



Dear Friends,

The leaves are turning gold and red, and the morning air is sharper. For many of us the visual feast of autumn is one of the most enjoyable things about the turning of the seasons.

Seasonal change is constant and fairly predictable. We can even visualize our own lives in this perspective, which encourages us look forward to different kinds of happiness as we grow older and, perhaps, wiser.

Other sorts of change can catch us unawares: slow changes which are almost imperceptible – such as long term trends in the economy, evolving demographic patterns, rising sea levels – can be difficult for us to deal with. Rapid and disruptive change, because of technology advances, or geopolitical shifts in distant countries, can be extremely challenging. But our lives are made of change. As John Henry Newman said ‘to live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often’.

Our church life is going to be full of changes in the next few weeks and months, some of which you can read about in this *Lumen*, and some of which have been long expected, but only put into action now. However, I don’t really want to write about our internal change. I’m much more concerned with the historical changes which are taking place in our society and in the world, and how our religious traditions can help us to make sense of this, or lead us into endless conflict.

Early in the summer I walked through the vineyards on the West bank of the Mosel between the bridge to Trittenheim and Neumagen-Dhron, which is built on the site of a large Roman fort. I came across a sign to a viewpoint and climbed the steep path to the ‘Konstantinshöhe’, where local legend has it that the future Emperor Constantine saw the sign of the cross in the sky and had the revelation ‘in hoc signo vinces’ – ‘in this sign conquer’. Whether this event really did take place, here or much closer to Rome, we cannot be sure. Did he himself think that this was truly a sign from God? Or was he persuaded by the Christian scholar Lactantius who accompanied him in his travels and campaigns? What Constantine really believed is not clear, but we do know that in October 312 at the decisive battle of the Milvian Bridge against the much

larger army of his rival Maxentius, Constantine's soldiers went into action with the symbolic Christian letters 'chi-rho' painted on their shields. They won their battle and Constantine entered Rome in triumph.

Christianity soon became part of his imperial polity. He did not fully renounce paganism, but he built churches and cathedrals, promoted bishops to the rank of magistrate and gave them free transport on imperial chariots. The 'chi-rho' appeared on coins as well as on the army's shields and banners.

The impact of Constantine on European civilization is profound and enduring, and we can still see it today as many political leaders across the EU defend their borders against refugees and migrants of other religions by appealing to the Christian culture of their societies. They do have history on their side, because, unfortunately, this kind of discrimination, and the identity politics which it generates, has been an entirely normal aspect of the Christian tradition, in Europe and elsewhere.

But what does the Christianity of Constantine have to do with the way of Jesus?

As we read Mark's gospel, the first to be written, we see that Jesus continually meets foreigners and outcasts. He never asks them about their religion or social background, he simply responds to them as human beings, and when he is criticized for this, he defends his actions by referring to his deep understanding of the foundations of faith.

Jesus rejected the identity politics of his time, and he would do the same now. But if we are to follow his way it will not be enough to sit in our armchairs and to have well-meaning liberal attitudes about people we do not intend to meet. From the comfort of our own situation it is easy to criticize xenophobic politicians in other parts of Europe. We easily forget that in today's Europe the weakest economies are being asked to carry, on behalf of the whole of Europe, the heaviest social burdens.

Being serious about following the way of Jesus will involve us in a lot more than smiling at some strangers. It will require imagination, commitment and courage, not only from leaders, but also from the people they represent. It will also require long-term political and administrative action in ways which are at least as detailed as the actions of Constantine. His Christianity triumphed because he privileged the Church at the cost of persecuting religious minorities. But a society which is open and generous towards minorities, regardless of their religion, would not only benefit all of us, it would also be a real sign of the life-giving way of Jesus.

God bless you, and God bless our leaders, as, together, we come to terms with a changing world.

Chris Lyon.

Announcements

Funeral

Caroline Antonyuk-Handforth (24 August 1970 – 9 September 2015)

Memorial Service

A memorial service for the late Stewart Cooper is to be held in November; details will be appear in pewsheets and on the website in due course.

Promoting charity work

Serve the City Luxembourg asbl, supported by the Anglican Church of Luxembourg, has been shortlisted by Philanthropie.lu from among 142 charitable projects as an example of innovations in civil society! The shortlisted charities will be presenting themselves on the Place d'Armes on Saturday 17 October in a big event to promote volunteering and charitable involvement in the Grand Duchy. We hope to see you there, more details are available at the philanthropie website: www.philanthropie.lu/une-fete-de-la-philanthropie.

There is also an opportunity to vote for your favourite shortlisted charity on the RTL website: http://www.rtl.lu/aktiounen/philanthropie_voting/projets/ Voting closes on 15 October, so be sure to vote soon for your preferred charities!

Michael Sweerts

A request for cover photos

Readers who like taking photos are invited to submit pictures for future covers of *Lumen*. To be suitable, apart from being technically acceptable (in terms of composition, focus, content and electronic compatibility) the picture needs to allow space for the standard wording, in roughly the usual places. It must also reflect the theme of the season, and avoid the hazards listed in the Church's communication policy, as set out in the Summer 2015 edition of the magazine on page 5: broadly, it must not infringe copyright law or depict people without their consent.

Thanks are due to Elaine Birch, who sent in this autumn's picture. The Winter issue, which we hope will appear in the run-up to Christmas, will—apart from the seasonal images—also take in the themes of Advent and Epiphany, with their associated ideas.

Please send your pictures in jpeg form to mag.editor@anglican.lu. The editor's decision is final.

News from the Church Council

Fresh back from their holidays, the Council members met again on 16 September. Their numbers were swelled by Isabel Page, who had been co-opted onto the Council to replace Simon Norcross (now one of the Churchwardens) for the remainder of his term as member, and by Chris Vaudrey, back on the Council again after having taken over from Felix Rusere as Treasurer. Whilst there had been high hopes before the summer break that the time-consuming issue of future accommodation (once the Vicarage was sold) might soon be resolved, it turned out, as the Chaplain reported, that things had not been proceeding as smoothly as wished, but progress was nevertheless being made. Other topics on the agenda included ways of helping the refugees; recruiting new rota organisers; the forthcoming Safeguarding Training Day on 24 October; the search for a new Music Director; the future of the First Sunday Group; and church service times.

A Church Council AwayDay would be held in Luxembourg City in early October.

Tania Buhr

Training for Safeguarding on Saturday 24 October

It is very important that anyone with responsibility for, or working regularly with, children and/or other vulnerable people attends this training. We are obliged by the Church of England to ensure that those involved in such work are trained in good safeguarding practices and have undertaken all required legal checks.

Safeguarding Training will take place on Saturday 24 October at the Centre Jean XXIII in Kirchberg. Ian Carter, the Diocese's Safeguarding Manager, will be coming to Luxembourg to lead this. Ian will bring us up to date with the latest developments in safeguarding legislation, with information on the checks that we, as a church, are subject to as part of the Church of England. He will also provide advice and training on how to provide good safeguarding measures and practices for the protection of children and other vulnerable people we have contact with, within the context of church. In this, the Church Council is taking the lead by committing to be in attendance, regardless of whether they are individually involved in work with vulnerable people.

Please make every effort to attend this training event. The cost will be borne by our church. For more information please contact andy.markey@anglican.lu or lynn.barclay@anglican.lu.

Soirée TheoBar: Drinks, Networking ... and God.

Two forthcoming talks (in French):

9 December at 19h30: Marc Fromager, Director of Aid to the Church in Need (AED France) on *Persecuted Christians in the Middle East*

11 January at 19h30: Revd Pascal-André Dumont, Spiritual Director of the Community of Saint Martin, on *Relations between men and women as couples*

For flyers and updated information on venues please visit our website:

www.theobarlux.com/[www.Facebook.com/TheoBarLux](https://www.facebook.com/TheoBarLux)

TheoBar is an initiative supported by the Archbishop of Luxembourg.

The parable of the selfie stick

Walking around the Acropolis this summer I was struck by the pervasiveness of selfie sticks. The obvious thing to say is that they symbolise the profound self-obsession of our times, the ‘me me me’ culture it is all too easy to rail against or look down on.

But being snooty about it misses the point entirely. This is not something special to our society. We simply have the technological capacity, relative ease, and freedom from want and fear, to indulge the human condition of self-absorption. Behind the story of our self-absorption, the selfie stick allows us to tell other stories: ‘We are happy’, ‘This is beautiful’, ‘#Istandforthis’. Telling stories is profoundly human – and what Jesus did. He took images from every day life and used them to tell people about God’s kingdom, and about who he was, and about how we relate to each other. Selfie-stick pictures, collectively, say a great deal about how we see ourselves, what makes us human, and how we relate to one another. Despite the censoring and editing that goes on as we seek to project a particular version of ourselves, and our stories, to the world, they still speak our humanity in a profound way.

Donald Brown, an anthropologist, compiled a list of ‘human universals’. Brown says they ‘comprise those features of culture, society, language, behaviour, and psyche for which there are no known exceptions’ and which are found only in *Homo sapiens*. Many of the 67 universals on the list are reflected in typical selfies. To cite a few: sports, bodily adornment, cooking, decorative art, gestures, hairstyles, family feasting and kin groups, visiting.

In the face of those who would highlight our differences and sow division, the pictures remind us that we are fundamentally one. ‘There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus’ (Galatians 3.28). The selfie stick allows us to see ourselves as we really are: our self-absorption and image maintenance, but also our stories, our individuality, and our unity.

To embrace our humanity is not to condone all its manifestations. It is to free ourselves to be, by the grace of God, the best humans we can be – and to call others to the best of their humanity as well. A tall order for the humble selfie stick, perhaps. But surely it brings a smile to God’s face!

Evelyn Sweerts



A tale of two churches

When Campbell and I moved our second home from Italy back to Edinburgh, we decided that we wanted to find a church to which we could walk. We've always had to drive to church—the Cathedral in Edinburgh, the Konvikt Chapel in Luxembourg and the Anglican Chaplaincy in Florence. Our nearest Episcopal church was St Ninian's Comely Bank. I used to pass it on the bus to school every morning, when it was a rather less than attractive building resembling a Nissen hut set in what I can only call waste ground. Fortunately, things have changed. The grounds are now a lovingly maintained garden, where people are encouraged to sit and enjoy the peace and beauty. The sale of part of the ground to a developer provided the means to improve the church building and its facilities.



On our first Sunday, the very warm welcome we received and our discovery that the Rector was none other than Andrew Bain, who had been Chaplain at the Cathedral when we left Edinburgh, convinced us that St Ninian's was for us. We approached Tom Edwards, then the organist and director of music, and he was happy to have us in the choir. The present holder of the post is Jonathan Yip, a charming young man from Hong Kong who is Organ Scholar at the Cathedral. Campbell is currently the only man in the choir there, so we have to warn Jonathan when we are available so that he can change the music arrangements from SSA to SATB!

While the Anglican Church of Luxembourg (ACL), which welcomes all denominations, is fairly middle-of-the-road in its worship, St Ninian's is definitely 'high'. I am very happy with that, although the incense can be a problem. (When we went to church in Florence, I had to take an allergy tablet as we drove past the airport. Happily, St Ninian's must use a different brand.) The choir robes every Sunday, which means cassock, neckcloth and, since some kindly benefactor donated them, a surplice. The cassocks were made to measure for each of us. The ACL choir has been discussing the possibility of new robes for years (probably decades) and we wear what we have only when forced to do so—for example, to attend the annual choir festival. Talking of which, Matthew Owens, sometime organist at the Cathedral in Edinburgh and now at Wells, came to

conduct a choir festival held in Luxembourg. Chatting to him, I discovered that he inaugurated the present organ at St Ninian's. While the ACL clergy are male, those at St Ninian's are female. Frances Burberry, the current Rector, took over from Andrew a few years ago and Julia Mason, the Team Priest, knows Chris Lyon well. The Scottish Episcopalian world is a very small one!

In contrast to *Common Worship*, St Ninian's still uses the 1982 Scottish Liturgy. I remember being slightly dubious about it when it replaced the 'wee grey bookie' (a previous version of the communion service) in the eighties, but now I slip back into the familiar words with ease. I just have to be a little careful during the Creed when I'm in Luxembourg.

St Ninian's magazine (called simply *Church Magazine*) is very like *Lumen*, in that it contains a message from the Rector, articles by and about members of the congregation and a 'What's On' section. However, the last copy we picked up contained a truly astonishing piece. A fellow member of the choir, who is a GP, wrote a reflection on Altruistic Kidney Donation. I quote : 'Around 4 years ago I read an article in the British Medical Journal about altruistic kidney donation. I have carried a donor card since I was a teenager, and knew that both cadaveric donations and donations from family members were possible. I had not known that one could give a kidney to a complete stranger, though I discovered that this has been possible since 2006. Immediately, I knew that here was something I would like to and could do.' She goes on to describe her experience before and after the donation. I was amazed and humbled by her generosity and courage.

Barbara Thomson



A new director for the Church Choir

Nine months after Dana's departure, the process of choosing her successor has finally reached completion. The new Director is Ovidiu Dragan, a Romanian choir trainer and music teacher based in Mondernange. Since 2009 Ovidiu has been director of the Romanian adult choir in Luxembourg, *Voci din Carpati*. He teaches children piano and music theory (solfège) and leads the children's orchestra at Differdange Music School. He has also directed three other choirs in Luxembourg, the Big Band Differdange and the Harmonie Municipale de la Ville de Differdange (recordings on YouTube). For 12 years he taught choral conducting at Bucharest Music University and Spiru Haret University and was guest conductor with the Bucharest Philharmonic Orchestra.

In March this year the Chaplain set up a small group of Church members, representing various musical interests, to act as advisers. This Music Group, comprising Amy Cirje, Fiona Turner, Kristina Mascher, Alan Carlisle, Chris Vigar, Jim Kent, Kerry Turner, Ron Haigh and myself, has joined Chris Lyon on three occasions to discuss recruitment. (After moving to Barcelona, Jim Kent withdrew from the discussion, but the First Sunday Group and its music remains on the agenda.)

During the interregnum various Choir members have helped to keep things going: special thanks are owed to Amy, Fiona and Alan. The Choir continues to practise on Thursday evenings at 8 pm and to lead the music on Sundays. New members (especially altos and tenors) continue to be welcome.

Edward Seymour

Introducing ... Victoria Hodgson



A bit about my life

I was born in England, in Hampshire, and spent 18 years growing up in a close-knit family. The eldest of six children meant that I was never short of a playmate or three and quite how my parents managed to juggle everything I will never really understand.

I went to university in Hertfordshire and then started work at the university library. I really enjoyed working there but after a year or so I realised that I was trying to hang on to my uni life. Most of my friends had left the area and the cost of living so close to London was proving a little high, so I moved back home. There I met an old friend from college who needed a housemate and subsequently introduced me to her book club and my now husband!

When I met Gavin he had already studied and worked in France and was hoping to go back some day. We started dating and I soon knew that he was the one for me, but I wasn't sure about living abroad. I managed to convince myself that it would probably never happen, and a couple of years later we got married and moved north to South Yorkshire with Gavin's job and I started work as a secondary school librarian.

We spent seven years in Bawtry, where we made plenty of friends and added two children, William and Sebastien, and several chickens to our family! Gavin applied for jobs overseas, mainly Switzerland, but none of them ever worked out until December 2013, when he told me that he had an interview for a job in Luxembourg. I'm sure my reaction was similar to many others: where was Luxembourg!

In February 2014 Gavin started work in Kirchberg and in April we joined him in a house that I'd only seen in photographs until that point. We have been here for 16 months now and have been very blessed with how smoothly everything has gone. William went straight into local school and Sebastien started *précoce* in September. Both have picked up the language very well and made friends fairly easily. I love Echternach and the surrounding area, it really is incredibly beautiful, and I was very lucky to meet a lovely lady from New Zealand at the school gate during my second week here, who has become a firm friend.

A favourite song

I have two actually, both of which were played at my baptism. *Oh Happy Day* by Tim Hughes, a fantastic celebratory song, and *The River* by Brian Doerksen. Both were being sung at New Wine that year, and both really spoke to me.

The greatest day in history
Death is beaten, You have rescued me
Sing it out, Jesus is alive

The empty cross, the empty grave
Life eternal, You have won the day
Shout it out, Jesus is alive
He's alive

Oh, happy day, happy day
You washed my sin away
Oh, happy day, happy day
I'll never be the same
Forever I am changed

When I stand in that place
Free at last, meeting face to face
I am yours, Jesus, You are mine

Endless joy, perfect peace
Earthly pain finally will cease
Celebrate, Jesus is alive
He's alive

Oh, happy day, happy day
You washed my sin away
Oh, happy day, happy day
I'll never be the same
Forever I am changed

Oh, what a glorious day
What a glorious way
That You have saved me
Oh, what a glorious day
What a glorious name

Oh, happy day, happy day
You washed my sin away
Oh, happy day, happy day
I'll never be the same

Your love has rescued me
Forever I am changed
What a glorious, glorious day
I'll never be the same

Me and church

I have been involved with church since my mum used to take me every Sunday to our local Baptist church. I really enjoyed Sunday school and was a member of Girls Brigade for many years, until I left to go to university. My youth group leader was very fantastic and we had some brilliant youth weekends away. Whilst I was at university I didn't have much to do with church. I didn't seem to fit in anywhere. The Christian Union on our campus was not particularly inspiring and the local church was High Anglican, which was very different from the type of church I was used to! When I went home, the youth group had moved on and I didn't feel that comfortable in the 'adult' service. Having been involved with youth work since, I have come to realise this is a common problem and why people often leave the church at 18/19 years, and many never return.

After I met Gavin, married and moved north, I decided that church would be a good way of meeting new people, so started looking around for an Alpha Group to join. That very week, the local C of E church was starting a course, so both Gavin and I went along. We met some wonderful people and it wasn't long before I was helping out in various groups. Playgroup, youth club, Messy Church, Holiday Bible Club, you name it I did it, but I was still 'waiting' for something, although I wasn't really sure what. It was whilst on a church camp, New Wine, in Lincolnshire, in a seminar, that I admitted to myself that I was waiting for my thunderbolt. I was waiting for God to prove Himself. Although I had prayed *that* prayer many years ago, asking Jesus into my life, I had been waiting for some sort of sign. But what the speaker was saying was that not everyone got or needed a thunderbolt, some of us had had a relationship with God for years but just didn't realise it. It all made sense to me.

It was not long after we returned home that I approached my vicar and asked him if it would be possible to be baptised, having never been christened as a child. The problem was that I really wanted to be fully immersed during my baptism. Not a problem at all apparently, and on 1 September 2013 I was baptised, rather aptly in a birthing pool in my local church!

When we moved to Luxembourg, I knew it was important to find a new church so I looked online for information and discovered a few English churches did exist, but they were all in the city, a fair trek on a Sunday morning. Having visited a couple of the churches and prayed about it, it seemed that God was encouraging me to join the Anglican Church, so this is where we have stayed and I am now on the Church Council and I've been helping with Lions and Lambs.

Interests

Well, since being in Luxembourg I have had some more time to myself so I've started running again and I'm hoping to do the Route du Vin semi-marathon in September this year. I love gardening and spending as much time outdoors as possible, hence the large ironing pile that just seems to keep on growing! I enjoy walking with the boys and helping them to cultivate a love of nature. With two growing boys and a husband who is sporty, most of our activities as a family tend to be quite strenuous, but when I get a moment to myself I love to read.

A free day

Hard to imagine such a thing! But it would probably involve all of my family, a massive BBQ and a game of rounders, all washed down with a glass or two of crémant.

Victoria Hodgson

True Religion

'True Religion is slow in growth, and, when once planted, is difficult of dislodgement'
John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 1858

At Keble College, Oxford, where I have lived and worked for the best part of two years now, Christians are a minority. We are not, it has to be said, as few and far between as members of other faiths, or even – unfortunately – students of colour, but the undergraduate body is mostly atheist. This is somehow anachronistic for a place where each courtyard is named for a clergyman, where Christian iconography smiles at you from every portico in the college, and where the so-called 'chapel' looms twice as high as the rest of the buildings.

However, the presence of Christian heritage and history is more strongly felt at my college than others in Oxford: this is partly down to the various saints and angels who watch us students dash around college, and partly to the efforts of that minority of Christians themselves. This year, places to study Theology at the college, taught in part by the chaplain herself, were doubled. The college library has every book you could possibly need about the Oxford Movement heroes, Keble, Pusey and Newman, whose names parts of the college bear. A *Book of Common Prayer* service is said every morning and night, and no-one may begin dinner without having heard Grace, thanking the Lord, said first. The bell rings in the chapel as a call to Eucharist on Sunday afternoons, and it is an anomaly to pass a day in college without hearing the organ.

While all these things are possible to ignore if you try hard enough, as an incoming Christian these everyday slices of my faith were a source of huge excitement. You see, I am used to being the minority: aside from church attendance on a Sunday I would find myself surrounded predominantly by non-Christians, which made it easier, as a teenager, to dismiss the importance of faith and its role

in my life. The seed of faith was there, though: sown for me at baptism, slightly watered by myself at confirmation, but it had certainly been ‘slow in growth’. On coming to Keble, it began to flourish in the definitive Christian presence of the college. I now sing in the chapel choir for three services a week; I attend Mass in one of the close-by Catholic communities on Sunday mornings; and the history of the college’s namesakes in the Oxford Movement has so captured my imagination that I am going to be writing my dissertation for my English degree on the religious writings of these men.



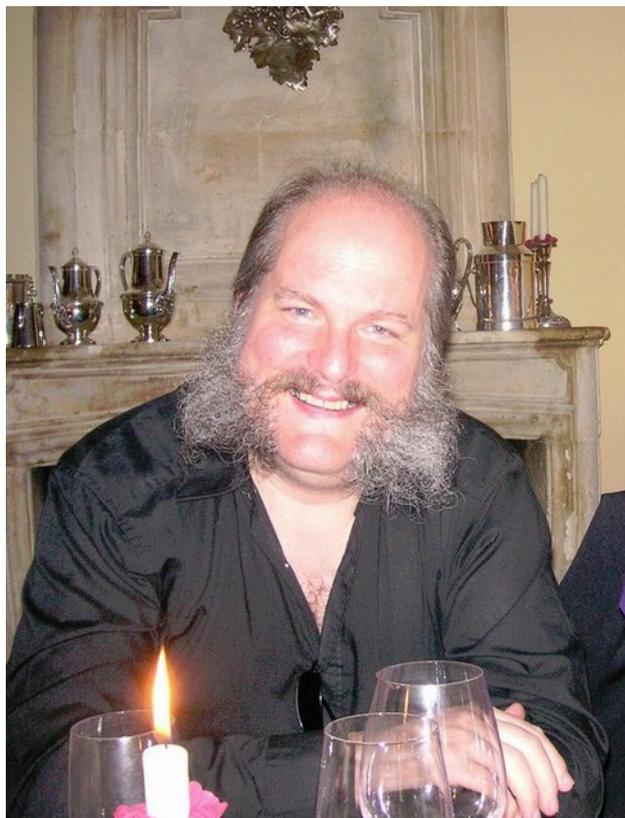
These are all outward ‘things’: things that could be taken as a sort of ‘proof’ of faith, some ‘fruits of my labour’ (see Psalm 128:2), but what I have come to realise is that these things have come naturally – almost accidentally in some cases – just by allowing the seed of ‘True Religion’ to take hold. To be able to bear fruit, a seed must first take root; nothing can be produced by the tree that does not cling to the ground it stands on. Of course, this is a process that takes time: the mirabelle tree in our back garden took several years to flower after my dad planted it – now, we cannot eat enough crumbles to keep up with the crop some years! In a similar way, the seed of Christian faith at Keble clings to the community and to individuals like myself, allowing this wonderful abundance of music and history and worship that continues, even in our minority, to prevail through all facets of college life.

***A note on the Oxford Movement:** The Oxford Movement was the campaign by High Church clergymen (based at the University of Oxford) in the 1830s and 40s to reinstate historic – and thus, traditionally Roman Catholic – traditions in the Anglican church. It stated that the Church of England was one of the three branches of the ‘one holy, catholic and apostolic church’, along with Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy. The ‘Anglo-Catholicism’ that resulted from this movement is the reason why us choristers constantly wear the smell of incense in Keble chapel!*

Hannah Schofield

Steve Preston

June 1961 – September 2015



It is with much sadness that we have learned of the death of a former Church choir member and a much loved friend to many in Luxembourg and elsewhere.

Steve was a gregarious and colourful character, known for his bonhomie and good living as well as some quite remarkable facial hair! He was widely travelled and when his work in the IT industry brought him to Luxembourg in the 1980s, he left and returned several times, before his recent departure for sunnier climes in the East. He was a person who made friends wherever he went, with a dry sense of humour and warmth that will be sorely missed.

He had a great talent and love of music and his fine tenor voice was used first of all on the stage with Pirate Productions and then when he joined the choir. Many will recall his excellent contributions to the music of the Church, including as soloist in special performances of such works as Fauré's Requiem. He had a commitment to making a 'joyful noise', and this included trips to the UK as part of the European Cathedral Singers.

Steve suffered from recurrent illness and was particularly troubled by shingles, which with a recent road accident are thought to be the reason he passed away in his flat in Thailand. He was cremated with friends and family in attendance and his ashes were scattered at Phromthep Cape, Phuket.

Rest in peace, dear friend.

Rachel Parker

Protected by kindly forces

At the Ecumenical Vigil Against Torture on 26 June, held in the Villa Pauly where the Gestapo had its headquarters during the war, the final hymn was sung in German. Its four verses came from a seven-verse poem by the Lutheran pastor and theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, which he had included in a letter of new-year greetings to his fiancée, written from prison in December 1944. The hymn's refrain, created from the poem's last verse, circulated in East Germany in the 1950s and has since become familiar throughout the country, thanks partly to the tune composed by Siegfried Fietz a few years later. The last verse goes like this:

*Von guten Mächten wunderbar geborgen,
Erwarten wir getrost, was kommen mag.
Gott ist bei uns am Abend und am Morgen
Und ganz gewiss an jedem neuen Tag.*

A prose translation might read: 'Protected wonderfully by kindly forces, / We confidently await whatever is to come. / God is with us in the evening and in the morning / And quite certainly every new day.' The language, remarkable for its everyday simplicity, expresses such reassurance that, particularly when conveyed by Fietz's unassuming tune, it is hard to recognize the desperate circumstances in which the poem was written.

But the simple words conceal something more mysterious. Who are the kindly forces, and what makes their protection wonderful? In the first verse of the poem, the same forces are described as faithful and silent, surrounding, guarding and consoling the writer in a wonderful manner. It seems, from the context of Bonhoeffer's letter, that he wanted to suggest the presence of guardian angels, as evoked in Psalm 91: 'No evil shall befall you ... for he will command his angels concerning you, to guard you in all your ways'. The wonder, the miracle, derives from the confidence their presence inspires, a confidence that defies the darkness and suffering whose existence the poem goes on to acknowledge; so that by the last verse, the writer concludes that he and his loved ones are safe: for 'geborgen' carries the sense of 'rescued and sheltered' as well. The solitary image of the first verse becomes a vision encompassing us all.

In the 1970s the hymn-writer Fred Pratt Green (who wrote 'For the fruits of his creation' in *Hymns for Today's Church*) produced an English version¹. It turns the poem into a hymn by reversing the thought process, starting with the general view and brief time-scale of Bonhoeffer's last verse:

By gracious powers so wonderfully sheltered,
and confidently waiting, come what may,
we know that God is with us night and morning,
and never fails to greet us each new day.

And when this cup you give is filled to brimming
with bitter sorrow, hard to understand,
we take it thankfully and without trembling,
out of so good and so beloved a hand.

Yet is this heart by its old foe tormented,
still evil days bring burdens hard to bear;
O give our frightened souls the sure salvation
for which, O Lord, you taught us to prepare.

Yet when again in this same world you give us
the joy we had, the brightness of your sun,
we shall remember all the days we lived through,
and our whole life shall then be yours alone.

By gracious powers so faithfully protected,
so quietly, so wonderfully near,
I'll live each day in hope, with you beside me,
and go with you through every coming year.

Edward Seymour

¹ By gracious powers so wonderfully sheltered: A NEW YEAR GREETING FROM PRISON. Fred Pratt Green (1903-2000), based on the German of Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945) English versification © Stainer & Bell Ltd. Adapted by permission of SCM Press from Bonhoeffer's *Powers of Good, Letters and Papers from Prison* (1971).

SPECIAL 'AT HOME'

**The Book Stand of the International Bazaar
invites**

BOOK COLLECTORS

to a special sale of



**ANTIQUARIAN Books
Modern FIRST EDITIONS
EXHIBITION Catalogues; Special ART BOOKS
Rare CHILDREN's books
etc.**

**A two-day Open House
at the HQ of the Book Stand**

16 & 17 October 10 am – 6 pm

**25 rue du Moulin
L-7376 Bofferdange**

Refreshments

Cash only

The fruits of integration

25 years in a Luxembourg village

Jane and I arrived in Waldbillig in the summer of 1990 with Tom, aged 3 and Philip, aged 1 (Sam came along later in 1993). We had decided we wanted to try and get to know the locals and learn the language, so that the boys would have a native as well as an expat community to grow up in. Waldbillig, in the Petite Suisse region near Mullerthal, was considered seriously remote by some expats (a whole 30 km from the City!), but this was a blessing in disguise, as it meant that all our neighbours were Luxembourgers.

Our first step – as it had been everywhere we had lived since we married – was to join a choir. The Chorale Ste-Cécile of Waldbillig had just celebrated its centenary (it was founded in 1889) and contained several descendants of the original choir members. Despite being deeply rooted in the agricultural community, they were very welcoming to newcomers and we immediately started to make friends, initially speaking German to them, but eventually getting by in Luxembourgish.

We soon discovered that being in any kind of club (*Veräin*) in Luxembourg was quite time-consuming. We also joined the village band (*Waldbëlleger Musek*), and in just these two clubs, in addition to Masses and concerts, we ended up helping out at: coffee-and-cake afternoons; dances and various types of fest involving sausages and beer; Luxembourgish plays; quizzes; international tours with the Junior Band; weddings and funerals; the Hämmelesmarsch; and the Echternach Dancing Procession.

Not to be outdone, in 1996, with some of the local choir members, I started a Veräin (the Uergelfrënn Waldbëlleg) to acquire an organ for Waldbillig parish church. There is an Anglican connection here, as one of our most generous donors – without whom the whole thing would never have got off the ground – was the late Jim Larkin, sometime organist at the English-Speaking Church and organ enthusiast extraordinaire. The organ project suffered a hiatus in the early 2000s, but is now back on track and the organ is due to be installed in October this year.

On various occasions over the years, we have organised exchanges between the Waldbillig and Anglican church choirs. Joint concerts were held in 1991 and 1997, the Anglican choir sang the Kiermes mass in Waldbillig in about 2009, and the Waldbillig choir sang a service in the Konvikt in 2013.

Many things have changed in Waldbillig over the years. The generation who experienced WWII as adults have gone, the farming community has dwindled to only a tiny fraction of the population, and many newcomers have arrived, though sadly few of them (whether Luxembourgers or foreigners) get involved in traditional village life. However, the Commune of Waldbillig has resisted calls from central government to merge with neighbouring communes, and the hard core of *Veräiner* are still there, ensuring that the community still has a heart. The choir merged with Haller church choir in 2003 and is now called *Sang Mat Waldbëlleg-Haler*.

It has been a privilege to be part of this growing and changing community for a quarter of a century, and we are very glad to have helped in a small way to bridge the gap between English-speaking expats and rural Luxembourgers.

Henry Wickens

A visit to Hahn refugee camp

On 25 September I accompanied a small group of students and teachers from the International School of Luxembourg (ISL) on a trip to a refugee centre run by the German Red Cross at Hahn, close by the airport. Over 600 refugees (mostly Syrian) are currently housed there in tents pitched on an unused car park next to a warehouse. One could see that many of them had been through quite an ordeal, but now seem very much intent on rebuilding their lives in a new place. The camp was well organized and the Red Cross staff, many of them volunteers, were very inviting and grateful for our donations and assistance. In the morning we unloaded over 40 bags and cartons of goods donated by the ISL community. €1000 worth of medications and medical supplies were also purchased with cash donations. Our school catering company (Eurest) provided free cartons of fruit juices and muesli bars while our school cleaning contractor (ISS) provided boxes of soap. Other boxes of ISL-donated goods were also trucked and delivered to Red Cross Luxembourg for use with refugees.



In the afternoon the students sorted, cleaned up and organized donated toys and books in a tent that had been set aside for a childrens' play centre. The students worked hard and after two hours' work we were able to set up an inviting and functional play space. Then we mingled with the refugees, heard some of their stories and took a few photos with them. We got talking to a man named Osmar. His hometown was the city of Kobanî, which was largely destroyed by airstrikes against ISIS. Osmar travelled from Syria to Turkey, where he stayed temporarily in the refugee camps there. He then embarked on the infamously dangerous journey from Turkey to Greece. Although nobody on his boat drowned, they had to throw all of the baggage overboard, including passports and identification papers. He arrived in Greece with nothing. Osmar then travelled north to Hungary, where he had the chance to make some money. He used this money to pay a taxi driver to drive him from Budapest to the first town in Germany. This journey alone cost €500. Osmar was then transferred to a Munich refugee camp, from where he was later placed in the Frankfurt-Hahn refugee camp. Osmar is a qualified civil engineer and his goal is now to continue studying civil engineering in Germany, but he will have to learn German before he can start studying at a German university.

In comparison to other refugee centres Hahn is quite isolated and so bicycles are at a premium. The school aims to make a second trip in the near future and provide some classroom furniture (there are volunteers teaching German in the camp), second-hand bicycles and hand-held computer games.

As I drove home a long-forgotten verse from Deuteronomy returned to memory: 'Love you therefore the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt' (Deut. 10:19). This reminded me that while the experience of being a refugee has a long, long history, God's concern for the 'stranger' in our midst has never diminished. I also reflected on the fact that, after talking to many of the refugees, taking photos together, and receiving winning smiles from the children and numerous 'thank you's' from the adults, they seemed a lot less like strangers and much more like friends.

Phil Harvey

At the Calais 'Jungle'



I don't really have the words to express the experience of visiting the refugee camp at Calais with the charity CalAid. It was surreal! We got the opportunity to volunteer at the warehouse storing donations coming in from all over Europe. Ordinary people left their homes and their lives for a weekend or a week or two to help sort out desperately needed items for the most vulnerable people, 'the refugees'. We met, talked and did our own distribution of pre-packed food items to the refugees themselves living in the camp. I could not believe my eyes when I drove into 'the Jungle', as the camp in Calais is popularly known. It was massive and filthy, packed with individuals with smiles on their faces despite their situation! What a paradox.

The saddest part of the experience was the sight of children (a few living unaccompanied) and families with babies and toddlers in this camp. It was heart-breaking knowing that there are no safeguards in place for them.

The people of Calais and the charities on the ground, who received donations mostly from people within the Anglican Church of Luxembourg, send their thanks and appreciation.

Eyi' Faderin



Photo: Hayan Ibrahim

A prayer for our earth

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe
and in the smallest of your creatures.
You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.
Pour out upon us the power of your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.
Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

O God of the poor,
help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth,
so precious in your eyes.
Bring healing to our lives,
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.
Touch the hearts
of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation,
to recognize that we are profoundly united
with every creature
as we journey towards your infinite light.
We thank you for being with us each day.
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle
for justice, love and peace.

...
Praise be to you!
Amen.

From Pope Francis's encyclical letter Laudato Si' (Praised Be You): On the Care of Our Common Home, which was published on 18 June. It takes its name from the invocation of Saint Francis of Assisi, 'Praise be to you, my Lord', which in the Canticle of the Creatures reminds us that the earth, our common home, 'is like a sister with whom we share our life, and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us'.



Autumn Word Search



M	B	U	L	G	N	K	G	X	U
E	T	E	S	O	J	O	S	O	E
V	O	W	S	Z	C	L	P	R	A
P	D	A	D	Q	E	K	I	I	Y
I	E	L	L	A	F	F	V	E	U
S	Q	G	L	Q	N	A	L	P	R
N	I	Q	N	O	W	L	I	A	I
N	W	W	B	U	O	C	K	Y	M
J	G	O	Y	W	E	E	H	M	Q
L	U	I	R	N	M	U	T	U	A
F	D	E	R	B	M	U	J	H	F
Y	A	L	T	S	E	V	A	E	L

autumn
fall
season
leaves
brown
yellow
red
rake
bonfire
leaves



FreePrintable.com - 100% Easy. 100% Fun.

Autumn Day

Lord: it is time. The summer was so vast.
Lay down your shadow on the sundial's measure,
and in the meadows let the big wind blast.

Command the latest fruits to swell and shine;
give them a day or two of southern breezes,
urge them on to fulfilment, so it squeezes
the lasting sweetness into heavy wine.

Those with no home yet will not build one now.
Those on their own will, company forgoing,
stay up to read, or write long letters, knowing
those avenues to wander to and fro
uneasily in, when the leaves are blowing.

Rainer Maria Rilke

