



# Lumen

Winter 2016 - 2017



## **The Anglican Church of Luxembourg**

The Anglican Church of Luxembourg is a Chaplaincy within the Diocese in Europe of the Church of England. Our worship is open to all.

**Bishop** The Rt Revd Dr Robert Innes  
Tel +32 (0)2 213 7480 [bishop.europe@churchofengland.org](mailto:bishop.europe@churchofengland.org)

**Suffragan Bishop** The Rt Revd David Hamid  
Tel +44 (0)20 7898 1160 [david.hamid@churchofengland.org](mailto:david.hamid@churchofengland.org)

**Chaplain's Office** 43 95 93

**Lay Assistant** Evelyn Sweerts [lay.assistant@anglican.lu](mailto:lay.assistant@anglican.lu)

### **Church Office**

Parish Coordinator Lynn Barclay Tel/Fax 43 95 93 [lynn.barclay@anglican.lu](mailto:lynn.barclay@anglican.lu)  
Admin. Assistant Elaine Birch Tel/Fax 43 95 93 [office@anglican.lu](mailto:office@anglican.lu)

Registered address Room 147 Centre Jean XXIII, 52 rue Jules Wilhelm, L-2728 Luxembourg

**Services at** **The Konvikt Chapel, 5 Avenue Marie-Thérèse, Luxembourg City**

### **Church Council**

Gabriel Chelladurai		<a href="mailto:gabrieljc@gmail.com">gabrieljc@gmail.com</a>
John Dimond	691 850 523	<a href="mailto:jimmyjazz23@gmail.com">jimmyjazz23@gmail.com</a>
Gerd Gebhard	621 229 250	<a href="mailto:gebhardg@pt.lu">gebhardg@pt.lu</a>
Catriona Gillham		<a href="mailto:catriona.gillham@gmail.com">catriona.gillham@gmail.com</a>
Victoria Hodgson	691 311 652	<a href="mailto:t0rster@yahoo.co.uk">t0rster@yahoo.co.uk</a>
Isabel Page	691 331427	<a href="mailto:ipage@pt.lu">ipage@pt.lu</a>

### **Secretary**

Tania Buhr [oblivion@pt.lu](mailto:oblivion@pt.lu)

### **Archdeaconry Representatives**

John Overstall	33 96 71	<a href="mailto:overstal@pt.lu">overstal@pt.lu</a>
Moiria Hogg	34 70 42	<a href="mailto:mhogg@pt.lu">mhogg@pt.lu</a>

### **Churchwardens**

Philippa Seymour	35 90 97	<a href="mailto:pseymour@pt.lu">pseymour@pt.lu</a>
Simon Norcross	621 365 542	<a href="mailto:norcross@vo.lu">norcross@vo.lu</a>

### **Treasurer**

Chris Vaudrey [treasurer@anglican.lu](mailto:treasurer@anglican.lu)

### **Bank Account**

Account name L'Église Anglicane du Luxembourg

BGLL account No **LU12 0030 7313 9549 0000**

**Website** [www.anglican.lu](http://www.anglican.lu)



[Anglican Church of Luxembourg](http://www.anglican.lu)



## Dear Friends,

It is time for me to say ‘Goodbye’: I will not be going far, but this is the last ‘Dear Friends’ I am writing as your chaplain.

Being your chaplain has not been the best job I ever had, in fact, it’s third on my list. The best job I had was at the age of 14, working in a fish-and-chip shop in a small village in the West of Scotland. I was intensely shy and fairly new to the village, but I enjoyed doing something which required skill and attention, especially when the pubs shut at 10pm and the shop filled with hungry drunks. It was very satisfying to do something which filled a direct and immediate need, and which put me in contact with so many people. I worked nearly every weekend for the next five years.

When I was 17, just before I became a law student, I also started working on a huge building site as a labourer for McAlpine’s. I did this for the next four summers, and learned an enormous amount from my fellow workers: how to pace myself, how to work with a shovel and a jack-hammer, and how to take my place in a team in dirty, difficult and sometimes dangerous conditions. While I sweated with the squad I had some of the best discussions about life and faith I have ever had, with men whose formal education was limited, but who asked deep questions with a keen intelligence. I was not brought up in the church, but I read a lot about it, and talked about what I read. One rainy morning, when no outdoor work was possible, two men suggested we should have a proper discussion about religion. From a different part of the site they brought another student who was training to be a Catholic priest, and asked us to answer their questions. There we were: two very young students and about twenty much older men, sitting on planks and boxes, listening to questions about the Bible and the Church, and to some real moral dilemmas of life and death which a few men shared with the whole group. I realized then that this was what I wanted to be doing in my life.

So this became the pattern of my ministry. Throughout my time as a priest I have tried to develop within the church an understanding of faith that makes sense to adults (because if adults don’t have confidence in the gospel as something that enables them to live as adults in an adult world, what hope is there?). At the same time, in every place that I’ve worked, I have paid at least as much time and attention to the community beyond the church, often

by engaging in projects with other agencies. In all I have done, I have had in mind the depth of questioning that I encountered on the building site, and, perhaps because I've always been willing to engage with hard questions in an open way, I've always been welcomed and encouraged.

But listening is hard, people's lives are often deeply complex, and the pace of social change is hard to keep up with. It would be easy to bathe in a warm and nostalgic piety. Church leaders everywhere are always tempted to speak to church members as if they were children, and to the wider public as if they should get back to church. Nobody needs this kind of religion, which has nothing to do with the example and teaching of Jesus. The gospel of Jesus is that God is already with us, and the challenge is to be open as adults to God's presence in this changing world. The church is the community of adult people who celebrate God's presence day by day, even in the darkest moments of life, and who have learned that grit and grace cannot be dissociated.

Here in Luxembourg I have been honoured to work with people who are deeply engaged in their professional, civic and social lives. It has been a wonderful privilege to be your pastor, and to have been given your confidence in so many circumstances. Thank you for inviting me to share in so many moments both joyful and difficult, for introducing me to your friends and sometimes to your work colleagues, for very often recommending my ministry to neighbours in need, and for opening doors to the institutional and business communities here. I have learned so much, and grown in ways I could never have imagined.

I leave you with three of my favourite quotations, which have been beacons for my living as much as my thinking:

*The power of God is capable of finding hope where hope no longer exists, and a way where the way seems impossible.*

St Gregory of Nyssa

*I wish to speak to those who are out on the great waters [of life]. If you wish to have a faith that you will not need to carry because it carries you, you must not seek certainty, you must seek truth, and having begun that enquiry you must carry it through. Truth, and certainty as to truth, lie on the other side of such honest labour of the mind.*

The Revd Benjamin Jowett

*When two or three come together in his name, Jesus is there. Community is a sign of his presence; it is a sign of the Church. Many people who believe in Jesus are living in some degree of distress – battered wives, people in mental hospitals, those who live alone because they are too fragile to live with others. All these people can put their trust in Jesus. Their suffering is a sign of his cross, a sign of a suffering Church. But a community which prays and loves is a sign of the resurrection.*

Jean Vanier

God bless you. Please pray for me.

*Chris Lyon.*

## Announcements

### BAPTISMS

25 December 2016    Maya Phoebe Overstall

### BLESSING OF MARRIAGE

29 October 2016    Lauren Marshall and Tristan Pâris de Bollardière

### FUNERALS

3 November 2016            John Tregarthen Wheeler  
*(funeral conducted by Fr Ed Hone, in Chris Lyon's absence)*

17 November 2016           Shanice Teresa Baxter

20 December 2016           Monique Martine Thomas



The Revd Barry Simmons, Chaplain from 1980 to 1991, died on 4 November 2016.

## **Recruitment of a new Chaplain – and how we shall manage in the meantime**

In a scarily short time Chris Lyon will be leaving us, and we already need to start thinking about his replacement.

Bishop Robert has assured us that the Diocesan Office will provide considerable support in the management of the recruitment process; however the final choice of the new Chaplain is the responsibility of the Churchwardens and the Chaplaincy Council, who will also have a lot of input earlier in the process, e.g. to the job description to be sent out to prospective applicants.

It will not be possible for another Chaplain to take over immediately after Chris leaves; amongst other things, protocol demands that the formal recruitment process only starts after the present incumbent leaves office. There will thus be a locum, indeed potentially several locums, to act as temporary chaplain.

During this ‘interregnum’ we will try to ensure that there is a Holy Communion service every Sunday, but cannot guarantee this.

This will give us time to think extensively and constructively about the recruitment of our next Chaplain. Indeed we invite everyone in our church community to think about the qualities they value in a Chaplain and to feel free to give us input to the request that we shall send to the Diocesan Office.

Your prayers would be much appreciated for an orderly and successful interregnum and appointment process. Please also pray that the person selected as our future Chaplain will be the right person for the job, for our church and for the wider community.

Meanwhile, as from the end of February we, the Churchwardens, shall be responsible for day-to-day management. We are thus the contact persons, should you have any thoughts, comments or questions about how our church is or should be run.

*Philippa Seymour  
Simon Norcross  
Churchwardens*

### **Winter cover photos**

Thanks to Phil Harvey for the view of seed-bearing berries  
and some blossom in a garden under snow.

## News from the Church Council

At its meetings in autumn 2016 the Council had no shortage of ‘meaty’ issues to deal with. It discussed arrangements for moving to Cents church for a three-month trial period as from the beginning of November, but in the end the planned move had to be postponed when it became clear that further talks with those administering Cents church would be needed to clarify certain matters; plans were then made to organise a suitable meeting.

The Chaplain’s announcement of his retirement at the end of February 2017 focused the Council’s attention on the arrangements to cover future services and on the whole procedure of finding and appointing a replacement for the Chaplain, with the support of the Bishop. There was much to discuss. With an eye to the future, the Council also looked into the possibility of taking on Evelyn Sweerts as lay pastoral assistant.

Other agenda items included the Church finances, the search for a suitable fiduciaire to take over the bookkeeping, the Fun and Fundraising Group’s plans to hold an Arts Festival in February, and the future role of the Charities Committee and the Justice and Human Solidarity Group.

*Tania Buhr*

*For more details, please see the minutes of the Church Council’s monthly meetings on the Church website: visit [anglican.lu](http://anglican.lu) / Links & Documents / Meeting Minutes & Reports, and scroll down to ‘Church Council’.*

## Sidespersons & Readers

I am about to compile the sidesperson/reader rota for the 11.00 service for the next four months (February to May), and I would be very pleased to hear from anyone in the congregation who would like to join the happy band of meeters and greeters. For various reasons the pool of sidespersons has dwindled of late, and it would be good to recruit a few new people. Each Sunday, two people are assigned to be in church by 10.30 to welcome people to the service. It is not an arduous task, but it is an important one.

Basically what you have to do—apart from greeting people and smiling!—is to hand out service books, hymn books and pew sheets, take the collection, and tidy up the church after the service. One of the two is assigned to read the first lesson. However, if you like the idea of being a sidesperson but would prefer not to read the lesson, that is absolutely fine.

If you are interested in joining the rota, or would like more information, do please contact me ([galcade@pt.lu](mailto:galcade@pt.lu) or 43 71 42).

*Liz Galvin*

## Bishop's Advent Appeal 2016

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

‘The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house,’ says the Lord Almighty. ‘And in this place I will grant peace.’ *Haggai 2:9*

This year's Advent Appeal offers the opportunity to contribute to building up one of the most interesting and strategically significant churches in the diocese.

*St John the Evangelist, Casablanca*



St John's Anglican Church is a thriving English-speaking church in the heart of downtown Casablanca. Built in 1906, it is the oldest operating church building in Casablanca and one of the few official places of Christian worship in the city. Although regular attendees hail from Europe, Asia and the Americas, a third of the congregation now comes from sub-Saharan Africa. Services are conducted in English, but between services the church grounds are filled with conversation in a wide variety of tongues.

### *The Problem*

With a capacity of just under 100, St John's is bursting at the seams every week. Pews are filled to overflowing. Folding chairs fill the back and are squeezed into the aisles to provide extra seating, leaving little room to pass by. Ceiling fans whirring overhead can't provide sufficient relief in the crowded sanctuary during the summer months. The average attendance during Sept-Oct 2015 was over 200 in a church that can only seat a hundred!

Moreover, St John's has limited space for meeting. A temporary tent structure serves as a fellowship hall, and a repurposed shipping container houses Sunday school classes, with the 11-14 Sunday school class meeting in a coffee shop across the road from the Church.





### *The Solution*

St John's would love to be able adequately to accommodate its congregation, serve the children better during Sunday school time and have proper space for social interaction and fellowship.

At the beginning of 2015, St John's began to consider a development project. In May 2015, they commissioned an engineering firm, International Design and Development (IDD), to look at how the site could be developed. In September 2015, they appointed a local architect.

Plans are now well developed. They involve a westward extension of the church to include a mezzanine level and the redevelopment of an existing parsonage building to provide Sunday School, meeting rooms and a roof-top terrace. You can find an inspirational U-Tube video of their plans here: [St John's Casablanca](#).

### *How You Can Help*

The current estimated cost of the project is 300,000 GBP. Promised donations so far amount to about 100,000 GBP.

I would be thrilled if the diocese could raise a significant sum to help them on their way. St John's is a church of historical significance operating under special conditions in a majority Muslim country with an extensive ministry to Sub-Saharan migrants. As usual, we invite each chaplaincy to make its own arrangements for the collection of money towards the Bishop's Appeal and then for the local church treasurer to forward collections to the diocesan office.

*With every blessing,*

*+ Robert Gibraltar in Europe*

*The amount our Church had raised for the Appeal by 31 December was €435.95.—Ed.*

## Reversing the Advent Calendar

People were invited to participate in a 'Reverse Advent Calendar' scheme in aid of ADT Quart Monde, which supports families in need in Luxembourg (<http://atdquartmonde.lu/>).

In total, 47 families participated, donating roughly 1500 items! Some were delivered directly to my house in Biwer by people who could not attend the Advent service. John and Victoria Dimond also extended the collection to their friends—many thanks to them!



Above is a photo of some of the items donated. A big thank you to everyone that made it happen.

*Edward Ojo*

## Carrying the future

*(This is the text of a sermon by Chris Lyon delivered by Evelyn Sweerts on the first Sunday of Advent. Gospel reading: Matthew 24, 36-44)*



The cover of our Advent service booklet shows a very pregnant Mary on her way to Bethlehem with Joseph. Pregnancy is a very good metaphor for Advent. Mary and Joseph have said yes to the future, and indeed they are carrying it in their present life, but they are not in control of it. Just like any first-time parents they have only the most general idea of what this baby will bring them. All first-time parents have a moment when they realise that life will never be the same again. And at some point after that, they realise they wouldn't have it any other way – even if they might not have chosen everything it turned out to have included!

Advent is about God's promise for the future which we all long for, and hopefully watch for signs of in the present, but which will nevertheless be a huge disruption for us all. Can we look to this new future with hope, or do we remain very attached to the way of life to which we have become accustomed?

The reading from Isaiah offers us an idyllic future. Who could not hope for peace? But how will this come about? There is a small not-for-profit organisation in America called RawTools who, alongside working on restorative justice programmes to transform communities, literally turn guns into gardening implements as a powerful symbol that another world is possible. They call all of this work 'forging peace'. They are right: peace is forged, it doesn't drop from the sky ready-made. Over the last 70 years, since the end of the Second World War, we have become used to working incrementally towards a future of justice and peace, slowly and painstakingly regulating more and more aspects of our lives, locally and globally, in ways that would have been unimaginable 100 years ago. But despite all our efforts an increasing number of people feel excluded from, or frightened of, this globalised future.

Of course, in theory everyone can join this new elite, which is open to all who have developed the skills to navigate the highways of information technology, and have the



time and money to keep up with an accelerating pace of change. All it requires is total commitment, and perhaps the ability to say ‘no’ to what used to be considered a normal part of life.

Does this sound familiar? As we read the gospels, perhaps we see that this is very like the way of thinking that the scribes and the Pharisees had embraced: get educated and work hard! The future belongs to those who get ahead, and keep themselves separate from all who will not or cannot learn.

But this is not the future that God promises. The way of the elite always breaks down, not only in the Bible, not only in history, but also in the present moment. As we all experience, even here, at the heart of Europe, the systems we have learned to navigate – the bureaucracies and structures of economic, political and even religious power – generate their own dynamic. They seduce, coerce and eventually confine all those who placed their hopes in them. It is not for nothing that some people joke about the ‘golden cage’ of Luxembourg. These systems often do both good and evil at the same time, and form a complex web we can neither ignore nor escape. Yet the systems of this world – including religious systems – are finite and fragile, always breaking down.

So how do we feel about the breakdown of the systems to which we have become so attached through our education, our professional career, our lifestyles? Inevitably we feel some anxiety and a sense of loss. The destruction which the future brings about as it begins to arrive in the present needs to be taken seriously. This is what Jesus speaks of in today’s Gospel. The effect seems random: one is taken, one is left. How unjust! What is clear is that there is a vast disparity between the fates of people who up till that point have been living side by side. Is there any reason for this, any justification for this gross inequality of outcome?

Systems are so attractive. The whole point of a system is that it is predictable to the point of being comforting. It generates attachment by its predictability, even amongst those who might be regarded as victims of the system. A system can be understood, mastered, relied upon, used, and, of course, manipulated. Systems are human creations, generated by communities and societies. They form part of our identity, they shape our way of thinking, feeling and relating at the most profound levels of our lives. Systems are hugely important.

But they are not life-giving.

The great contemporary political philosopher Jürgen Habermas makes a basic distinction in his thinking about society between systems and organisms. But you don’t have to read Habermas to recognise that life is organic, not systematic. This is an insight the Bible continually delivers to us. Throughout the books of the Bible it’s clear that all those who put their faith in human systems come to ruin. It isn’t that systems aren’t useful: of course they are! Nor are they necessarily wrong in what they seek to achieve. They are simply limited: not to be trusted; we should not place our hope in them.

So now we come to the tricky part, in which we might find ourselves divided rather than united in our hope, especially if we express our spiritual life in a religious way, the way that very many, maybe even most, Christians do, especially perhaps the church-going kind. One of the most fundamental aspects of religion as a human activity is tradition, handing on to the next generation what was handed down to us from the past. This means that the hope of most religious people is that things will carry on being the way they always used to be, that is to say that the hope of most religious people lies in the past. But in this respect the religious tradition is actually a betrayal of the way that hope is consistently described in the Bible, especially in the New Testament, and particularly in the Gospels.

In the Psalms we are invited to ‘Sing to the Lord a new song!’ Through the prophets God promises personal and social renewal. Revelation speaks of a new creation. The Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, is full of God saying: ‘Behold! I am doing a new thing!’ The big question, the challenge that God puts to the people of God, is whether they will welcome this new thing or fear it. For most of us, our response is a mixture of welcome and fear. We may not feel particularly affectionate towards either the past in general, or our own personal past, but it is what we know. We all long for a better, more just and more peaceful world – but equally we may worry about whether there is a place in it for us, is there a place in it for me? How will I fit into the new way of doing things? Particularly if we are privileged in any way, which in fact we all are by virtue of living in Luxembourg if nothing else, we may fear the loss of some aspect of that privilege. Or, we may wonder whether all the wrong we have done in the past will prevent us from stepping into the future.

There has been a lot of talk this year about what caused Brexit, or Trump, and whether we will see those phenomena repeated elsewhere. Regardless of where we stand on those matters, we all like to seek explanations for what we see happening around us. Politicians and political scientists have tended to see the explanation in power: who does and doesn’t have access to it. Who has a voice, who doesn’t have a voice – and how might those who don’t have one, or feel they don’t, reassert themselves, say to the world: I am here. Those who follow a more Marxist line of thinking follow the money in their hunt for explanations: who has missed out on the economic benefits of globalisation? Why might they feel that Brexit or Trump could give them access again? Dignity in work? I’d like to suggest that theologians – and we are all theologians, if we have ever had even one stray thought about God – would do well to follow the trails left by fear. What are people afraid of? What vision of the future do they fear? What are we afraid of? There is a marked and increasingly vocal fear of the ‘other’, and we might ask what is driving that. Whether we want to follow power, money or fear, or some mixture of them all, the underlying question is: Will I be one of the very many who are left behind?

So this is the Gospel answer: the future is open for all those who make themselves ready for its arrival. We are not judged by what we have done in the past. The past is the past. But unless we turn from the past, by changing our way of thinking, and above all, changing our attitude, and in particular, our sense of special entitlement to a privileged place, then we will not find a place in the future, because we will not allow the future to

have a place in our own lives. The truth is that far too many people are too afraid of what the Gospel describes as Good News. Small signs of hope, which are scattered in great abundance all over the world, are ignored, or denied, by those who rightly see them as a threat to the old order of power, privilege and dominance.

Just at the moment there are many challenges for everyone living on this small planet. Modern systems, especially modern financial and information systems, have not brought about the justice for all which seemed at one time to have been promised. To be sure, people everywhere generally have a higher standard of living than they used to, until very recently death rates were falling and people were living longer, but the massive inequalities which the new systems generated or enabled have delivered considerable injustices which for very many people outweigh any incremental benefits. When, as has happened with increasing frequency in the last few years, the poorest and most marginalised in global and local society are asked to make the largest sacrifices to maintain the system, something is deeply wrong, and the kind of crisis which Jesus predicted will happen once again. Not because God sends down from heaven some special punishment for the wicked, but simply because they receive the consequences of their own actions, and become themselves victims of their own disregard of others. Those who live by the systems of this world, will die by the systems of this world.

Please don't imagine that the solution to the crises of modern world systems is a return to traditional world systems. Feudalism, populism, various kinds of fascism which are once again stirring all over the world, often nourished by religious ideologies of different kinds – these are no solution to any sort of modern problem: they are nothing more than the displacement of injustice from something which we found uncomfortable to an ancient kind of injustice, of which we have either been perpetrators or the victims for so long that we have ceased to recognise that it was and still is fundamentally unjust. These systems and so-called solutions bear within them the seeds of their own destruction, as well as the toppling of those who benefited from them at the expense of others.

The only solution is that which Jesus calls for: wakefulness and vigilance. We will need a continuous awareness of the issues of justice, peace, the environment and human dignity. A willingness to get alongside God working in the world, labouring to bring God's now-and-not-yet kingdom into the present. This requires an openness to new learning every day. And if that sounds too challenging, too gritty, there is indeed good news in all of this, because once we have begun to see more clearly then we begin to find that there are signs of the kingdom in all sorts of places that we had never expected, perhaps because we had never imagined that there could be such a possibility, or maybe because we had never dared to hope, or maybe because the signs were very small – the yeast and mustard seeds that Jesus speaks about – or maybe because we have never looked. Well, let those of us who have eyes look now and see.

Just as Mary carried the future inside her, let us go into this Advent time aware that we too carry the future inside us, and look forward with imagination and hope to what is to come.

*Chris Lyon*



## Introducing ... Clark, Annelise & Kristi



### *Tell us a bit about your life ...*

Clark, Annelise and I arrived in Luxembourg in July 2016 – Clark and I both work at the US Embassy. We have also served in Tel Aviv, Algiers, and Washington, DC.

Clark and I like to tell people we met in 2004 at a bar in Washington, DC, but the truth isn't quite as intriguing: it was actually a reunion event for Trinity University in San Antonio, of which we are both alumni – we graduated about ten years apart. Clark had made Washington his home for over twenty years, while I was a recent arrival, having taught at American Schools in Warsaw and El Salvador and public schools in Texas and New York City. Clark was a widower when we met, and his son, Matt, then 15, is now 28 and living in Washington State with his wife Gina. Annelise will be 6 in February – she was born during our posting to Washington in 2011. Having attended a francophone maternelle in Algiers for two years, Annelise has adjusted well to the Ecole Maria Montessori in Strassen.

### *What are your interests and can you continue them in Luxembourg?*

One of our primary interests, conveniently, is travel – which is why I taught abroad and later joined the Foreign Service – so yes, certainly, we're able to continue that now. While posted to Algiers, we couldn't travel as much domestically, but got out whenever we could. Our most exotic and favourite trip so far was to Sri Lanka. I am an avid photographer, having asked Santa for a camera at age seven, and feel as though my camera is my fifth limb. Clark loves to cook and has revelled in the quality and variety of food available here with which to experiment.

### *Finding Church*

I grew up Catholic and became Episcopalian while living in New York City in 2001. Clark grew up Presbyterian and became Episcopalian in Washington. We are members of Saint Thomas

Episcopal Church in Tysons Corner, Virginia. Upon getting assigned to Luxembourg, we searched the internet and were happy to stumble upon the Anglican Church. We are grateful for the warm welcome our mostly British friends have extended to us Americans and will very much miss Chris's wise words on Sunday mornings.

### *Free Day*

Work keeps us quite busy, but on an unscheduled Saturday, we love hopping in the car and exploring – there's always another castle or picturesque village within striking distance to discover, and Annelise and Clark indulge my picture-taking. We're looking forward to warmer weather and tackling some easy hikes. When we can, we take our 1-year-old goldendoodle, Coco, with us. She's definitely become part of the family and is our best ambassador.

### *Favourite Hymn*

For me, it's a tough toss-up between *Amazing Grace* and *Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee*. (Is there anything more beautiful than Beethoven's Ninth?) Annelise would probably vote for *When the Saints Go Marching In*. Clark says he likes anything that's easy to sing.

*Kristi Roberts*

## **God: with us, or at ours?**

Some languages have a special preposition that means 'where you live'. In German and Luxembourgish, that word is 'bei'; in French 'chez' (as in 'chez nous'). English doesn't have a comparable word and has to use 'with', although the old English verb 'bide' contains something of the same flavour: as in 'there were shepherds abiding in the fields', or the hymn 'Abide with me'. In the Ancient Greek of Luke's gospel the preposition is 'μετα' or 'μεθ'.

On the day of the Resurrection, the travellers on the road to Emmaus, as described in Luke's account, invite the mysterious stranger to 'Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent': 'Bleib bei uns', as Martin Luther put it—the text of a motet by Josef Rheinberger, which the choir sang at Evensong in October.

The word resurfaced at our Remembrance Service in November, in the refrain to Dietrich Bonhoeffer's hymn, translated by Fred Pratt Green:

*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.*

In the original, the third line was first published as 'Gott ist *mit* uns am Abend und am Morgen'. This was the wording of a typescript version, then thought to be the author's. But about 20 years later an earlier version came to light, in his handwriting: 'Gott ist *bei* uns', and this is the wording that German hymn-books now use.

Small though the change may seem, by referring to that moment on the Emmaus road it underlines a distinction Bonhoeffer must have thought worth making: rather than occasionally turning up from somewhere else God chooses to abide with us, wherever we may live.

*Edward Seymour*

## From EFG to JPIC

In 2008, when environmental issues were becoming increasingly prominent in the news and we were being asked about our environmental footprint, as a church and individually, many of us felt we did not know nearly enough about this issue, and we set up a group known as the Environmental Footprint Group (EFG) and organised lectures and discussions to learn more.

From the outset we welcomed to our meetings anyone interested in the topic, whether or not they were church members. The EFG has been largely successful in increasing people's understanding of environmental issues such as global warming, and over the years it has become clear that it is hard to consider these areas without reference to other concerns such as poverty and inequality. At the session on working together for a fairer, more sustainable world at the Congregational Meeting on 25 May last, people were asked which issues they considered most important and their responses clearly showed that they were concerned about the environment, and also about many other things – education, justice, human rights, women's rights, migration and poverty were just a few. During the rest of the year we have been thinking about how to respond to this and also the direction that the EFG should take in the future. We think we have come up with a good solution which will provide a more coordinated approach to awareness-raising and action on these important issues.

The Environmental Footprint Group will merge with the proposed Human Rights group to form one Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) group, to be run by Evelyn Sweerts, Simon Norcross and Philippa Seymour, reporting directly to the Church Council. This group will widen the EFG's already wide sphere of interest to include human rights issues. It will continue to meet at irregular intervals when there is a speaker with something to say, on a day to suit the speaker, rather than trying to find a speaker for a particular day each month. Members of other churches and none will continue to be encouraged to attend. Although this will be a think-tank rather than an action committee, it will actively seek to make connections with groups in Luxembourg that are taking action, such as CELL, Greenpeace, ACAT, Stëmm vun der Strooss etc, and will invite people from such groups as speakers from time to time. And it will work closely with the Anglican Church Charities Committee to propose causes that might be supported financially. The Charities Committee will continue to do due diligence on the causes that are proposed, but we will endeavour to make closer links between financial support and understanding of the issues. For instance, we have supported Stëmm vun der Strooss in Luxembourg since 2012, so we might invite one of its organisers to tell us about its work.

We have three speakers already lined up for the first half of next year: Marc Bichler, Luxembourg's Climate Change Ambassador; Campbell Thomson who will talk about Tourism and the Environment, (dates to be arranged); and Evelyn Sweerts who will talk on 10 May about Anglican attitudes to social action.

If you are not already on the EFG mailing list and would like to receive information about JPIC activities and other meetings, conferences etc. that may be of interest, please send your e-mail address to [pseymour@pt.lu](mailto:pseymour@pt.lu).

*Philippa Seymour, Evelyn Sweerts & Simon Norcross*



## How to keep a good Lent?

*This proposal by Peter J. Gomes (1942-2011), who was Pusey Minister at the Memorial Church in Harvard, Massachusetts, is contributed by Jacqui Spence*

Each year, as Lent comes, I am asked by interested people as to how they should organize their intentions and ambitions for the 40 days. No two persons respond in the same way to Lent, and I am not going to try to prescribe a rigorous course of behaviour: experience tells me, however, that what I propose works, and because it does I am eager to share it with you. Lenten work, for that is what it is, can be organized around three ‘S’s: Silence, Study and Service.

### *Silence*

The world is a noisy place, and even our small corner of it has more than its fair share of noise. Silence is therefore a rare and precious thing, particularly when we realize that silence is not simply the absence of sound, but is also the presence of that which sound ordinarily obscures. For us, silence can be the place in which we both seek and experience the presence of God. I suggest that you secure for yourself *15 minutes of absolute silence*, during at least one day each week in Lent, in which you do nothing at all—no mental correspondence, no organizing, not even high thinking. Find a space or place in which you can be alone, the bathroom or bedroom will do, and clear your head. Some find it well to do this at the start of the day, getting up earlier than usual, and others at midday, foreshortening lunch, or right before evening begins. Do not schedule your silent time for bedtime: you will fall asleep, and although sleep is silent, it is not the silence of which we speak. I propose one day with a 15-minute silence, but once you try it you may crave more, and wonder how you got along without it.

### *Study*

An ambitious course of study and rigorous reading is not necessary to make good use of Lent, but some ordered reflection in which your mind is engaged on a regular basis is very much an approved discipline. Set aside *15 minutes for study* on one day of each week in Lent. This will take the form of reading for most, but you should think in advance about what it is that you are to read, and organize the reading so that you make the most of your time. Do not try to be too ambitious, as failure will make the possible impossible. If you wish to read from the Bible, choose one of the four gospels and organize your reading into six sections of 15 minutes. Perhaps you will want to read through the whole Psalter in the same fashion, reading no more and no less in a single sitting once per week than the 15 minutes allow. Perhaps you will want to try a book. I suggest J. Barrie Shepherd’s *Faces at the Cross: A Lent and Easter Collection of Poetry and Prose*, from Upper Room Books. I am re-reading Diogenes Allen’s little book, *Temptation*.

### *Service*

Contrary to popular perception, Lent is not private or personal. From ancient times it has had a communal, public, even civic dimension wherein the faithful are encouraged to good works and deeds of public charity and private philanthropy. Lest you become too private and self-absorbed in Lent, you should find a way in which you might give time to some work or kindness which is not only for yourself. Fifteen minutes may seem a devilishly small amount of time for good works, given the pressing needs of this world, yet *15 minutes of careful and prayerful focus on service*, on what you can and should do as a work of kindness, is not too much to consider, and if well used sets the stage for more extended exercises in charity and philanthropy. Where can you do some good? Who needs your help? What might you do if, for instance, you have spare change? Is there some person or place waiting for your particular skills and graces? Thinking soberly and creatively about these things for 15 minutes each week is time well spent, and very well spent indeed if it leads you to action.

## Cake-selling Brownies on Remembrance Sunday



Our Remembrance Sunday cake sale was a great success. We managed to sell all our cakes and mince pies and raised a grand total of €156.63. The money has been donated to Help for Heroes, which was founded in 2007 to provide direct, practical support for wounded, injured and sick Service Personnel, Veterans and their loved ones in the UK. Visit <http://www.helpforheroes.org.uk>.

Thank you to everyone who helped in the fund-raising, whether it was baking or attending. It was much appreciated and was a great experience for the Brownies who attended to understand there are people in the world who need our help and support.

*Jackie Wilkie*

### Youth Group

In Youth Group we've been examining some of Jesus's teachings in Luke's Gospel, and looking at how those relate to contemporary social justice issues. We'll continue our drinks, croissants and conversation next term, with meetings on

**5 February**

**12 March**

**2 April,**

in each case from **10am in the bar of the hotel next to the church.**

Everyone aged 11-17 is welcome!

*Evelyn Sweerts*

## **Admitting children to Communion**

The Anglican Church of Luxembourg has extended the giving of Communion to include children, in line with the 1997 guidelines from the House of Bishops. A number of people have already expressed an interest in having their children admitted to Communion before Confirmation, and we hope to have a special service for this purpose in May or June 2017. This will, of course, depend on the situation with our locums.

If your child would like to receive Communion, we ask them, with you, to attend a short preparation course. The purpose of this course is to help children to develop an understanding of Holy Communion appropriate to their age and abilities, so they can participate in it meaningfully. However, it is important to be clear that this is to be part of a developing understanding of faith as a lifelong process. It should not be viewed as a Confirmation course, which we still offer. If you are interested (no commitment required) or have further questions, please contact me at [lay.assistant@anglican.lu](mailto:lay.assistant@anglican.lu). We can organise the short classes and work on finding a suitable date together.

*Evelyn Sweerts*

## **Lions & Lambs playgroup—an introduction**

Lions & Lambs is a weekly Christian-based playgroup that is held on Thursday mornings from 9.30am to 11am (roughly!). It is a very friendly, relaxed and open group of parents and their little ones, aged anywhere from newborn babies to pre-school toddlers and beyond (0-3 years+).

We alternate our weekly meetings between Contern and Strassen, at members' homes (Fiona Paley in Strassen, Cherry Kent in Contern) to allow people from various parts of Luxembourg to attend. Many come every week also. There is no need to register and it is simply a case of come along if and when you can.

It is a real mix of familiar and new faces, as we have some core members who have been attending for the last 3 years and many who have just arrived in Luxembourg a few months ago. Each week, we welcome anywhere from 2 or 3 mums with one or more children each up to 8 or more and their little ones. We have carers, dads, grandparents, au-pairs, visiting family who tag along too – everyone is welcome! It is an ecumenical group – some people attend a church regularly, others do not and the group is very much open to people of faith and of none who want to give their children a basic Christian education.

We follow the liturgical calendar and a loose structure, starting with singing some Christian songs (the children have shakers and other instruments), followed by a children's Bible story, moving on to a simple craft exercise on the same theme. For example, recently the theme was Epiphany with the story of the Three Kings and we



decorated some crowns/masks. The children also have a fruit snack and there is tea or coffee available for the grown-ups. We have a welcome prayer and say Grace before snack time. As it is so relaxed and the children are very young, we understand that they often would rather simply play freely and explore. The group offers friendship, support and fellowship to the grown-ups who chat over tea or coffee.

There is no fee – it's just a case of bring yourselves and your children. People bring a piece of fruit to share at snack time, but there is no obligation to bring anything at all.



*Most of the 18 who were at the meeting on 12th January (one took the photo!)*

Everyone is welcome, as mentioned! We have an email/ mailing list, which is used to remind members which location the meeting is being held at each week (and in case of any changes). We also have a Facebook group for those on social media. If you would like to be added to the group, or have any questions, please email Cherry ([cherry.hooper@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:cherry.hooper@hotmail.co.uk)) or Fiona ([Fiona.paley@gmail.com](mailto:Fiona.paley@gmail.com)).

We look forward to welcoming you. Please feel free to share this with friends or neighbours, anyone who is new and/or may be interested at all!

*Cherry Kent*

## Candlemas Eve

Down with the rosemary and bays,  
Down with the mistletoe;  
Instead of holly, now upraise  
The greener box, for show.

The holly hitherto did sway:  
Let box now domineer  
Until the dancing Easter Day,  
Or Easter's Eve appear.

Then youthful box, which now hath grace  
Your houses to renew,  
Grown old, surrender must his place  
Unto the crisped yew.

When yew is out, then birch comes in,  
And many flowers beside,  
Both of a fresh and fragrant kin,  
To honour Whitsun-tide.

Green rushes then, and sweetest bents,  
With cooler oaken boughs,  
Come in for comely ornaments,  
To re-adorn the house.

Thus times do shift, thus times do shift;  
Each thing his turn does hold;  
New things succeed, new things succeed,  
As former things grow old.

*Robert Herrick (1591-1674)*

## People responsible for:

<b>Breakfast Bible study</b>	Graham & Isobel Weller	27 99 32 28 grahamandisobel@btinternet.com
<b>Charities</b>	Martin Curwen	34 82 26 curwenml@pt.lu
<b>Children's Ministry Coordinator</b>		junior.church@anglican.lu
<b>Coffee</b>	Carole Vlachavas	43 84 25 carolecheater@yahoo.com
<b>Communications Committee</b>	Philippa Seymour	35 90 97 pseymour@pt.lu
<b>Community Group</b>	[Vacant]	
<b>Ecumenical Representative</b>	Moira Hogg	34 70 42 mhogg@pt.lu
<b>Environmental Footprint Group</b>	Philippa Seymour	35 90 97 pseymour@pt.lu
<b>Flowers</b>	Lucyna Muscat	621 294 023 muscatlg@pt.lu
<b>Intercessions</b>	Phil Harvey	26 12 37 12 ppharvey@hotmail.com
<b>Junior Church rota</b>	Esmée Chengapen	esmee.chengapen@gmail.com
<b>Lions &amp; Lambs</b>	Cherry Kent	cherry.hooper@hotmail.co.uk
<b>Lumen magazine</b>	Edward Seymour	35 90 97 mag.editor@anglican.lu
<b>Mothers' Prayers</b>	Rani Roloff	621 181 848 ranisubaiya@yahoo.com
<b>Music &amp; Choir</b>	Ovidiu Dragan	ovidiuvdrgan@gmail.com
<b>Readers 9.30 am</b>	Richard Deeley	33 77 87 rdeeley@pt.lu
<b>Readers 11 am</b>	Elizabeth Galvin	galcade@pt.lu
<b>Readers 6.30 pm</b>	John Overstall	overstal@pt.lu
<b>Safeguarding</b>	Moira Hogg	34 70 42 mhogg@pt.lu
<b>Webmaster</b>	John Dimond	691 850 523 webmaster@anglican.lu
<b>Wellsprings</b>	Cheryl Fisher	621 238 452





[onlineprinters.com](http://onlineprinters.com)