Anglican Chaplaincy of Bonn and Cologne

Newsletter

Contents

2 **Editorial**
2 Meet the People: Ursula Ostermann
5 Interviewing Richard Gardiner
5 Meet the People: Richard Gardiner
8 Obituary: Richard Weikardt
10 **Just a Thought**
10 Destination: Heaven
11 The spider asks…
11 Food for Thought and Discussion
13 **Diary May-September**
13 Belonging together in Europe
15 Exeter College Choir – Cologne 2015
16 CAECG – The Alphabet Soup That Helps Nourish Our Souls
18 Goodbye and Thank you, Andrew
19 Locums' Flat
21 The Wasp Party, Bonn
22 Meal with David and Marion, Bonn
24 Trip to Bad Münstereifel, Bonn
24 Thanks to David and Marion
25 **Upcoming events**
26 And a final thought

Editorial

No need to rub your eyes. This really is the long heralded Newsletter. My sincere apologies for the delay (even worse than *Deutsche Bahn* or London buses), but I was very busy in other fields: helping to organise the locums' flat and the Garden Party. Anyway, here it is, a bumper edition of the Newsletter. A bit like your bumper Xmas edition of the Beano or Wendy (if you're Brits of a certain age), but with less cartoons, and it's too early for Christmas, despite the first sightings of *Lebkuchen* in the shops.

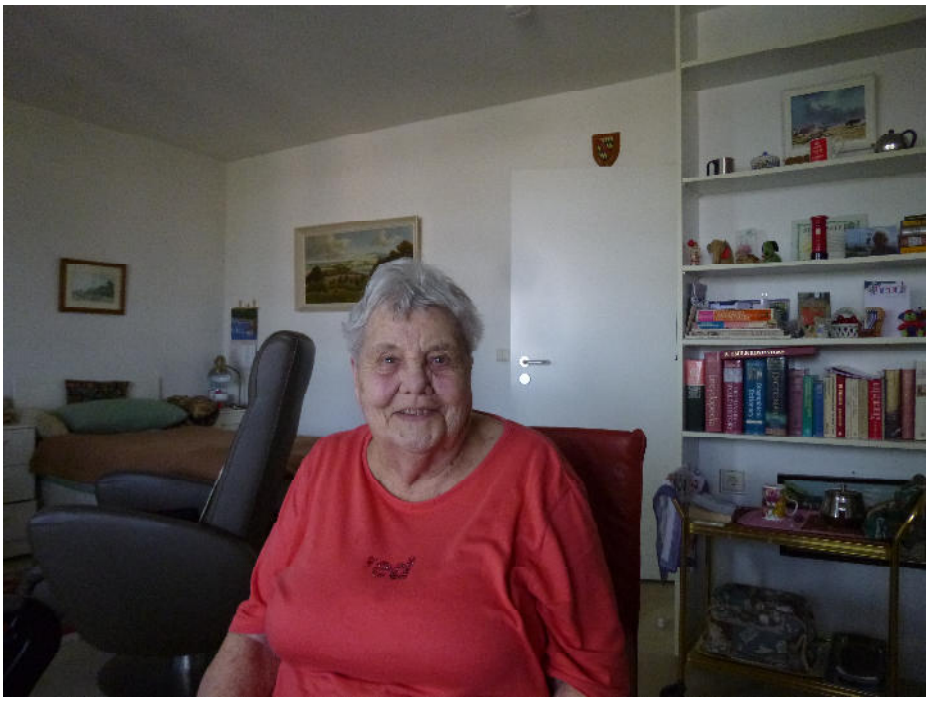
The articles reflect the various interests and activities of the congregation and its priests. During the Interregnum, where we have no permanent priest, it's important to realise how much we do and how much more we could do. As we know from the refugees surging towards Europe, we may have our justified worries, but other people are often in a much worse plight. If we can help them, we will also be helping the wider German community in which we live.

This is the first issue of a (hopefully) revamped Newsletter. Please send me any feedback, comments, suggestions you want to give to geoff.sammon@gmx.de.

Meet the People

In this series I'll be publishing interviews with members of our congregation. We see them in church, but we often don't really know much about them. In each issue I'll be interviewing one person from each end of the congregation.

Ursula Ostermann



Ursula is one of the oldest members of our congregation. Born in Berlin in 1925, she now lives in Bonn, but spent a formative part of her life in England, in London and Worthing (Sussex). She also worked closely with Americans for many years.

Ursula: My life has been quite complicated and not easy to explain in just a few words. I was born in Germany. I have a German passport. I live in Germany. My flat at the Augustinum is my home. Although I made the right decision coming back to Germany (from Worthing) in 2001, I miss England. England is where I grew up and spent 20 happy retirement years. It´s not a question of liking or disliking a country. I prefer the English mentality....although it can sometimes drive you round the bend. When people ask me "Where are you from?", I say: I was born in Berlin, I grew up in London. I worked mainly in the Rhineland, so the Rhineland is my home. My *Heimat* is both England and Germany. I think Worthing was my best home because my flat there was the only home I ever owned..... and also because my retirement there was the most carefree period of my life.

Geoff: So what made you choose Worthing?

Ursula: The parents of a childhood friend, former neighbours in London, retired to Worthing. I was seven when we went to England. My mother made sure that I wrote a letter to my Grandma in Berlin every week so that I wouldn´t forget my German. In 1939 when the war broke out we had to leave England and went back to Berlin. The biggest cultural shock for me was to go from a British school to a German school with its Nazi ideology, but I was 14½, so at first it all seemed like a big adventure. My German was that of a 7-year-old, which was embarrassing for me, but I was quite popular because I could help the others with their English homework. Our major problem as a family was that my mum was half-Jewish – something that in those days you didn´t shout out about. The headmistress was told but kept quiet about it. The girls in my class took me to BDM (*Bund Deutscher Mädel*) meetings. I never actually joined because when the dreaded questionnaire with the question "Sind Sie arisch?" inevitably popped up I stopped going to meetings because I would have had to tick the NO box. If someone was half-Jewish, like my mother, they were *Mischling 1.* If they were quarter-Jewish, like me, you were *Mischling 2.* It wasn´t funny. In 1941, when I was 16, the Hitler Youth organised us school girls to be sent to farms to help with the harvest. We were all keen to go, including me, because we knew there would be plenty of food. My father was discriminated against because – although he himself was 'Aryan' – he had a half-Jewish wife.

In 1944, after I had left school, I was evacuated to Naumburg/Saale because of the air raids. In March or April 1945 the US Army arrived and the war was over for us. But then I caught diphtheria and was still in hospital when the Americans withdrew and the Red Army took over. Somehow or other my parents were contacted and my mum came to Naumburg to take me back home to Berlin. That was quite an undertaking because there were few trains and I couldn´t yet walk properly.

Our flat was in the British Sector of Berlin, and when I was well enough my English was really useful, and I taught English on a programme called *Lernt English bei den Engländern* (the British Cultural Centre in West Berlin). I had started studying in 1943 at what was then the *Wirtschaftshochschule Berlin*, merged with the *Humboldt Universität* after the war. In 1946 I went back to university, but first we had to clear away the rubble from the badly damaged buildings, so I was a *Trümmerfrau.* I graduated in 1948 and got my doctorate in Economics in 1949. It was what you might call Uni in the fast lane. We couldn´t afford to lose any time because Berlin was then in the process of being split politically into East and West, including the university.

Geoff: You spent some time in the US after the war, didn´t you?

Ursula: Yes, I took part in a so-called "exchange" programme sponsored by the US State Department and organised by the American Civil Liberties Union in 1950/51, which took me to New York, Washington D.C., Cornell University in Ithaca, New York State, and finally to Ames, Iowa. The idea was to acquaint Germans with democracy. While I was there I fell ill and had to go to hospital. The Americans were very generous – the US government paid for my operation. In addition they let me stay on in the US after the end of the official three-month programme. A journalist friend sponsored me – I wasn´t allowed to work. I helped with his secretarial work for $50 a week and lived in New York City for six months until July 1951. In New York I attended the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, which was always packed, mornings and evenings, because the sermons were so good. I joined their 20/30 Club and was invited to give a talk on what the war had been like in Germany. It´s rather strange, but whereas the Americans wherever I went asked over and over again what things were like in Germany, when I returned to Germany none of my German countrymen ever asked what America was like.

Geoff: What did you do when you came back to Germany?

Ursula: I came back to Bonn rather than Berlin because of the unemployment in Berlin. In Bonn I managed to get a job with Time-Life International, who were looking for a librarian, and I soon became a reporter. Workwise the American correspondents were very demanding, but they were also fair, supportive and generous. I learnt a lot. My journalistic career was cut short by a long period of illness. When I recovered I found a job with an auditing firm in Düsseldorf. After four years and as my health improved I got frustrated doing work that wasn´t really ME. I resumed my journalistic career and in 1963 joined Radio Deutsche Welle in Cologne as a Senior Editor in the Transcription Service. Both with Time-Life and Deutsche Welle I was able, as a very small cog in the machinery, to help explain my *schwieriges Vaterland,* as Gustav Heinemann once put it, to the English-speaking world. Neither in the 1950s nor in the 1960s was this an easy task – but it was both challenging and rewarding.

Geoff: You retired to Worthing. Why were you so happy in Worthing?

Ursula: It was by the sea, it was my own home and some of my English friends lived there. I had had to take early retirement (for health reasons) in 1981 and I spent more than 20 very happy years there and made many frends. As a child I had gone to Sunday School at St. Martin´s, West Acton. In Worthing I attended St Botolph´s, Heene Parish Church, where I soon became Treasurer. I was confirmed twice: once in Berlin in March 1941 and a second time in Chichester Diocese because in those days a Lutheran was not eligible to come on the Electoral Roll of a CofE Church. It´s not meant to sound trivial, but my confirmation in England always seemed like a second helping.

Geoff: How has your faith helped you to deal with the difficulties in your life?

Ursula: I had quite a few illnesses – coupled with financial problems, because the welfare state had not yet been invented – and I was often at the point where I could

only pray "My God, why have you forsaken me?" When you're in dire straits you don´t always realise that God is there with you all the time. Looking back, I know that God has guided me all the way and that both the happy and the unhappy times in my life have made me who I am. Basically, I´m a happy person whose bottle is half full and not half empty, and I want to share and pass on this happiness to other people. I have always enjoyed whatever duties I have taken on in the various churches I have attended. I regard them as a privilege and regret that I can no longer do them. Even in hospital you can be cheerful! Perhaps that is why my favourite Bible passage is Psalm 100, where it says:

Make a joyful noise, all ye lands, serve the Lord with gladness...

Interviewing Richard Gardiner

Richard lives out in the sticks (*jwd* in German), in the remote wasteland between Cologne and Bergisches Land. Driving up there is an eerie experience. The area is the home to many strange creatures, such as the Lohmarian leopard, the *rasende Rentner* or *pensionati rapidi* and Lohmar's own chapter of Hell's Grannies. Access is therefore difficult, and the unwary driver has to first run the gauntlet of several radar traps (the technical term is *oculi diavoli*). An intricate system of byways ensures that only the most intelligent of visitors manages to reach the Gardiner residence. Once there, they face the forbidding exterior: a dark, high, organically built castle far from human habitation, defended by killer wasps during the daytime, and poisonous badgers at night. The sounds of ravens croaking, as in a Scandinavian movie, give it an added air of mystery. However, once the drawbridge is crossed and the ancient bellpush has been persuaded to ring, the visitor is rewarded by a warm welcome from Richard's wife, Ulla, who offers hospitality in the shape of a hearty glass of the local mead.

Richard Gardiner

Richard is a long-standing member of the Chaplaincy (although he sometimes sits). He is well known to most of us. The interview below, conducted in August, gives you more about his background and ideas about the church. Richard is married, with four grown-up children (Catherine, Sebastian, Sarah and Miriam) and one grandchild, Niklas aged three.

Geoff: You're from the Midlands, aren't you, but I can never remember whether it's Wolverhampton, Walsall or Birmingham.

Richard: It's Birmingham.

Geoff: Right, so you're a Brummie.

Richard: Yes, I was born on 7 June 1951. I was baptised at St. John's, Sparkhill, and I was later a choirboy and server at St. Christopher's, Springfield. When I was 15 I was confirmed at St. Mary's in Mosley Village, Birmingham. After school I took time out and was offered a place in September 1969 with *Help Your Brother*. It was an organisation run by the Church Missionary Society from 1966 to 1970 and had been initiated by the Revd. Alan Ninn, a priest at All Saints in Cologne. I worked at Michelshoven, Rodenkirchen with mentally handicapped and socially disadvantaged

children for six months. This is also how I met my wife, Ulla. She was working for the *Diakonisches Werk* at a children's home in Stephansheide. We both went to a concert which ended up as a party on 1 January 1970.

I got my first job at Hertie's, working in the warehouse. Then I worked for a company in Rösrath. It was during this time that I learnt German. I later moved to the Cologne textile firm of Severin & Co, now closed. I ended up in 1999 working for DKV (*Deutsche Krankenversicherung*) as a computer programmer for their mainframe computers, and I'm expecting to stay there until I retire on 30 November 2016.

Geoff: How did you come to All Saints?

Richard: I am a cradle Anglican but originally from a fairly Low Church background. I began to be drawn to and appreciate the Anglo-Catholic liturgy through serving in the church from around the age of 13…

Geoff: Ah yes, your gobstopper period. (for more details you need to ask Richard)

Richard: …and becoming a member of the *Guild of the Servants of the Sanctuary*. At the time I came to Germany I was considering a vocation to the priesthood, but meeting Ulla intervened. At first I attended Roman Catholic mass with Ulla (Ulla being Roman Catholic) although I must admit that I did struggle with Roman Catholic doctrine, eventually deciding to go back to my religious roots, i.e. the Anglican Church. Ulla and I got married in a Roman Catholic Church, but even then I wasn't allowed to take communion at my own wedding, which confirmed me in my resolve to go back to Anglicanism. I joined All Saints in 1981.

Geoff: That was when it was still held in the British Army NAAFI.

Richard: Yes. That was when Bruce Addison was Chaplain. In 1982 Alan Cole took over. He was looking for a server, and when he heard that I'd been a server back in England, he asked me to do it. I said, 'It's been so long', but he just said, 'You'll soon pick it up.' It was Alan Cole who through numerous discussions played a major role in rekindling my sense of vocation and I started to train as lay reader. It was by distance learning, but unfortunately two thirds of the way through the Central Readers Board course which I was doing was disbanded, which left me a little out on a limb, so to speak. As at the time Bishop John Satterthwaite was about to retire he put me on to Bishop John Hind, who informed me that the new Chaplain, Patrick Curran (now Archdeacon for South-East Europe), would be able to oversee the rest of my training as lay reader. So I finally completed my training and I was licensed in 1997. Simon Hobbs along with a number of members of the congregation then encouraged me to offer myself for ordination. As most people know, I was ordained deacon in Brussels in June 2013 together with Matthias Grebe and Doreen Cage from Spain, and all three of us were priested at All Saints by Bishop David in June 2014. As part of this process I, like all priests, spend my first years after ordination as a curate, a period which in my case began in 2013 and will possibly end in June 2016.

Geoff: What do you see as the unique contribution of Anglicanism?

Richard: I think because it's not as dogmatic as some other churches, but also not as liberal. Dogmatism is something that I abhor. A priest, like anyone else, is as

much a pilgrim on the way. In fact, I am always a little bit wary of priests who act as if they are the only ones who know the right road to salvation.

Geoff: What would you say are the strengths and weaknesses of our own Chaplaincy?

Richard: I think we've got a very committed core of people. The congregations at both ends of the Chaplaincy are extremely friendly and welcoming, and we've got a very tolerant congregation in the main. Its weaknesses lie, perhaps, in the two ends of the Chaplaincy – too few of the members really know members from the other end. Secondly, we as a church, lack involvement in the local community, for example in helping sister churches in welcoming immigrants.

Geoff: How do you see the future?

Richard: I'm optimistic because of our strengths. What we need to work on is better interaction during the week. One way of doing that might, for example, be to have a short Morning Prayer followed by a simple breakfast mid-week, but that is of course something that the council needs to discuss and decide.

We also need to work on the way we deal with the sick. If you know somebody who is ill, please inform the priest. (It is so easy to think that because so and so has informed me that someone is ill or in hospital that the priest has also been informed. Please check that that is the case because all too often it isn't.) During the Inter-regnum you can do that by emailing me at Richard.Gardiner@Web.de or by phoning me on 02247-1472.or mobile 0172- 5328025. And of course it's not just the priest. We're the priesthood of all believers. Pray for people and let them know you're praying for them.

Geoff: What do we need to do to improve the Chaplaincy?

Richard: Well, as I said before, I believe that we need greater involvement in our local community and for one that means strengthening and renewing our ecumenical contacts. We also need a deeper commitment not only to the charities that we support but also to our charitable giving in general – As I said at a council meeting in the past; I personally have grave difficulties in being a member of a church that doesn't support charities. Why should people support us if we don't support others?
But in general I think we should see the Interregnum as an opportunity to build up our community and to look to the future without being too fearful for its future. We have a lot going for us.

Obituary: Richard Weikardt, 1934-2015

The text below is the one held by Helen Rensmann at Richard Weikardt's funeral.

The Anglican Church has had a presence in the Cologne-Bonn area for over 160 years, dating back to the time when the wealthy English aristocracy visited the Rhineland on the European Grand Tour. When Richard's English mother came to Germany as a young woman she joined the congregation of the Anglican church in Cologne, and some of Richard's earliest memories were of accompanying her to Anglican church services as a young boy as long ago as 1936. During the war years there were no English services, but when in 1945 the American troops who had been occupying the area moved south, the British troops moved in, bringing their Anglican chaplains with them. For Richard's mother, the arrival of the British was all part of a bigger plan and – as Richard himself put it – led to her conviction that all this had only happened because God wanted her to have HER CHURCH back. Richard's mother devoted herself to the task of re-establishing and promoting the Anglican Church in Bonn and Cologne and was the driving force in its recovery in those early post-war years. And it was inevitable, as her involvement grew, that Richard should get involved alongside her.

But it was not until some years after his mother's death in 1987 and his own retirement that Richard took a more active role in the running of the Chaplaincy. This coincided with my own arrival in Germany and affiliation with the Bonn church. It was in fact Richard who persuaded me to get more involved in Church affairs, and as a result we spent a total of 13 years on the Church Council together. During that time Richard served as Chairman of the Friends of the Chaplaincy, the charity established to co-ordinate the financial affairs of the Church. More importantly, however, he also took on the office of lay Vice Chair of the Church Council.

This was very fortuitous for our Church because it transpired that these years would be very turbulent, not least because they witnessed the arrival and departure of three different Chaplains. In the vacancy periods between priests the Church Council was responsible for the day to day running of the Chaplaincy and as Chairman of that Council Richard's role was crucial. He provided not only continuity but also the leadership which was essential in order to keep the Church running smoothly during the times when no priest was in office.

Those were indeed challenging and occasionally existential times for the Chaplaincy, and Richard's leadership skills were tested to the limit. But as he himself acknowledged, the difficulties that were encountered brought the congregation closer together. And I know that he enjoyed the notion of continuing the devoted work that his mother had initiated and took pride in following in her footsteps.

Richard was dedicated to the Anglican Church and the people in it throughout his life and he took his responsibilities within the Chaplaincy extremely seriously. He was eminently rational and prudent but at the same time eminently caring and kind-hearted. One of the things I admired most about him was his wisdom - he was simply incredibly wise. When passions were running high, he could soothe and pacify a situation; he was a master of conciliation and a great diplomat. He had a remarkable ability to identify the essence of a problem, to cut through all the extraneous detail and emotion and isolate the essential elements of any set of circumstances. He was generous, patient, never uncharitable, always looking for the good in people. He was universally liked and always commanded great respect. But in all his dealings and even when life was very serious – even when he was close to death - his wicked sense of humour – dare I say his typically English sense of humour – could not be suppressed.

My husband, Thilo, has always described the Anglican Church as my “Nabelschnur nach Hause”, and I have always described Richard as my “Ersatz Vater” – my own father being in England. I have learnt so much from Richard over the years and he always had time for me whenever I needed his help or advice. He was there for me unfailingly every year on my birthday – the doorbell would ring and there would be Richard with a big smile on his face and an even bigger bunch of flowers in his hands. He was a supremely loyal person – loyal to Rita, to his family, to his friends and to his Church.

In the tradition established by his mother, Richard’s dedication and hard work has had a tremendous impact on the life of the Anglican Church in Bonn and Cologne: the loss of Richard is an immense loss for his family and friends, but it is also an immense loss for our Church. What remains, however, is his remarkable legacy.

Richard once said, and I quote, “for Christians it is a ‘conditio sine qua non’ to try hard to understand your fellow man and to be able to show compassion”. Richard lived out this maxim in his life – and the effects are visible in the life of our Church today. A very fitting tribute and memorial to the life of a wonderful man.

Helen Rensmann

Just a Thought

Commemorated in August: John Bunyan, 1628-1688

Destination: Heaven
Prospects en Route: Detours, Pitfalls, Lions

"*As I walk'd through the wilderness of this world, I lighted upon a certain place where was a Den; And I laid me down in that place to sleep*…"

So begins the prologue to *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan, setting the scene for the nocturnal vision that made him famous.

"…*and slept like a log all night.*"

That was the mischievous tagline added for a "New Statesman" competition asking for "opening sentences which destroy their novels". *Pilgrim's Progress* was of course not destroyed. It has been called English literature's first novel and its last allegory. The characters bear names like Christian, Faithful and Hopeful on the one hand, and Lord Time-server, Madam Wanton and Parson Twotongues on the other. Distinguishing the goodies from the baddies and phoneys looks easy enough.

But it's not so easy for the pilgrims. On the way to the Celestial City, Christian "is constantly taxed to tell his friends from his foes" (N.H. Keeble in his introduction to the Oxford edition of *PP*). Nor does Bunyan's protagonist look very heroic. He falls into the Slough of Despond while Faithful does not; he is terrified by the lions while Faithful, evidently a more serene soul, thinks they must have been asleep when he went by. "Left to his own devices, Christian would not have achieved the quest; and yet, quite against the odds, he does achieve it. Any man may, through grace, become a Christian hero. That is the point which Bunyan…would impress upon us" (Keeble).

Faithful is persecuted and put to death for bearing witness to his faith. Christian goes on with Hopeful. The two begin a discussion about faith and doubt, guilt and grace. Hopeful has not been living up to his name. Anxious about his soul's salvation, he has bombarded heaven with his prayers, apparently to no avail.
Chr. Had you not thoughts of leaving off praying?
Hope. Yes, an hundred times, twice told.
Chr. And what was the reason you did not?
Hope. [T]his came to my mind, *If it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come*….So I continued Praying until the Father shewed me his Son.
Chr. And how was he revealed unto you?
Hope. [S]uddenly, as I thought, I saw the Lord Jesus look down from Heaven upon me and saying, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*. But I replyed, Lord, I am a great, a very great sinner; and he answered, *My grace is sufficient for thee*. Then I said But Lord, what is believing? And then I saw from that saying, [*He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst*] that believing and coming was all one….

Bunyan is reminding us that faith is not mere intellectual assent, that faith means commitment. His pilgrims have voted with their feet, and somehow they keep going.

George Williams

The spider asks…

I wonder how many of us consider the ways of small insects. I have closely examined them and find them to be extremely intelligent. There is so much one can learn from them, especially the ant. But here is what the spider speaks:

"I spun my web around the arms of God,
My best, my perfect pattern, drawn from my inmost self.
A gift to one whose arms seemed weighed with care,
His burdened shoulders needing me to share
With Him my plan of prayer.
I was afraid that careful humans might come by
And send my spinning all away
And say, 'This is no place for spiders' webs',
They would not know, my web was my own patterned prayer,
To show the figure hanging there
Something of my love and care.
I wonder how humans plan their prayer." (Oliver Snow)

Devika Homann

Food for Thought and Discussion

Now that everyone is back from the summer holidays, we've seen the lunar eclipse and the leaves are falling, some of us are thinking about the questions raised at the recent CAECG meeting (see article below, p. 15).and asking ourselves how we should respond to them – individually and as a Chaplaincy.

- What is our role as English-speaking Anglicans on the European continent?
- What kind of ministry can we offer as a congregation?
- How can we ensure that any ministry we offer – collectively or individually – has a firm foundation in the Gospel?

For the last few years, there have been experiments off and on, at both ends of the chaplaincy, with different ways of looking at how we might put the Gospel lessons into practice in our lives. In small groups, we have, among other things, seen a wide range of films[1] and discussed their implications for our lives and outreach. Now, as we re-examine our mission during this interregnum. there are some new resources available.

[1] **All the Small Things** (6 part BBC series), **The Burning Deck** (series 2, episode 3 of *Kavanagh Q.C.),* **Joshua** (a film based on Joseph Girzone's book of the same name and **Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?, a** twelve-part course on moral philosophy, taught by Michael Sandel and filmed at Harvard University. This course can be accessed at no charge here:http://www.justiceharvard.org/watch/

Canon Adrian Chatfield (see CAECG article below, p.15) has kindly shared his power point slides on innovative ways to "be church" and given consent to share them with the Chaplaincy. Also, I've come across a treasure trove of resources available online through the Church in the 21st Century Center at my alma mater in Boston (http://www.bc.edu/church21.html). Over the summer I have watched some of their videoed guest speaker presentations – including one with the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams.

All of these films – there are currently 366 of them, enough for every day of a full leap year (coming up in 2016) – are accessible 24 hours a day at no charge. Once on the website, you can click on C21 videos and scroll down to "Roles and Relationships in the Church".

Rowan Williams is video #11 "Revelation in the Context of Interfaith Dialogue". In the same section are two videos with Sister Helen Prejean of "Dead Man Walking" fame, discussing prison ministries and the thorny issue of capital punishment in the USA (#42 from September 2010 and #7 from October 2014). Some are very specific to Roman Catholic theology but a large number in all four categories (Catholic Intellectual Tradition, Handing on the Faith, Roles and Relationships in the Church, Sexuality in Catholic Tradition) cut across denominational lines.

There's an online magazine (C21 Resources) and there are also online courses. These are not free but the cost is modest. I took one this summer on Pope Francis' Encyclical, Laudato Si' On Care for Our Common Home. The message of this small book (116 pages) has been welcomed by the Anglican Church http://www.churchnewspaper.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/TCE-20150626.pdf and Anglican churches in London and Essex - among others – have already run workshops on it. One (or more) of the small groups in our Chaplaincy might want to consider using this as a basis for discussing how our churches could get involved some of the many issues the encyclical explores.

It's an exciting time for a revival of Christian community action and for ecumenism when the world most needs thoughtful leadership to deal with issues as varied as absorbing refugees into our communities, redefining families in the 21st Century and making our common home hospitable for everyone.

Elizabeth Horman

Diary May-September

Belonging together in Europe

I often thank God for Germanwings. At the end of May my favourite airline took me to Zurich, Switzerland, for four days. One month later I was on a Germanwings plane full of holidaymakers heading to sunny Portugal. No holiday for me this time, though: Both trips were connected with the Anglican–Old Catholic International Coordinating Council (AOCICC).

The AOCICC has 11 members: ten clergy, including our Suffragan Bishop David Hamid, and one layperson (that's me). The other members come from the Anglican Church of Ireland, the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe, and the Old Catholic Churches of the Netherlands, Austria and Switzerland. It's a great mix of people, backgrounds and nationalities.

In May we gathered for four days in Zurich (see picture above), hosted by the Old Catholic parish there. Our annual meetings have a full agenda. In Zurich we prayed and studied the Bible together, updated each other on the news and developments in our church families, discussed current bilateral ecumenical relationships, met local congregations to share in worship and fellowship, and shared ideas for practical projects to encourage Anglicans and Old Catholics across Europe to get to know each other better. One current example: Thanks to an initiative of Antje Kirchhofer, a Swiss youth pastor, we are planning a youth pilgrimage to Echternach, Luxembourg, in spring 2017 for young Anglicans and Old Catholics from all over Europe. Watch this space for more details.

At the end of June it was time to pack the suitcase again and head to Lisbon (see picture above). The Lusitanian Church of Portugal, which belongs to the worldwide Anglican Communion, had organised a two-day conference to celebrate 50 years of full communion between the Lusitanian Church, the Spanish Episcopal Reformed Church, and the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht. I was invited to attend the celebrations at St. Paul's Cathedral in Lisbon and to give a presentation on the current work of the AOCICC.

Among the 50 or so attendees were members of various Anglian congregations in Portugal and Spain, a flock of clergy, and several bishops, including the Old Catholic Archbishop Joris Vercammen. For me it was a rare (and, I must admit, enjoyable) opportunity to turn the tables and address people who I otherwise usually sit and listen to!

It was a joyful occasion with interesting discussions, warm hospitality, and plenty of time to meet new people. Each day we worshipped in the cathedral, alternating between the Anglican and Old Catholic traditions. And regardless of whether the service was in Spanish, Portuguese or English, the words of the liturgy were the same. To me that was a powerful reminder of how much unites Old Catholics and Anglicans, no matter where we live or which language we speak. We are all members of the same family. I often thank God for that, too.

Jenny Knudsen

Exeter College Choir – Cologne 2015

It was a great joy to bring the choir of Exeter College, Oxford, where I am the Chaplain, to the Anglican Chaplaincy of Bonn and Cologne. I had been a member of the congregation as an Erasmus student in Bonn in 2004 – 2005, and, with more interest in the church than in German civil law, I became involved in the life of the two churches. In 2005, under the vision of Barbara Merkes, the summer concert series was set up to help with much needed funds, so, it was both serendipitous that the choir came back in the tenth anniversary year, as well as singing on the fifth anniversary of my ordination.

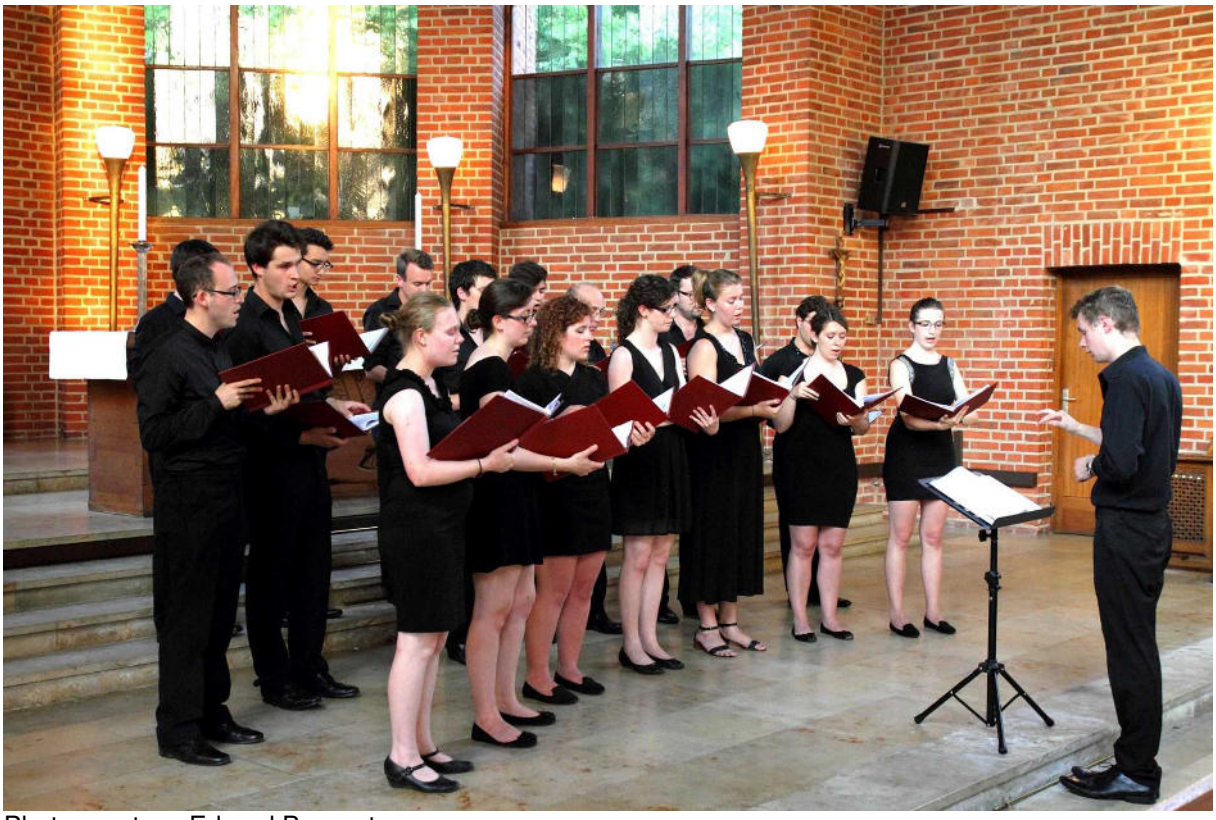


Photo courtesy Eduard Bungartz

Chaplaincies in the Diocese of Europe are completely different from the English parish: congregations are gathered, and, in Germany there is no benefit from the *Kirchensteuer*, which means that each congregation must pay in full for chaplain as well as upkeep of buildings. These concerts have been vital in helping secure funds, but, more than that, have helped to integrate the chaplaincy in the wider landscape of Cologne, offering a concert venue for visiting choirs, and serving the neighbourhoods of Marienburg and beyond. They are a source of mission for the church: non-threatening invitations to enter the building, and there to begin to meet some of the community of the church. To see regulars and newcomers, music lovers and tourists mingling together, enjoying music, drinks, and nibbles is surely a sign of the hope for the future.

Ten years ago, at the first concert, none of us there had any idea how they would develop, or indeed how God's plans for our lives would take shape, but it was moving for me, and, I think for my students, to come and sing a repertoire of English music from Tallis to Wood and Elgar in a unique place: a church where English speakers can gather to explore their faith, to grapple with their doubts, and to strive to find a meaning of God and of life.

Andrew Allen, Chaplain and Bishop Radford Fellow, Exeter College, Oxford.

CAECG – The Alphabet Soup That Helps Nourish Our Souls

Some of you may have wondered what CAECG (rhymes with "tag") is all about, but have been too shy to ask. Quite honestly, for a long time, I wasn't at all sure what it was about either. And even after I worked out what the letters stood for, I couldn't say for sure what the Council for Anglican and Episcopal Churches in Germany actually did.

Now, in my third year as Cologne's lay representative to CAECG, I've learned a lot more about this working group for German-based churches of the Anglican Communion. I continue to be amazed at the breadth of activity covered by 15 churches spread throughout this very large country.

The clergy and lay representatives meet together twice a year – each time in a different part of Germany – to discuss among themselves and with the Archdeacon and Bishop(s) – every aspect of the Anglican Communion in Germany – church governance, ethics, finances, mission and outreach and – at the heart of it all – prayer and worship. Each two day meeting (three days for the clergy) spends some time looking at Christian response to a variety of concerns in the world. In 2013, we looked at the **Church and Ecology**; in 2014 we explored **Christian Ministry in Europe** and at the March 2015 meeting, we were challenged to think about our approach to **Mission and Charity**. Each year we are encouraged to bring back the issues to our own churches and look for ways to incorporate them on a long-term basis into our community life

And it doesn't stop there. CAECG also offers opportunities, under the umbrella of Developing Christian Ministries (DCM), for everyone involved in our communities to spend two days at an educational event – one year it was church music. In 2014, the Canon of Coventry Cathedral introduced us to the Cathedral's Ministry of Reconciliation (http://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/wpsite/our-reconciliation-ministry/). The 2015 DCM - New Ways of Being Church in Germany - was held in Bonn, ably organized by our own Rev. Matthias Grebe. Some two dozen people from Anglican/Episcopal congregations in Germany came to see how Fresh Expressions in the UK is transforming the understanding of mission and of church itself. A short wander through their Website (http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/) gives an overview of the many new approaches to 21st Century mission. At the heart of all of them are (in order of importance):

- Planting our collective feet firmly in prayer, worship and service
- Listening to the concerns people bring to us
- Actively engaging with people who need our support
- Using these foundations to build a community

Many times, out of this "living mission", curiosity grows about the reasons we do what we do and we may see new people and new families drawing closer to our church community. Growing the church is not about numbers (though we are glad when new people come – and stay). It's not about "conversion" – that's God's bailiwick. It's about "learning the cost of the Gospel" and living our faith in our interaction with others day by day.

For more on this year's speaker, the Reverend Canon Dr Adrian Chatfield, and the Centre for Prayer and Spiritual Life in Cambridge, which he directs – here's the Website: http://www.ridley.cam.ac.uk/centres/simeon-centre.

For the final CAECG meeting in 2015 – hosted by Wiesbaden – two guest speakers were invited. The Rev. Lucinda Laird, Dean of the Episcopal Cathedral in Paris asked us to consider a number of questions, among them:

- What do Anglicans on the Continent have to offer to post-Christian Europe?
- Who has God called us to minister to? And how?
- Do we take Jesus' command to feed the hungry, clothe the naked and take in the homeless seriously?

As strangers in strange lands we need to:

- Let go of our assumptions
- Meet people where they are
- Work on joint historical baggage
- Become more Christ-like in our dealings with all our neighbors

In each session we had a chance to discuss these issues and explore in small groups the possibilities we have as individuals/families and church communities to fulfill them.

Our new Archdeacon, the Rev Colin Williams, joined us for the weekend and spoke to us about his role in helping us find the way in which we, as a church community can reflect the both the spirit and the letter of the tasks Jesus set for us.

So now you know some of what CAECG has to offer us as a community within a larger regional community that is, in turn, part of the world-wide Anglican Communion. Aren't you glad you asked? (Or even if you didn't, aren't you glad I told you?)

Elizabeth Hormann, CAECG Lay Representative, Cologne

Goodbye and Thank you, Andrew!

Things were a little different in All Saints on Sunday 30th August. We were joined by members of the Bonn congregation for Andrew's farewell service. Andrew was presiding and was joined by our Assistant Curate, Revd. Richard Gardiner and our Area Dean, Revd. Ken Dimmick, had come from Stuttgart especially for the occasion. Andrew had put together a special order of service and chosen some of his favourite hymns. In his sermon he spoke passionately once more about Mission and the future of the church. There was plenty of food for the lunch after the service.

Photo courtesy Eduard Bungartz

We also had a time of thanks for Andrew's ministry and of course the presentation of a leaving gift, a white Chasuble and a stole. Our Area Dean passed on the greetings from the Bishops and reminded us that we are not alone but united in a ministry that not only includes the local level but the Deanery and Archdeaconry. On behalf of the Churchwardens Barbara thanked Andrew for all he did in his time here (by request from the Area Dean her speech has been made available here:

http://www.anglicanbonncologne.de/what-we-ve-been-up-to/blog.

Pfarrer Richter from the Military Chaplaincy next door presented a number of small gifts too. We then took this group photo of all those present.

Photo courtesy Eduard Bungartz

We wish Andrew all the best for his new ministry at St. Thomas' Church in Stourbridge and will keep him and his family in our prayers.

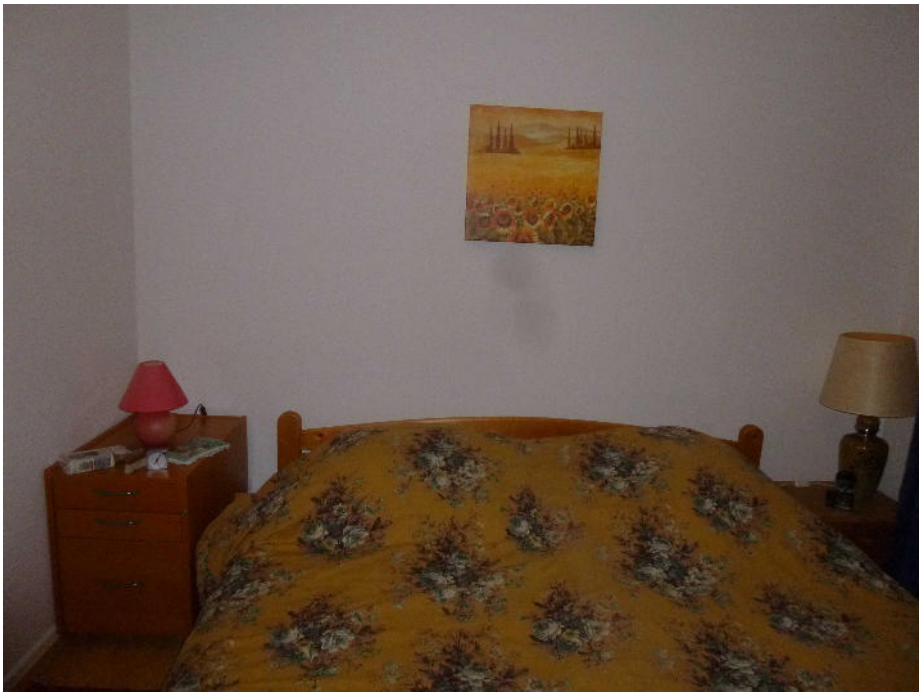
Barbara Merkes, Churchwarden All Saints

Locums' Flat

The advent of the Interregnum meant that we had to look for a two-room flat for the locums. The PCC suggested that we look for one in Bonn because the rents can be lower there and the locum would have to do the first service on a Sunday morning at the Bonn church. I groaned at the thought of traipsing through dingy flats or flats that were too expensive for us Church Mice – luxury penthouses with champagne parties are more for the Mammon crowd. In fact, and to our amazement, the second flat that Helen found hit the spot. We couldn't believe our good fortune.

Within a week we were able to start asking people for contributions. We bought the basic furniture from Matthias, which helped him and us, but the missing links were provided by Kai and Katharina (wardrobe and table), cupboard, carpet and glass desk (Debra), bedroom rugs (Jill), and TV set (Tony). Next came the minor but essential trappings of everyday life: bedclothes, towels, mirrors, cutlery, crockery, pots and pans, bedside lamps, a standard lamp, curtains, and pictures.

Many many thanks to all of you in both Bonn and Cologne who donated them. But all this would have remained an unfinished symphony had we not had the expertise and hard work of Hans and Anna Dorst and Tony Taylor to guide us. It was an object lesson in how well we can work together.



We'll be organising a drinks party in the flat in late October so that anyone who wants to can see what the flat's like. We'll then go off to a restaurant for a meal together. So tell the Mammon crowd to move over: the Anglicans are coming!

Geoff Sammon

The Wasp Party, Bonn

We had our second Garden Party at St. Paulus on 5 September, in the grounds of the kindergarten. We tried to improve our advertising by increasing the number of banners and making them more attractive. We also learnt from our mistakes two years ago and managed to get all the stalls ready in time by doing part of the spadework on Friday afternoon. We also avoided the electrical fireworks that had left us without power for the hotplates in 2013.

Saturday morning began inauspiciously with dark clouds and even darker warnings of the downpours to come, but after a short refreshing shower the day switched into sun mode. It was only when we started clearing things away did the rain re-appear. Whether it did this to punish us for stopping the fun or to hurry us up, was unclear. We certainly cleared things away in record time.

The Garden Party was extremely popular with the local wasp community (NB: not the WASP community – we're proud of our multi-racial, multi-ethnic congregation). If we'd had as many €10 notes as we had wasps gathered round the cake stall, the Treasurer would have been over the moon. (This phenomenon is traditionally known as moon-wasping.) As it was, we made a profit of €1,700, almost doubling our take in 2013. But of course the fun thing, despite all the hard graft, was getting together to create an event to benefit the whole community.

Geoff Sammon

Meal with David and Marion, Bonn

The Bonn congregation had a meal with David and Marion at Schaumburger Hof, overlooking the Rhine, on 18 September, about a week after they arrived. For once, we'll let the pictures tell their own story.

The congregation engaging in spiritual refreshment (some more than others).

David and Marion discussing some of the finer points of doctrine with the gang.

John is explaining to Dagmar how to reduce the deficit using his special smartphone app: “You see, you just press this button, and whoosh! It’s gone.“

Ramiro is describing the finer points of salsa technique to Christopher, no?

Geoff Sammon

Trip to Bad Münstereifel

Wendy Jäger in Bad Münstereifel was kind enough to renew her invitation to visit the Bruder-Klaus-Kapelle near Wachendorf. The chapel lies out in the fields, near the forest. From a distance it looks more like bales of straw piled up for harvesting. Close up the bales of straw turn out to be made of concrete. We had to wait for quite some time, as a guided tour had just been let in; the chapel is small and the guide, who was also the sponsor of the chapel, was verbose. We tried psychological warfare by singing hymns loudly, to no effect (the chapel walls are thick), but were eventually allowed in once the tour was over. The chapel is certainly of interesting design, rising to a roof which would be pointed, were it not for the fact that the top has been lopped off, so to speak, so that it is partly open to the sky. The result is also that it lets the rain in: there was a large puddle on the floor, but this was apparenlty intentional, as the idea is to reflect the unity of earth and sky. The puddle certainly showed that. In the walls there are lots of tiny round glass portholes to let in light.

After this interesting aesthetic experience, Wendy and her daughter Sigrun guided us back to Wendy's house in Bad Münstereifel, where they had laid on home-made soup, an array of delicious cakes, and tea and coffee. It was a fun trip, and gave us a chance to chat, more than we would usually do after church. Wendy and Sigrun, thank you very much for your warm welcome. It was great to see you again.

Geoff Sammon

Thanks to David and Marion

Just a few words of thanks to David and Marion for being such a wonderful beginning to the Interregnum. You were both so warm-hearted and lively that it was a joy to be with you. Despite the teething troubles in the flat, where you acted as our guinea pigs, you were always good-tempered and calm. We hope we'll see you again sometime soon.

Upcoming events

21 October : Singing Group in Bonn-Beuel

Do you enjoy singing? A small and unselected group has been meeting up about once a month for the past year, simply to sing English songs together. Why don't you join us? You don't even have to be able to sing. We have an amazing teacher who is helping us with that. We meet in the basement at the church in Bonn at 7:30 p.m. You don't need to bring anything with you, just your voice and a sense of fun. Our repertoire until now has consisted of folk songs (from various nations), songs from musicals, pop songs (old and modern) and hymns. Perhaps you can add something we haven't tried yet. Although the singing group now generally meets on the first Wednesday of every month, the school autumn half-term means that the next sing-alongs will be on Wednesday 21st October and Wednesday 4th November. We meet at 7:30 p.m. in the church basement in Bonn-Beuel. Anyone welcome. Talk to Anne Wegner (02224-941008) or Jill Wolff (jill.wolff@gmx.de) for further information. Or simply turn up on the day!

1 November: All Saints Patronal Festival, followed by a pot luck meal

4 November: Singing Group in Bonn-Beuel (see above, 21 October)

5 December: Christmas Bazaar, held at the Pfarrheim St. Josef, on the corner of Linkstraße and the street An St. Josef, just behind the main hospital in the centre of Bonn-Beuel.

13 December: Carol Service Cologne, at All Saints, 6.00 p.m., with the Bonn English Singers.

14 December: Carol Service Bonn, at St. Boniface (St. Paulus in Siegburger Straße, Beuel), at 7.30 p.m., with the Bonn English Singers.

For the events below no date has yet been fixed. They will be announced in the weekly sheet and on the website.

- **Church@5**: our experimental service, held on a Sunday evening in Bonn
- **All-Age Service**: first Sunday in each month in Bonn
- **Christingle service**: in early December
- **Taizé Service**: planned for Cologne
- **Thought for Food**: house group dealing with general topics, to start in November in Bonn

And a final thought:

BLESSINGS

(dedicated to the LOGOS Christians July 22nd, 2015)

The Lord opens His heart by blessing Mankind
be it as joy - be it as pain
Blessing - the divine reality
having power, consolation, sooth
Man has no blessings
other than HIS with CHRIST's spirit
his omniscient and omnipotent DEEDS

Blessings cover up man's weaknesses,
short comings and deficiencies
Blessings contain all in all: the universe
from the tiniest to the greatest phenomena
experiences both private and public
in hours of total need and total despair
in hours of silent joy and uplifting BLISS

Ursula Howard