



June 2005

# LA CÔTE ANGLICAN CHURCH COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

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### Message from the Chaplain

After spending a week in April studying the European institutions in Brussels, I followed with interest the fortunes of the new EU constitution, and in particular the consternation of the French and the Dutch. Now the electorate of both countries have rejected it, nobody quite knows what to do next. I was told in no uncertain terms by staff at the Commission that there was no plan B!

Reports from France and Holland suggest that people are not now so sure that the European Project is for them. Immigration is an issue; so is economic evolution and its impact on the social contract. When it comes down to it, they quite naturally wonder whether in 10 years time they will still have their jobs, and whether they will be paid a decent wage; whether their way of life will be the same. However, you could read the referenda results as a protest against unpopular governments. People don't often get a chance to put a spanner in the works when their elected representatives are not playing ball. The constitution, not exactly the most radical of changes to the EU, may have happened at the wrong moment and got lost amidst general popular unrest.

Europe is so much larger now. National identities have become ever smaller. In the heady days of the Benelux Franco-German axis, people in those founder countries could see the sense in cooperating. Their neighbours bordered close by and the very last thing they wanted was another war. Now that Europe stretches from Portugal to potentially Turkey, they find much less in common with their fellow European citizens. Most people, of course, are naturally conservative. They want more of the same – only better – with people they know.

The vagaries of human nature are set before us for all to see. The discomfort of moving forward has pushed the majority, it seems, into a flap. The people have spoken, and the politicians are going to have to work hard to find ways to respond.

It is interesting that the country which allows its people to speak most regularly is the one which has stayed outside of this grand scheme. Switzerland has consulted its citizens before, and is in the process of doing so again on EU bilateral agreements. The Schengen Dublin accords referendum awaits a verdict. Do the Swiss want to throw their lot in with other Europeans? Or keep themselves to themselves?

It is not for me in this article to argue the economic and political benefits for or against a closer European Union. Rather I can see this political crisis raising questions for us about the nature of leadership, particularly when it comes to the question of identity and neighbourliness. How does any organisation, global or local, seek to take steps forward in cooperation with others? This is as relevant in the church as it is in the EU. How should leaders give opportunity to members to share in the process of charting a way forward?

In La Côte we have been thinking of taking a step forward, a step that will quite likely mean more members in more congregations and therefore an evolution in our sense of identity. My experience in the neighbourhood groups so far has been overwhelmingly positive. Those present have recognised the potential and the benefit. But there in the background lies the anxiety of change. This is true for all of us I am sure, especially those who have put heart and soul into developing La Côte over many years. What will be the limits of neighbourliness as one or two new congregations develop over the coming years? Will our enthusiasm for staying together run cold?

Leaders have a tricky task. On the one hand, movement forward has to be a reflection of the will of the people. It should involve their participation in shaping that new evolution. But on the other hand leaders have to look beyond the comforts and sensitivities of their people and try to see the broad picture. What needs to happen for the ongoing health of a community: To secure and prosper its future? Leaders have to meet people's fears and anxieties and face them with realities. Bringing change to the basic relationships of a community is fraught with upset.

I have from time to time sought to discern a Christian model of leadership. The best place to start is at the last supper where Jesus washed his disciples' feet, and told them to wash each other's feet. They were to be humble and responsive to each other. Jesus' vivid action adds a moral and emotional imperative to leadership style and to some extent substance, but it does not necessarily set out a measure of the people/leader balance. As I noted in my article last month, different churches do things differently. In one church the accountability runs to a single man; a pope. In others, the members of a local church community gather and vote. We can observe pros and cons in each extreme. Anglicans, as ever, lie somewhere in the middle...

I have been so pleased to be able to work creatively in neighbourhood groups and interest groups alongside so many members of our community. It has been a refreshing method of steering a way forward, a method that I hope has balanced people/leader power. We can do it on this scale because of the strength of the relationships we have with one another. When you get to the point of leading 25 nations of 400 million people, it's no wonder a similar process is fraught with difficulty. When people don't know each other, they tend not to trust each other. When leaders are too remote, then decisions and progress are bound to be mired in suspicion.

I have no idea what awaits Europe, although I believe that there is much to gain from close neighbourliness. But I have high hopes for La Côte. The strength of relationship is there and we are able to see our way into the future with care and consensus. The way is set for an evolution in our basic network of relationships. Not an easy prospect, but nevertheless one that seems to make sense to people. Exciting times lie ahead!

*Paul Holley*

## **Pledge review results**

After our recent annual pledge review we can confirm that we have seen a modest increase in the number of pledges from 27 to 31, with pledged annual income up from CHF96,700 to CHF102,900. Our target is CHF130,000 for the year 2007 to give us a secure long term base. Thanks to those who responded this time and to all whose generosity is bringing La Côte ever closer to full viability.

## Congregational Meeting – Divonne

Friday 10<sup>th</sup> June 7.15pm for pot luck supper. 8pm onwards for meeting.

Come and join us in the superb parish rooms of the Eglise Reformée in Divonne. We shall have a chance to look around the church and to talk together about the proposal to establish a morning service there. The 5 neighbourhood groups have now met, and we are ready to take a decision.

The church and rooms adjoin the cemetery in Divonne just over the bridge from the Catholic church as you head up the hill:



## Godly Play – a new approach to Sunday Club

Children are valuable. They are also vulnerable, so their care and nurture should be a priority. The responsibility for our children's spiritual welfare is a collective venture, and providing Sunday Club activities is a vital part of enabling our young people to grow in faith, receive the love of God and experience being part of a Christian community. In September 2005, we shall be introducing a style of Sunday group work that lays emphasis as much on helping the children gain the tools for their own spiritual discovery as on particular curriculum content.

### GODLY PLAY AIMS TO:

- make religion come alive for children
- assist their spiritual development
- help Christianity become part of daily life
- make the language of religion familiar

### GODLY PLAY INVOLVES:

- ❖ telling religious stories using three dimensional materials to invite listeners into the stories and to connect the stories to their personal experience;
- ❖ moving to wider dimensions of faith with the use of open questions and a time of response to the story with a creative activity;
- ❖ allowing the children to decide for themselves on a way of responding to the story, which may be learning to re-tell the story by using games, books, maps or puzzles or by responding to the story by doing some artwork; if they choose themselves from a range of options, they are likely to choose a learning activity that suits their learning style;
- ❖ organising the group's time and space so that it models the Christian community we seek to be. The room(s) can then become a peaceful place in which the mystery of God can be experienced.

- ❖ relating to worship of the church by learning religious language and modelling each session on the Eucharist, with a Preparation (meeting and greeting), Ministry of the Word (listening and responding to a bible story), Communion (sharing food and drink) and a Blessing on Dismissal (saying goodbye).

Within the framework of Godly Play, children can find the freedom to explore, be creative and ‘play with’ the stories of God for themselves. Biblical stories provide the core of Godly Play and the materials, to a large extent, are simple, 3D and attractive. It allows children of different ages and abilities to connect with the same story and choose to respond through an activity of their own choice.

An important element of Godly Play is the Montessori tradition of education - **respect** for oneself and for each other. With Godly Play we wish to create a special place each week for children to be. It will be a new experience for some who have been used to a more lively approach in the past and a bold step of faith for our community, so please join us in prayer for this new venture. Parents may wish to seek more information via [www.godlyplay.org.uk](http://www.godlyplay.org.uk)

## Ascension Youth Weekend – cruising in the Camargue...

11 young people spent the Ascension weekend aboard 2 trusty cabin cruisers under the captaincy of Ted Talbot, 1<sup>st</sup> Mate Paul Desrosiers, chief steward Denise Holley and padre Paul Holley.

The canal du midi offered many adventures, not least an abundance of water to throw at each other...



"I thought that the cruise was really fun.

At the beginning I really had my doubts –

but by the very first night I could realise the full potential it contained. And my premonitions were correct! The boat-trip turned out to be not only really fun but also very inspiring morally.

Our conversations with Paul and the others turned out to be quite open-minded and full of interest, and they really made me think. I want to thank all the people who participated in organizing this never-to-be-forgotten trip."

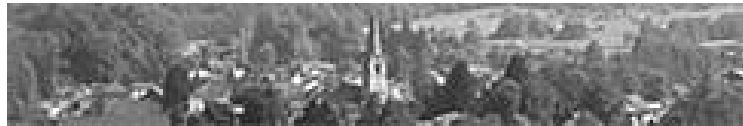
*Mike*



## Parish Weekend Oct 7-9<sup>th</sup> 2005

For Holy Trinity & La Côte  
Put it in your diary now ....

Our second ever Parish weekend, repeating last year's excellent experience  
At a new venue: La Pelouse de Bex, 1 ¼ hrs from Geneva, near Aigle (Vaud)  
Beautiful venue like last year but at an even more affordable price  
all the family and all the church family  
come for all or part of the time  
a range of accommodation to suit all budgets – reduction for children and young people  
help with transport for those who need it  
relax together: free-time, games, social activities, fresh air  
worship together, discuss together  
separate youth and children's programme  
**contact HTC church office from June 1<sup>st</sup> on [geneva-htc@anglican.ch](mailto:geneva-htc@anglican.ch) 022 731 5155 to put your name on the provisional list**



### General Synod – could you stand for election?

A new General Synod will meet for the first time in London this November. General Synod is the principal assembly of the Church of England: it is both a deliberative and a legislative body and decides on key issues in the life of the Church. It continues a tradition of Synodical government which has its origins in the medieval period. Elections are being held between July and October this year.

Have you ever considered standing as a candidate? For more information, take a look at the questions and answers set out below:

#### *How often does it meet and for how long?*

General Synod meets two or three times a year: in February (in London) for 4 or 5 days during a week, and (in York) in July for 4 or 5 days over a weekend. If required, Synod also sometimes meets in London for a shorter period in November.

#### *What is its composition?*

General Synod is elected every five years by a system of proportional representation. 467 members are made up of three Houses: Bishops, Clergy and Laity. The House of Bishops includes all diocesan bishops plus seven suffragan bishops. Both the Houses of Clergy and Laity include representatives of the armed forces, as well as members of religious communities. The House of Laity is composed chiefly of lay people elected from the dioceses.

#### *How is it elected?*

Directly elected members of the House of Clergy are elected by the licensed clergy of the diocese and directly elected members of the House of Laity by the lay Archdeaconry representatives, both as at 6.00 a.m. on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2005. Only those laity elected at AGMs held this year (by 30<sup>th</sup> April) and notified to the Diocesan Office are 'qualified electors'.

### ***Why should I stand for election?***

General Synod covers many areas of the life of the Church of England, ranging from key legislative and policy decisions, such as the ordination of women as bishops or the approval of new forms of liturgy, to more routine matters like fees. General Synod also has a strong interest in current affairs and social issues, recently debating, for example, the environment, trade justice, and higher education.

### ***Who is eligible to be a member?***

Candidates in the lay elections must be aged 18 or over, be communicant members of the Church of England and be on the electoral roll of a chaplaincy in the diocese. Candidates in the clergy elections must be ordained priest or deacon, be licensed in the diocese and not be in episcopal orders.

### ***How do I stand?***

Candidates need to be nominated and seconded by qualified electors within the nomination period set by the presiding officer, 13<sup>th</sup> July to 29<sup>th</sup> August. Nomination papers will be sent to all qualified electors in mid-July.

### ***How would I get elected?***

Once you have been nominated and the presiding officer has accepted your nomination, your name will be included as a candidate in the postal vote.

### ***What sort of people make good synod members?***

People who have an interest in both the life of the Church as a whole, as well as public issues that affect society at large, and have a strong commitment to the Church and its mission.

### ***For how long does a synod member's term of office last?***

A maximum of five years.

### ***When will the votes take place?***

Ballot papers will be issued on 5<sup>th</sup> September and must be returned by 4<sup>th</sup> October and the Count will be at 12.00 noon on Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> October

### ***How many General Synod members does the diocese have?***

In addition to the Bishop, there are places for two clergy and two lay representatives.

### ***Where can I get more information?***

Contact the Diocesan Office, or see the Church of England website at:  
<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/about/churchlawlegis/gselections>

## **June Services at La Côte Anglican Church**

5 <sup>th</sup> June	Lay led service
12 <sup>th</sup> June	Holy Communion
19 <sup>th</sup> June	Evening Prayer
26 <sup>th</sup> June	Children's service of 'holy picnic' including first communion.

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