. The doctrine of the Trinity also has implications for us. If we are made in the image of God the Trinity, then that means we are not made to be lonely, independent, autonomous beings, but people whose very being is in relationship, made for the giving and receiving of love and only really flourishing when this is happening. 'If I have not love, I am nothing.' (1 Cor 13)

So, after Trinity Sunday, as we move into 'ordinary time', let us remember the extraordinary truth that we are held and surrounded by the love of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and that we are

created to reflect something of this self-giving, inter-dependent love in our relationships with one another.



Trinity by Lucas Cranach the Elder (1472-1553)

Holy God,
faithful and unchanging:
enlarge our minds with the knowledge of your truth,
and draw us more deeply into the mystery of your love,
that we may truly worship you,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
One God, now and forever. Amen.

With love in Christ,
Helen

Street Culture

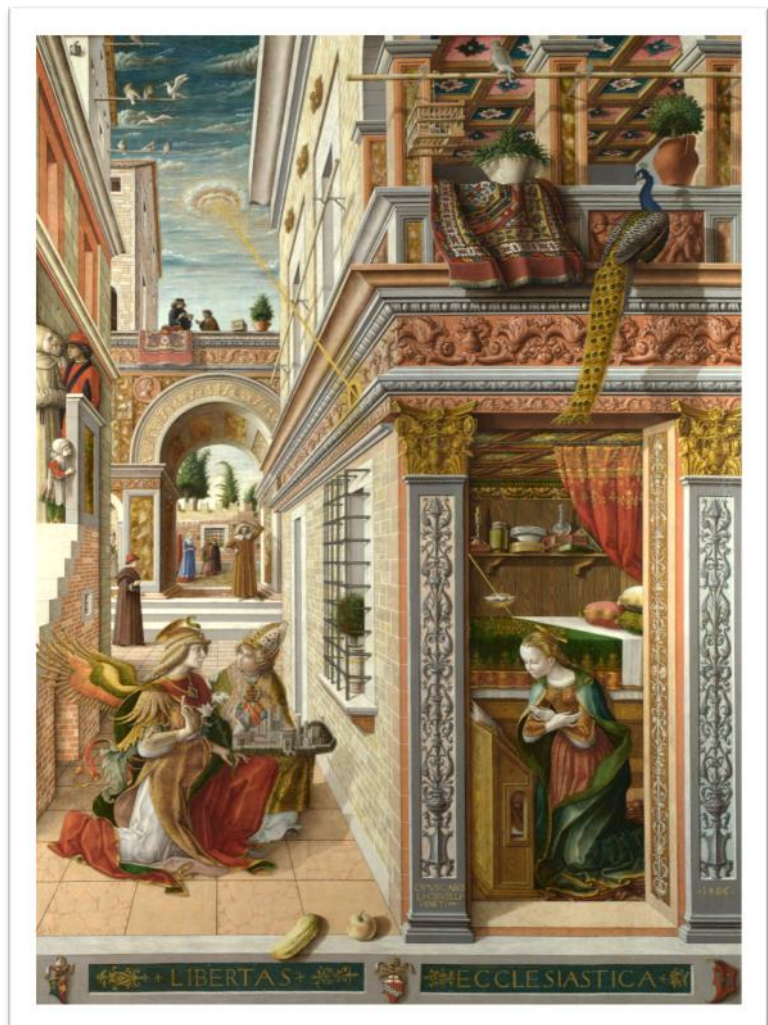
*Great things are done when men and mountains meet
This is not done by jostling in the street*

William Blake, the radical artist, poet and printmaker, who lived from 1757 to 1827, jotted these two lines down in his notebook. Although he was no friend of the Church of England, or of organized religion in general, he would have called himself a committed Christian – his poem known widely as *Jerusalem* is still sung as if it were a hymn, and many of his *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* are filled with Christian images and demands for social justice.

There is not much about social justice in these two lines. They read more like a travel advertisement for the Alps or the Himalayas. One wonders what happens when women and mountains meet, but one is left in no doubt that city streets are not a great place to be. For Blake, this was so. Urban crowding was a result of exploitation, and a cause of disease.

The Bible also sees mountains as “thin” places – places where God is closer. Abraham, Moses, Elijah, all meet God on them. The Temple is built on “God’s holy mountain”. Jesus is transfigured on one, and the Book of Acts records his Ascension into heaven from the Mount of Olives. But at the same time, God meets us in the street. The Gospels, Luke in particular, take great trouble to stress that Jesus was not socially privileged, but “one of us”.

A fifteenth-century painting by the Italian Renaissance artist Carlo Crivelli brings this home. In one of the streets of a very stylized Bethlehem is



St Egidius, the patron saint of Ascoli Piceno, the artist's home town. Next to him kneels the archangel Gabriel, delivering God's message to a very schoolgirl-like Mary. A ray of light shines from the Holy Spirit on high, while down below people go about their daily business – apart from a small child, who has noticed what is happening.

God speaks to us from the street – from where we are. We may have “special” places, but we cannot hide from everyday life. Everywhere is holy. God is with us here and now – we cannot hide or turn away. This is the message of the Church of England's current initiative, *Everyday Faith*. God does not just meet us in church, does not just speak to us through sermons and Bible texts. Our whole life is an encounter with grace and holiness. We are putting some videos on our website (www.stursula.ch/everyday.php) to show how some of our church family are meeting God and responding to God's approach. For this day, and every day, is a day of salvation.

- Hector Davie

Eco-Notes



The recent work of the gardening team reminds us that we need to live in harmony with our fellow creatures – and with the rain that falls and the sun that shines. Gardens are a good area where we can work together with nature to create something peaceful and beneficial, which is inviting to visitors – human ones where we can offer access to the public, and universally inviting to small mammals, insects and local plant life.

Living closer to nature also means knowing it more closely. Many churches in England are doing a good job of explaining themselves – and this not only means the built environment – the chantry chapels and the squinch-holes, the clerestories and the piscinas (St Ursula's has none of all four of these), but the lands around – where the beetles hide or the finches feed. When our young people return after the pandemic, we need to set them to monitoring how our plants grow, how many insects live where, what signs the squirrels leave of their visits.

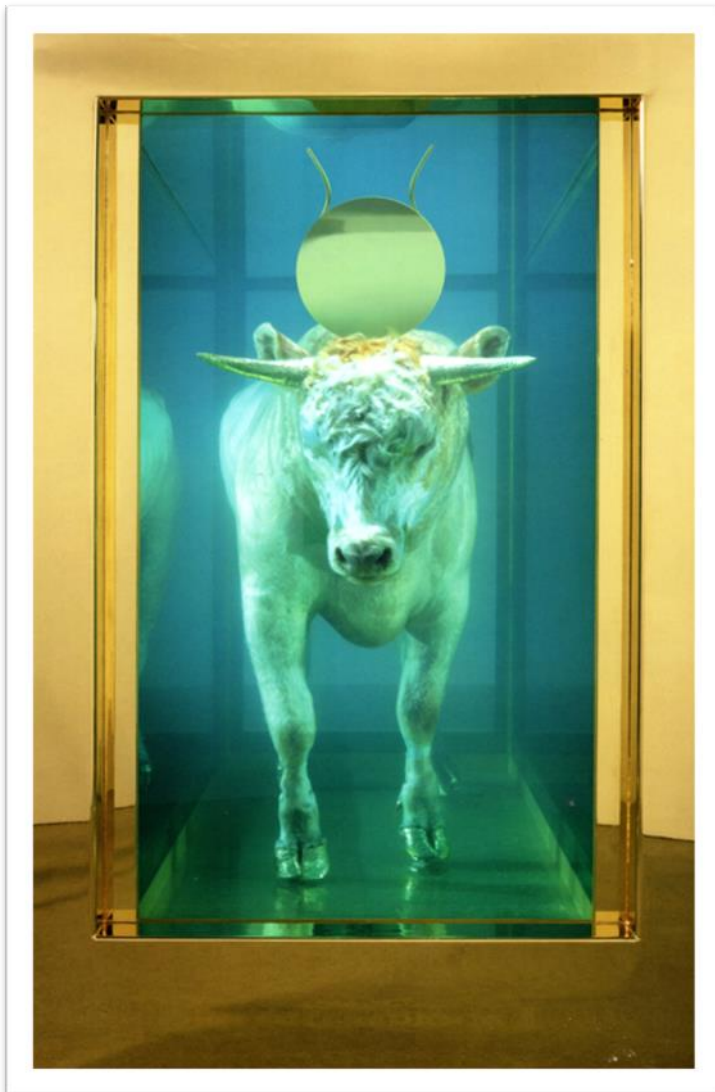
The environmental charity A Rocha reminds us, with its series of challenges in the Eco-Church movement, how far we have yet to go – look at their questionnaire (try Google!), and don't despair. We just need to keep plotting, joyfully, in the right direction!

- Hector Davie

A Word for the Month – Idol

I am not sure why, but a story that made a particularly deep impression on me at the age of seven or eight was the story of the Golden Calf. The story of Moses and the Exodus was one to stir any young child's imagination, and it always seemed a bit unfair that the children of Israel had to wander around an inhospitable desert for forty years. They were expecting a speedy trip to a land flowing with milk and honey, and had a valid point when they asked "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness?" (Ex. 14:11).

A couple of weeks after they escape from Egypt, they reach "the mountain of God" and Moses climbs it, and he and the people hear the Ten Commandments. One of the first of these forbids them to make what older Bibles translate as "any graven image". Scholars can debate whether this was a sign of a Stone Age or a Bronze Age culture, and



The Golden Calf, by Damien Hirst, 2008

whether a large group of nomads would have had the ability to smelt quantities of metal while wandering in a desert. The Bible tells us that it is a likeness "of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth", and that the harm is not in the making them but in "bowing down to them or worshipping them."

So when Moses returns up the mountain for a second time, taking Joshua with him, the six dozen elders whom he asks to look after the people while he is away, along with the people themselves, get tired of waiting for his return and say to Aaron, "Come, make gods for us, who shall go before us," and Aaron obliges, making a fire to melt down the people's gold

ear-rings. Out comes a statue in the shape of a calf, and the next morning, the people offer sacrifices to it. Moses hears of this, rushes down, smashes the calf, and in his anger breaks the stone tables on which God has engraved the commandments.

This story reminds us of many ancient religions in the Middle East. Bulls were worshipped nearly everywhere as symbols of power and of fertility, and in Dan and Bethel, sanctuaries in the northern kingdom of Israel, even God was worshipped in the form of a bull.

The word idol could mean other things to the Jewish people. It could mean the family heirlooms – the “household gods” (in many versions left untranslated as *teraphim*). These teraphim were kept with the idea of guarding the home. Or idol could refer to one of the gods of the nations which had lived in Canaan before the Jewish conquest. Contrary to what the history of the Jewish people before the Exile seems to suggest, the people Moses led did not completely root out “the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites”. Indeed the book of Deuteronomy asks them to act kindly and generously towards them. At least some people would have thought there was a connection between the milk and honey with which the land flowed and the *asheroth*, the fertility pillars set up in the fields, or with the sacred rites associated with the goddess Ishtar (Astarte). The locals did a brisk trade in little figurines, and the Jews referred to these contemptuously as *elilim* – little gods, which English Bibles translate as “idols”.

Quite simply, an idol is anything that draws us away from God. Jews and Muslims have strong taboos against artistic works depicting the human form, and sometimes even other animals, or any living being – God alone is the artist who can breathe life into a creation. Portraying an image, whether of a winged bull or of an old man with a beard, limits God too much. In Jesus, God came “in the form of a servant”, and we can see God in person.

So let us look through any image we see to recognize its creator. For if we do not do this, we are worshipping a creation which, no matter how impressive it is, is only a pointer to God, maker of heaven and of earth – and of us!

- *Hector Davie*



Our Summer Fête was supposed to take place on Saturday 5 June and I know we were all looking forward to it.

It would have been a great chance for all of us to meet each other and have a fun day out enjoying our beautiful garden. Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we had to switch again to an online sale.

At the time this text is written, our website www.sale-stursula.ch is live and everyone can browse (and order) through a great collection of British Food Products, Home Baked Goods, Patchwork including Cloth Masks and many more items. Preparing the online sale has been an exciting experience. Our volunteers have worked so hard for this and we all feel lucky to have them.

Don't Forget

Order now; pick up date is Saturday 5 June. Looking forward to seeing you then.

Books

If you wish to browse our books on collection day, please let us know with an email at event@stursula.ch.

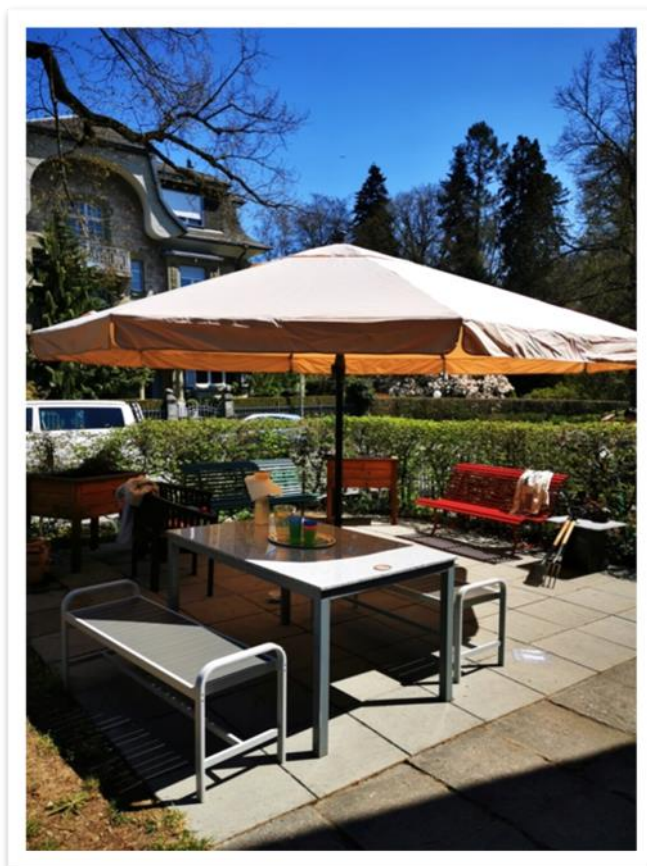
Updates

For more updates and additional information, please stay tuned to St Ursula's website www.stursula.ch and Facebook page. Moreover, Helen with her weekly emails will keep you updated with any future events taking place at St Ursula's.

- Maria Avdikou, Church Office

The background photo used for our Summer Fête flyer and the respective article was created by www.freepik.com

Gardening Report: June - July 2021



The end of May 2021 marked a year since the second phase of the eco-garden got going, which is when Alison and Agnes joined the eco-garden team, and we really started to push on transforming the garden. One year on, it is a totally different place, with lots of variety and many more birds and insects visiting the garden. It is too hard to list all the people who have contributed to the garden, whether with plants, money or time, but you know who you are and we thank you very much for all the contributions. A big thank you also to the watering team. We are setting one up for this year, although with all the rain we have, there may not be so much to do.

We are also currently planning a gardening day per month, to do the weeding, and other jobs that a garden always needs. If anyone would like to join us, you will be very welcome. We even provide lunch, which if the Covid rate continues to fall might even be from the grill next time. We will be cutting hedges in August, so would especially welcome help for that job.

Please feel free to visit the garden at any time, and take a seat on our new benches. We have a sun umbrella now on the patio, which can be easily wound up and down. Please do not leave it up unattended however, as any strong wind could cause a lot of damage. In the planting boxes on the patio we have lettuce and tomatoes growing, as well as strawberries in a pot. The produce is for anyone who wants some, just take it. The lettuce is cut and come again, so just cut off what you can use, and it will regrow. If you would like any information about the garden, or about joining us or the watering team please contact Agnes (agnes_derory@yahoo.com).

- Sue Higson

British Food Stall

The 5th of June will see another Covid-affected church event. Unfortunately, due to restrictions, we aren't able to have as big an event as usual but people are still very glad to be able to order their British food and homemade goodies for collection on the day.

Our order from the UK arrived promptly, which was a relief. A great team of volunteers offered to bake a wide range of cakes, baked and hot food. These are always well received on sale days and must be good as we have a lot of repeat customers!



We have a new range of guest-produced items from Wayne Ashley who is originally from Jamaica and has recently arrived in Bern. His little pots of sauce and chilli jelly are delicious. Many people are happy to see the return of Araliya products as well.

Our next event will take place on 4 September and we hope to be able to hold a more traditional sale although pre-orders will still be taken to allow people to guarantee that they will be able to get hold of their desired products.

We thank anyone who has made a purchase from the food stall for their support and we look forward to seeing you on 5 June or 4 September.

- *Caroline Montgomery*



SACEP Day

On Saturday 15 May we had our SACEP Day, organized by Revd Elizabeth Bussmann with Paul Jones, UK Operational Manager of Release International and they led us in exploring and getting to know the issue of Christian persecution around the world.



Release International was founded in 1968 inspired by the testimony and ministry of Pastor Richard Wurmbrand, who was imprisoned for his faith for 14 years in communist Romania.

More than 340 million Christians – one in eight – face high levels of persecution and discrimination because of their faith. In India, the Hindu nationalist government has fostered a climate in which attacks and harassment of Christians have increased. Likewise the brutal Islamic State in the Middle East and Boko Haram terrorists in Nigeria violently persecute Christian families and women. In China, the government has increased surveillance, with facial recognition systems installed in state-approved churches in some areas and online services monitored.



Release is an inter-denominational Christian ministry working through local church partners in more than 25 countries, helping persecuted Christians prayerfully, pastorally and practically. At the moment they have projects in Sri Lanka, Pakistan, India, Central Asia, Egypt and China.

Release supports individual needs of families where the main breadwinner is in prison; endeavours to help family members start up small businesses as well as developing local industry particularly for young women; supports local advocates in legal actions and prison visiting; and seeks to enable persecuted Christians escape from their captors and settle in free countries.

In addition Release promotes regular petitions to heads of Government and Ambassadors of countries where there is little evidence of freedom of religion – there is a current petition appealing to the Pakistan Government for the abolition of the blasphemy laws which are often used to imprison Christians.

The increasing persecution of Christians across the world should disturb us. The apostle Paul was once a persecutor of the early church – until God turned his life around, transforming him into a mighty preacher and church-planter. Release helps persecuted churches bring the good news of the gospel – even to those who persecute them.



Please check their website (releaseinternational.org), to see how we as a Church can help. 'Let us be on the side of those who sit in jails and are sentenced to death for their faith. Let us pray for them and help them'. (*Richard Wurmbbrand*)

- *Maxine Wildhaber*



Services and Readings June and July 2021

Sunday 6 June – First Sunday after Trinity

10:00 Eucharist
Genesis 3:8-15
2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1
Mark 3:20-35

Sunday 13 June – Second Sunday after Trinity

10:00 Eucharist
Ezekiel 17:22-24
2 Corinthians 5:6-17
Mark 4:26-34

Sunday 20 June – Third Sunday after Trinity

10:00 Eucharist
Job 38:1-11
2 Corinthians 6:1-13
Mark 4:35-41

Sunday 27 June – Fourth Sunday after Trinity

10:00 Eucharist
Wisdom 1:13-15, 2:23-24
2 Corinthians 8:7-15
Mark 5:21-43



Sunday 4 July – Fifth Sunday after Trinity

10:00 Eucharist
Ezekiel 2:1-5
2 Corinthians 12:2-10
Mark 6:1-13

Sunday 11 July – Sixth Sunday after Trinity

10:00 Eucharist
Amos 7:7-15
Ephesians 1:3-14
Mark 6:14-29

Sunday 18 July – Seventh Sunday after Trinity

10:00 Eucharist
Jeremiah 23:1-6
Ephesians 2:11-22
Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

Sunday 25 July – St James the Greater (Eighth Sunday after Trinity)

10:00 Eucharist
Jeremiah 45:1-5
Acts 11:27-12:2
Matthew 20:20-28

Sunday 1 August – Ninth Sunday after Trinity

10:00 Eucharist
Exodus 16:2-4, 9-15
Ephesians 4:1-16
John 6:24-35

Sunday 8 August – Tenth Sunday after Trinity

10:00 Eucharist
1 Kings 19:4-8
Ephesians 4:25-5:2
John 6:35, 41-51

For Your Diary June and July 2021

**Our Regular Weekly Events are NOT taking place
IN CHURCH until further notice.
(Many of them continue on Zoom.)**

Other Events

Tuesday 1 June	Church Council meeting
Saturday 5 June	Online Summer Sale – order pick up day
Thursday 17 June	Thun Service
Tuesday 6 July	Church Council meeting
Sunday 11 July	Magazine Copy Date

Future Dates

Saturday 4 September	Autumn Sale
Sunday 3 October	Pledge Sunday & Harvest Festival

Happy Birthday

Congratulations to our Junior Church children with birthdays in June and July:

Zornitsa Neda Holden 12 on 8 June
Charlotte Gertsch 16 on 10 June
Jakob Klingler 4 on 10 June
Clive Kammermann 6 on 11 June
Michelle Amporful 16 on 14 June
Coline Crettaz 13 on 14 June
Ariel Hutchison 14 on 18 June
Benjamin McKinley 9 on 24 June
Nayden Holden 9 on 25 June

Rachel Eze 15 on 3 July
Emma Quesnot 15 on 6 July
Samuel Ondondo 13 on 11 July
Cem Roser 6 on 14 July
Kimberley-Cass Ampadu 8 on 14 July
Jillian Patton 13 on 16 July
Michael Hänggi 16 on 21 July
Louis Carlotto 2 on 27 July



Junior Church

Unfortunately, we are still not able to meet at church. However, we are holding short family services via Zoom once a month. Everyone is welcome to join us – contact Helen for details.

In addition, there are many resources on the web. The Junior Church teachers use “Roots” (<https://www.rootsontheweb.com/>) which provides resources that are currently available to all. If you have questions about how to access these, please contact me or another Junior Church teacher.

Please continue to pray for the children, their families and the teachers during these strange times.

NEWS

There are no dates or details yet, but we are planning two activities:

- For the older children / young people: painting the lower hall
- For the younger children: pine cone hunt in the church garden

We will be in touch as soon as we know more. For further information, please contact Ruby (078 808 75 15).

- *Tricia Carrick*



*photo created by asier_relampagoestudio
-www.freepik.com*



Refuge Egypt in Cairo is a ministry of the Episcopal/Anglican Church, Diocese of Egypt with North Africa and the Horn of Africa. It was established in 1987 on a small scale and has grown to serve many thousands of refugees, migrants and asylum seekers living in Egypt who have fled their countries of origin due to war or disaster and who have well founded fears of return due to persecution or loss of rights. Refuge Egypt seeks to provide humanitarian assistance, spiritual guidance and encouragement to help build self-sufficiency and self-respect in preparation for repatriation, resettlement or integration into Egyptian society.

The work of Refuge Egypt is based on seeking to fulfill God's command in Leviticus 19:33-34: "When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the Lord your God."

Refuge Egypt is active in community development, health, education and other areas such as youth and prison ministries.

Humanitarian assistance includes registering refugees when they arrive in Cairo. The aim is to provide food, clothing, blankets and emergency support for refugees and their families for their first two years in Egypt – to help them find their footing.



The Youth Outreach program attempts to help young refugees overcome material, communal and spiritual pressures. This is done through seminars in vocational training and life skills, as well as fellowship and social activities and mentorship and pastoral support.

The Happy Child Preschool provides structure and predictability which all children need, as well as introduction to social and educational skills needed to progress to further education.

The domestic office offers knowledge and skills in cleaning, and helps place refugees in full or part-time employment in areas such as cooking, babysitting and driving and cleaning.

English language classes are offered as are health care and a well-baby and well-child clinic.

We can support the valuable work of Refuge Egypt through prayer, donations or also purchase of products through their gift shop.

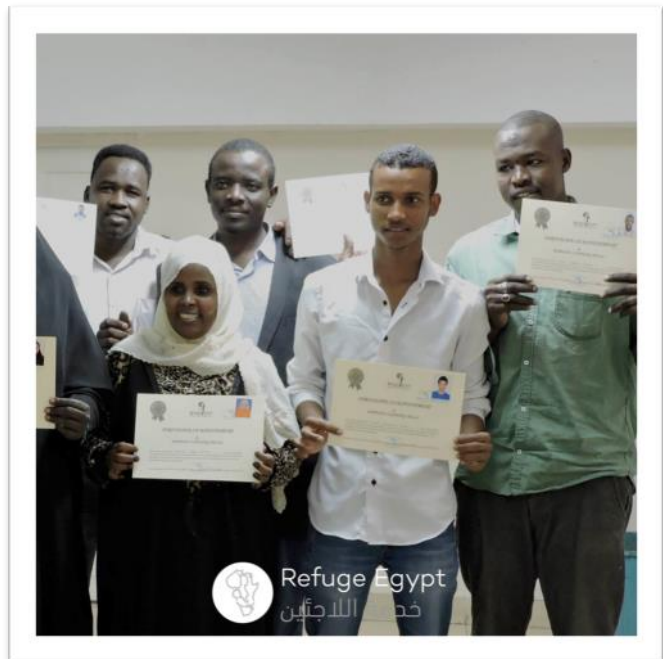
If you would like to experience the Refuge Egypt work first hand, they have a guest house in Cairo. Look at gsthouse@gmail.com.

It is evident that the goals of Refuge Egypt to “Serve our neighbours in Christ’s name”, and “dialogue with other faith communities” are being met. To receive news and announcements search for Refuge Egypt Cairo. They also have an e-newsletter.

Please pray for their work, those who are helped by them and for the world situation to be touched by the love of God so that people will no longer be forced to leave their homes and countries.

- Donna Goepfert for the Charity and Missions

This is a reprint of the article which originally appeared in the June-July 2019 issue of St Ursula’s Church Magazine.





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English Speaking Playgroup/School

Enjoying English from 0-18

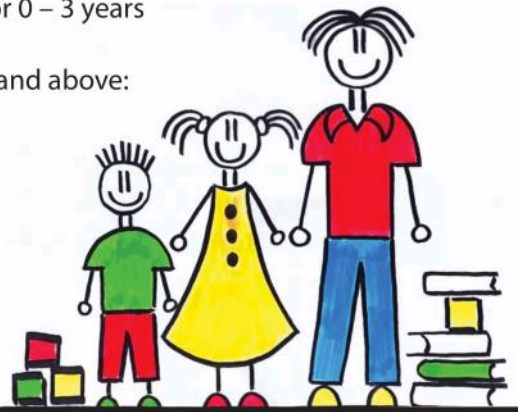


The English Speaking Playgroup/School offers a stimulating learning environment aimed at developing English language skills.

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English Speaking Club of Bern

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Since 1978, we have been Bern's one and only English Speaking Club. We offer you a reasonably priced bar, free billiards and a free round of darts. Visit us and get in touch with our English speaking members from all over the world. Just present this invitation at the bar. If you enjoy the experience, you can become a member - Basic Membership is free!

We are looking forward to meeting you

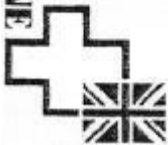
Mittelstrasse 55, 3012 Bern | Open every Thursday & Friday from 8pm | www.englishclub.ch

Why not join the International Club of Berne ?

The club was formed in 1991 as a non-political, non-religious organization open to all men, women and their families, interested in meeting for social and cultural activities. Our aim is to facilitate a better understanding of - and integration into - Switzerland, through a variety of services, programmes and joint explorations of this country and its people. We welcome members from all over the world, and currently count 140 members (including families) from some 30 nations. Our common language is English, but among our members many other languages can be heard. We hold a monthly meeting with guest speakers and presentations on a wide range of topics, and publish a monthly Newsletter. In 2016 the club celebrated its 25th anniversary with several special events. We are waiting to welcome you !

Nazanin Kupferschmid, President
Tel. 078 905 5743, email nkschmid@gmx.net
International Club of Berne, 3000 Berne, [www: icberne.ch](http://www.icberne.ch)
Annual membership: CHF 50 for singles, CHF 60 for families.

SWISS-BRITISH
SOCIETY BERNE



The Swiss British Society, Berne organises a number of cultural events including visits to exhibitions, concerts, a Christmas dinner, Burns supper and musical evenings. We also invite guest speakers to address our members on a range of literary, musical or political topics. Usually our events have a social element - we try to combine dinner or lunch together with our lectures and outings, or at least a chat and a cup of tea! New members are always welcome. Our website (and circular) is hosted by the Federation of Anglo Swiss clubs at www.angloswissclubs.ch

Contact: President: Chris Warren

Email: cuwarren@zapp.ch



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Anyone who begins an article “according to legend” risks their words being quoted from mouth to mouth and eventually being taken as the complete truth. We do not know if St Patrick was born in Ravenglass, in Cumbria, in the north of Roman Britain, around the year 385. Indeed we do not know if he existed at all.

We do not know if he was captured by Irish pirates and sold into slavery in pagan Ireland. We do not know if he worked as a shepherd. We do not know if he was converted to Christianity, escaped and returned to Britain. We do not know if he studied in France, and felt the call to return and convert the pagan Irish, supposedly in the year 432.

We do not know if he had anything to do with banishing snakes from Ireland, or if there were any snakes there in the first place. The story of his using the clover, or shamrock, leaf to illustrate the nature of the Trinity is not mentioned before the 18th century. He is said to have founded churches all over Ireland and to have established the first cathedral at Armagh and to have been its first bishop, but we do not know if he was even ordained. It is claimed by the local visitor centre that he was buried at Downpatrick, beside St Brigid and St Columba.

Among all these tales, there is a legend that when Patrick landed back in Ireland in 432, he made his way to confront Leoghaire, the pagan high king, at Tara. He camped some ten times away, by the river Boyne, and because it was Easter, lit a great fire to celebrate. Leoghaire was celebrating a pagan festival at the same time, noticed Patrick’s fire in the distance and sent warriors to destroy it.

Allegedly, on seeing their chariots, Patrick quoted Psalm 20:7 (“Some take pride in chariots, and some in horses, but our pride is in the name of the Lord our God”), and then recited the long poem we know as St Patrick’s Breastplate. Leoghaire’s warriors were so terrified that Patrick would cast a spell on them that they fled.

A breastplate is a charm or spell meant to ward off evil – in this case, a call to Christ and to the Trinity. Another verse will illustrate this more clearly:

Against all Satan's spells and wiles,
Against false words of heresy,
Against the knowledge that defiles,
Against the heart's idolatry,
Against the wizard's evil craft,
Against the death-wound and the burning,
The choking wave, the poisoned shaft,
Protect me, Christ, till Thy returning.

Whoever wrote it, the song was written down as early as the eighth century (in Irish Gaelic). Even if Patrick never set foot in Armagh, his nineteenth-century translator, Cecil Frances Alexander, was wife of the Anglican archbishop. The two verses on the back cover are sung to two different tunes – the first (verse 8) to one of a number of Irish folk melodies, the rest of the hymn to another Irish tune, *St Patrick*, arranged by Sir Charles Villiers Stanford. With its warlike words, most of the hymn is never sung today. But with its evocation of closeness to Christ and the very Celtic use of the Biblical idea of “binding” oneself to God, it deserves not to be forgotten.

- HD

from St Patrick's Breastplate

⁸Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.

⁹I bind unto myself the name,
the strong name of the Trinity,
by invocation of the same,
the Three in One, the One in Three,
of whom all nature hath creation,
eternal Father, Spirit, Word.
Praise to the Lord of my salvation;
salvation is of Christ the Lord!

Translated by Cecil Frances Alexander

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