



April 2005

# LA CÔTE ANGLICAN CHURCH COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

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### Message from the Chaplain

I had forgotten how green the grass gets around here! Winter dulls the memory, and it was a surprise once again when the sun shone and the rain sprinkled that the world around us returned to vibrant colour. This is the season of growth, and it is a joy to behold. I await the trees; to see those buds and leaves come through. Soon, we will be surrounded by pulsating life, and it will rejuvenate us.

Growth is a primary goal of La Côte Anglican Church. Our roots here are strong, but they are still too few to maintain our planting. We have seen many newcomers join us, and broader commitment to our work as a church community in this area. But there is more to be done. We are not yet viable.

Growth will therefore be on the agenda at our AGM. We are considering an additional string to our bow: a morning service. We have talked about this before, but it is probably time now to do something about it.

Let me open up a few issues with you. Firstly, people tell me from time to time that they would prefer a morning service. Their pattern of life on a Sunday would suit it better. Some people don't come to us at all because we meet at an inconvenient time. How much demand is there? I do not know. Some. Maybe a lot.

Secondly, we have to face the fact that we are spread over a wide area. From Morges to Thoiry; an hour's drive between the 2 ends. Some people drive well in excess of half an hour to get to us. We are well positioned. They do it. But our other activities are not always conveniently situated in the middle. Distance is a dampener on involvement.

Thirdly, we have grown into a congregation that draws from about 90 adults. People do not know each other like they used to. When we meet for a social event, or a congregational meeting, we have less of a sense that our presence there matters. We have less of a sense of community. It is not always noticeable, but we are in the process of evolution. Students of church growth suggest that a congregation in excess of 100 behaves differently, and the growth trend reaches a plateau at 150. Congregations of 50 -70 people have the intimacy and the potential for growth.

Fourthly, our resources for ministry are ever-developing. Working closely with Holy Trinity means that as Julia and Maree are ordained in summer 2006, there will be 4 of us who can offer ordained ministry. And at La Côte we have many others who are keen to offer lay ministry in all sorts of ways – more than can fit in our worship rota! We have the capacity to do more than offer one service a week.

In my business school speak, I suggest to you that this year we need to make a strategic choice: To focus on one service in one place, to establish 2 services in the one place, or to establish 2 services in 2 places.

The Chaplaincy Council suggests that we meet in neighbourhood groups to weigh these choices. We propose that with the growth in numbers that we have seen since our last neighbourhood group meetings, we organise ourselves into 5 rather than 3 geographical gatherings: France, Founex/Crans, Nyon/Prangins/Gland, Gingins/Coinsins/Genolier, Rolle/Morges.

I estimate there should be at least 15 people and up to 22 in each group. And that in itself is another good reason to meet. Maybe you are happy to leave strategic choices with others. But how about meeting with people who live nearby? People who you might not have met before? It might be that we find new opportunities for home groups in this exercise, and new friendships developing.

Ultimately a simple appraisal of distribution would suggest that we should have 3 congregations of 50 – 70 each – in France, in Gingins, and near to Rolle. That would indeed make our ministry here viable and perhaps very satisfying to those involved. But that is a lot different to how it looks now, and would involve loss as well as gain. I can see there would be reluctance to disturb a precious single gathering as we enjoy it now.

We might look around us and see beauty and energy in spring growth. But when it comes to growth in human communities, it means change. Some people will be motivated by the energy and excitement that brings. Others will feel the discomfort of change and the loss of familiarity. We do not yet have the luxury of saying we have reached our targets, and therefore we must pursue one strategy of growth or another. Our choice of strategy must take into account our unique character as a community, it must appraise opportunity, and should weigh the commitment amongst us.

Sometime soon we shall set times and dates for neighbourhood meetings. This is an important time for us and, at this stage of our growth, a good opportunity. As we embrace the coming of summer and the bounty it brings, we can put some markers down so that our future harvest is plentiful and nourishing.

*Paul Holley*

## **AGM Sunday 10th April 5pm**

Please do come if you can. It is an opportunity to take some significant steps forward in the life of our church.

## **La Côte Fondue Evening**

On Saturday, March 12 a group of 26 people set off at around 5 p.m. to brave the cold Jura mountains on a somewhat chilly, snowy and windy evening. We met up above St Cergue to start our walk through the lovely crispy snow to the chalet at La Trélasse where we were all to join one another for a fondue evening together. We walked for about half an hour through the powdery snow. The snow was heaped up along the pathway to about one metre high. The Jura mountains had not seen so much snow since 1985 and the countryside was especially lovely and inviting when covered with so much snow.



As we entered the old chalet/farmhouse around 6 p.m. we were welcomed by a lovely warm log fire. The rustic cadre was quite delightful.

We were a very mixed group, of children accompanied by their parents and some middle aged people as well as quite a number of over sixties. So it was a very inclusive group which is one of the nice aspects of Gingins where, whatever our age, we are made to feel a part of this embracing community.

Paul announced that a raffle would take place during the course of the evening to raise money for the Bethany Children's Home project in Umtata, South Africa where Joanne Holley during her gap year is taking care of orphan children, many of whom are very sick (for more information see October 2004 Newsletter). Denise distributed strips of 5 tickets for CHF 10 or CHF 2 each. Paul who confessed he had a reputation for picking his own raffle ticket numbers out of the bag excluded himself from this task on this occasion to avoid undue embarrassment though he was permitted to shake the bag which was still a little dubious since most of the winners were nevertheless oddly enough on his table! The winning tickets were pulled out of the bag by Betty Wellman who looked like someone all of us could trust. There were numerous prizes, such as chocolate, wines, etc. but still there were a couple of people - all on Paul's table, of course - who managed to win 2 prizes! The sum of CHF 187 was raised for Bethany Children's Home so a round of applause was given for this encouraging result.

It was a joyful evening with much humour and laughter where we were all able to appreciate the excellent Swiss fondue not to mention the good red and white local wine to accompany.

At the end of a thoroughly enjoyable evening we expressed a word of thanks to Gail Farrel of our Pastoral Care Group who so willingly organized this Gingins Fondue Soirée. All of us will certainly agree that the evening was a great success and should be repeated again next winter.

After the fondue we braced ourselves to face once again the walk through the crispy snow back to our cars to make our way down the icy snow-covered road towards our respective homes feeling somewhat invigorated after the mountain walk. Thank you once again Gail for the wonderful evening you so well planned for us and may we have many more such activities in the future.



*Margaret Owen*

## **Godly Play Workshop Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> April 10am – 12pm, parish room**

Godly Play is a syllabus of Sunday school teaching that is inspired by the Montessori method. It focuses on the telling of stories and encouraging children to express their thoughts about the stories in their own preferred way. Liz Andrews, a Sunday school teacher from South Manchester, is coming over especially to demonstrate. The children's work in Liz's parish has flourished since starting this method. Other churches around the UK are reporting similar success. Anyone is free to attend. Contact Paul H if you wish to come. [Check out www.godlyplay.com](http://www.godlyplay.com) for further info.

## **Anglicans and the UN in Geneva**

*In an article for chaplaincies in the Swiss archdeaconry, Revd Mike French writes:*



How can a faith-based community like the Anglican Communion hope to engage with the global political-economy and with the organizations and institutions which help to shape the international agenda? That is a question which is currently being explored by members of our Archdeaconry and other Anglicans in Geneva-based developments.

There has at times been some ambivalence about the role of religion in such debates and action. Some governments for example are wary of the role of civil-society. Realistically though it is recognized that faith—based organizations have a legitimacy in terms of the grass roots networks they represent and their presence on the ground in the hearts and lives of billions of people. Those networks can prove to be fundamental channels of provision in areas such as development, advocacy, health care and so on: witness the thousands of projects run by Anglican churches in the area of HIV/AIDS, or the effective Jubilee campaign on debt-relief which was inspired first by the churches .

For this reason, the Anglican Communion maintains a presence in the corridors of international institutions. Since the late 1980s there has been an Anglican Communion office at the UN in New York; the current Anglican Observer is the impressively named Archdeacon Taimalelagi Fagamalama Tuatagaloa-Matalavea (known to many as Archdeacon Tai). The work of that office can be found at [www.anglicancommunion.org](http://www.anglicancommunion.org)

But much that interests the Anglican Communion in terms of the international community and UN-related bodies takes place in Geneva – health, trade, human rights, economic and social issues. For this reason, there has been a developing Anglican Communion representation within the UN-umbrella there, beginning on a small scale and a voluntary basis, but by appointment of the Anglican Communion’s Secretary-General and with the encouragement of Archbishop Rowan.

What can one hope to achieve? The first priority is to be realistic and focused. The specific aim of this initiative is not so much about a praying and pastoral presence in the international organizations (that is something which is already part of the ministry of all of us). One important role lies in acting as a facilitator, linking those at the Anglican grass-roots – practitioners, experts in many fields – to counterparts, individuals and networks in the international bodies, making creative connections from which many small, positive initiatives can emerge; building understanding, informing the wider Anglican constituency, opening up ways ‘through the chinks and crevices of institutional frameworks,’ as one NGO commentator has put it.

Many of our church members throughout the Archdeaconry have considerable experience in this or similar areas. A number are already involved (Trevor and Dorothy Davies (Vevey) who have a leading role, myself, John Taylor (Geneva) and Revd Paul Holley). One current priority is to build a group of ‘Friends’ of the Representation to provide help with networks, resources and/or insights. If this sounds of interest to you do contact me, Revd Mike French, Secretary to the Anglican-UN Geneva Representation, [m.french@anglican.ch](mailto:m.french@anglican.ch), 022 779 0465.

### **April/May Services at La Côte Anglican Church**

3 <sup>rd</sup> April	Evening Prayer with Baptisms
10 <sup>th</sup> April	Holy Communion
17 <sup>th</sup> April	Evening Prayer
24 <sup>th</sup> April	Holy Communion
1 <sup>st</sup> May	Children’s Service
8 <sup>th</sup> May	Ascension Holy Communion
15 <sup>th</sup> May	Pentecost lay led service
22 <sup>nd</sup> May	Confirmation Service with Bishop Frank Sargeant
29 <sup>th</sup> May	Creative Communion

**All Sunday services are held at 4pm**

#### **NB: Parking**

It seems there are new restrictions on parking in the lane leading up to the Church. We want to keep our good relationship with the paroisse and the commune, so please would people now avoid parking there. The car park near the Post Office has ample space. Thanks.