



CHRIST CHURCH, BRITTANY

To know Jesus Christ and make him known



CHRIST CHURCH BRITTANY

Ploërmel + Nantes + Huelgoat + Rostrenen
'To know Jesus Christ and make Him Known'

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Newsletter February 2008

Prayer focus

- ❖ For all those of our Church Family who are unable to be with us.
- ❖ For the new Mum's and toddlers group as it nears its opening.
- ❖ That the new ecumenical service planned for February will be a witness to our unity as Christians.

CHRIST CHURCH BRITTANY – PART OF THE DIOCESE IN EUROPE
(CHURCH OF ENGLAND)

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'The views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those held by the Minister or Council of Christ Church Brittany'

Services for January/February

Ploërmel

January

27th 11.00am Holy Communion - Order One

February

3rd 11.00 Holy Communion - Order One

6th 11.00 Holy Communion - Order One - Ash Wednesday

10th 09.30 Holy Communion - Order Two

11.00 Prayer and Praise
17th 11.00 Holy Communion - Order One
24th 11.00 Holy Communion - Order One

Rostrenen (formerly Bonen) Chapelle de Manoir de Campastal.

February

24th 10-30 Holy Communion - Order One

Huelgoat (NB SERVICE on SUNDAY time remains at 16-30)

February

10th 16.30 Holy Communion - Order One

For further information about any of the services please get in touch with The Revd Hazel Door, Churchwarden or Reader.

Other dates for your diary

LENT COURSES LENT COURSES LENT COURSES LENT COURSES

Coming Soon. At a place near you!

Lent will soon be upon us, strange though it may seem. Easter this year is almost the earliest it can ever be, so now is the time to start thinking about joining a Lent course. This year we shall again be using one of the York courses. "The Lord's Prayer: praying it, meaning it, living it." Contributors to the course include Bishop Kenneth Stevenson, Canon Margaret Sentamu, and it is introduced by the former Archbishop of York, Dr David Hope. The course covers 5 sessions and will take place in several different locations.

Contact Rev. Hazel for further details: 02 97 22 31 38 or e-mail rev.hazel@wanadoo.fr.

Do it soon!!!

Alpha Course

Following the postponement of the Alpha Course a revised commencement date for the course will be announced as soon as possible. If you require further information in respect of the Alpha Course please contact Hazel, Door, the Wardens or Val Smith.

Fellowship Meeting – February 2008

St Vran

Fellowship meeting dates are 31st January and for February the 14th and 28th starting with a shared lunch. All welcome. For further information please contact Joyce and Alex Fraser on 02 96 56 13 22.

Organ Concert

An organ concert is being organised for the evening of 10th May 2008 to be held in the large chapel at Maison Mere. More information will follow in due course.

Joy Morin in Concert

On 9th March 2008 Joy will be performing a piano duet at the music school in Redon. The concert commences at 5.00pm and admission is entirely free.

Other Matters

Christmas Eve in Austria

Come with me into the little village churchyard, illuminated by hundreds of red candles burning on the graves, gleaming on the snow. Step into the darkened Church, where upwards of two hundred people are quietly waiting for Midnight Mass. The only light is from dozens of shimmering golden candles on the high altar.

Musicians tiptoe up into the gallery carrying their instruments. The choir follows them. The outer doors are thrown open wide, the lights go up, and the priests and acolytes process down the church, to a rousing organ voluntary. In this little village church there is a superb choir and orchestra to accompany the Mass. The music rises and falls, filling the church with joy. We don't understand the words, in German, but the service follows a known pattern, and the spirit is strong. We can sing our own words to the hymns we know.

Most of the congregation go forward to receive Communion, families, babies, grandparents, quietly processing up the aisle.

And, at the end of the service, the church lights are once again dimmed, and everyone stands to sing in unison 'Stille Nacht', one of the loveliest Christmas songs we know. The depth of love with which they sing this hymn, written by Franz Gruber in a nearby village, is so moving that it brings tears to the eyes for a moment...

As we go out into the church grounds, just past midnight, everyone stands to listen. High in the bell tower the trumpets are playing, echoing the sound of 'Silent Night', ringing over the snow covered mountains, and welcoming Christmas Day.

Recycling your Used Stamps

For several years now I have periodically sent off packets of used stamps that I have received from members of the Christ Church Brittany congregations to a lady in Hampshire. They are then sold to raise funds for ICS, the Intercontinental Church Society, which supports over 60 English-speaking congregations in several continents. The effectiveness of the scheme would be improved further if the following points could be borne in mind:

- a) British definitive stamps (the ones which have only the Queen's head on) are of little value and, if possible, should not be included. Currently they form a significant proportion of what is handed in but at some stage they have to be weeded out.
- b) Please ensure that each stamp whether torn off or cut off from an envelope, parcel etc has a border left around the stamp.
- c) Damaged stamps are of no value so please be careful how you cut or tear the paper surrounding the stamps.

All French stamps can be saved as well as any British commemorative issues and Christmas stamps. In addition any that have been received from other countries are wanted. You may put any stamps you collect in a container at La Source but if this is not possible please ensure that they are passed on by some means to me.

A big thank you to those who already save their stamps. If you do not, please consider doing so.

Robin Hillman.

A New Year Message

As we pray for Christian Unity I would like to share a New Year message we have received from a French friend. Each year she sends us a simple card which has a design and a message which remains memorable. This year the

design is an old tree which is covered in tiny lights. The message is as follows:

L' Arbre des générations a porté les fleurs d' Espérance
d' age en age,
afin que chacun, en toute liberté, puisse les cueillir,
les vivre, et les transmettre.

Below the verse there are two hands reaching to clasp in friendship and unity and above them a bright light.

This will be my prayer to begin a new year.

May Jesus, the light of the world, draw us one to another in friendship and in unity and in peace. Amen.

Karen Millns.

Thank You's

A big thank you to Penny Murray for her gift of a cross-stitch picture of the Three Wise Men, which is now hanging on the back wall of the Chapel.

Also thank you to Jenny Bonnington for the gift of the knitted crib set, which was displayed in the Chapel over Christmas and to Terry Woodford who made and donated the crèche.

Finally thank you to Eric Elsdon for his gift to Christ Church of a hand carved wooden cross. Eric bought the cross in Uganda which he visited to help with the building of one of the Watoto children's villages. The cross can now be seen fixed to the entrance door to the Chapel.

Annual General Meeting 2008 and Electoral Roll Revision.

As previously announced the 2008 Annual General Meeting will be held on Sunday 16th March 2008, immediately following the service.

Elections will take place at the AGM for the following:

1. Two Churchwardens
2. Nine Elected Council members (number subject to change after revision of Electoral Roll)
3. Two Archdeaconry Synod Representatives
4. An Independent Examiner
5. Sidesmen

To be able to vote at the AGM you must be on the Electoral Roll so if you are not currently on the Roll and you would like to be so; then please ask Don Dykes for the appropriate form.

The Council will revise the current Electoral Roll with a closing date on 25th February 2008, so if you need to apply you must do so before this date if you wish to vote at the next AGM.

If you would like further information on any of the above please contact a Churchwarden.

Visit of Bishop Geoffrey

All the preparatory work had been done, everything was ready and thanks to the efforts of the ladies (plus some male assistance) the Meeting Room looked very welcoming indeed. We now somewhat nervously awaited the arrival of Bishop Geoffrey, a wait that was extended by the news that his train had been delayed at Paris. Any nervousness swiftly dissipated once he had arrived as he quickly made us feel at ease and after a quick cup of tea it was immediately down to business. It started with a meeting with Frere Auguste at Maison Mere including a visit to the Freres Chapel then back to La Source for a formal meeting with the Churchwardens (who are in legal terms Officers of the Bishop). This was followed by a guided tour around the building and then on to dinner with Hazel, a mixture of business discussions and informality, with the Bishop telling amusing and interesting stories about his role. Then some well earned rest for the Bishop who had left home at 6.30am to travel to Brittany by train.

Sunday morning and a fairly early start, at Church by 9.00am to set out the Chapel and to check for the umpteenth time that everything that could be done had been done. The Bishop arrived at 10.00am and was straight in to further meetings followed by a lovely service at 11.00am. This was a real mixture of the pomp and ceremony you would expect with a Bishop presiding but was also touched by an informality which seemed to satisfy most people's tastes. With over 70 people present the hymns were sung loud and enthusiastically, accompanied by the wonderful music played by Joy, who was ably supported again by Arthur and Brian. The service was followed by a 'vin d'honneur' and then a special shared lunch at which over 50 people participated. The food and fellowship was excellent and gave the Bishop the opportunity to meet the congregation. He also took time to talk to us and explain much about what his role as Bishop entails, which as you might imagine, includes a great deal of travel, with him being away visiting Chaplaincies in the Diocese at least three weekends out of four. A clear message that came from the Bishop during his talk was that the Diocese is expanding and how important the impact of lay congregations is in this.

After the service it was on to St Barthelemy where Bishop Geoffrey sat in on a Christ Church Council meeting which took place at Barbara Dunfords home. After the meeting we all retired to a restaurant at Baud where we held a farewell meal for the Bishop. The following morning the Bishop had an early start with his train leaving Rennes at about 9.00am, arriving back at his office at 3.30pm where he would catch up with his staff and get back to the business of dealing with everyday matters.

The overall impressions I am left with following the visit are of a very genuine and warm man, who showed an interest in Christ Church every step of the way. There was not the slightest hint of him being bored at any time, even during a long and somewhat stodgy discussion at the Council meeting regarding the statutes for the new Association Caritative. I could not fail to be impressed with his stamina and the huge amount of travelling he does and was further impressed when a matter raised and discussed with him at the Council meeting was the subject of a series of helpful e-mails from his staff which started arriving less than two hours after his arrival back in London! Finally, and not least, I would like to say a very big thank you to all those who contributed in so many different ways to making it such a successful visit for Bishop Geoffrey.

And finally.....

'That they may be one as we are one' was Jesus' prayer to his Father on the eve of his passion. During the last century there have been many initiatives towards achieving the visible unity of the Church which has too often been torn apart by dissension and strife. Exactly 100 years ago Father Paul Wattson, an Episcopalian priest in the USA, founded the Octave (now Week) of Prayer for Christian Unity, to take place annually between January 18th and 25th. In the mid-1930s another Paul, Abbé Couturier, a priest in Lyons, gave the movement new impetus and emphasised the importance of praying for the unity of the Church 'as Christ wills it'. Exactly forty years ago, the Vatican and the World Council of Churches worked together to produce the first set of joint materials for use during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. This year's set of resources has, appropriately for the centenary year, been produced in the USA where the present-day ecumenical movement began. The theme is 'Pray without ceasing' (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

By the time you read this, Christ Church will have marked the Week of Prayer by taking part in annual ecumenical services at Ploërmel and Huelgoat with our French, and a few British, Roman Catholic friends. But the initiative does not stop there. This year for the first time we hope to have a service in the Rostrenen area some time during February. Every summer we meet at Carnac for an ecumenical event with French and English-speaking residents and holiday-makers, with representatives from the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches as well as the Eglise Réformée. This year's date is August 5th.

In addition we all come into contact in our daily lives with Christians from different traditions. Unity does not mean uniformity and we can rejoice in the rich diversity of backgrounds from which we come. In the Diocese in Europe we are in a privileged position as far as Christian unity is concerned. As members of a minority church in mainland Europe we are often dependent on the generosity of the home churches to share their facilities with us. Let

us offer them our prayerful support and together, continue to pray without ceasing for the visible unity of the Church.

Laura Hillman

Christ Church Newsletter Contributions: For the February 2008 issue, please email your contributions to Chris Wilson at wilson.christopher@orange.fr the deadline is Monday 21st January 2008. Many thanks.