
2021

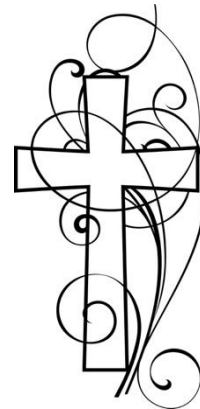
La Côte Anglican Church

Annual General Report



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Annual General Meeting 2021- Looking Back on 2020

What does it mean to be church, to be the people of God together during a pandemic? Covid 19 has forced us to re-think our answers and to come up with a renewed appreciation of the purpose and calling of a church community.

Over the last year three distinct answers have emerged:

1. Worship
2. Community
3. Outreach and service

I will use these three main areas of church life to look back and then forward.

1. Worship

During the pandemic we have discovered that our corporate worship cannot be limited to our church buildings – however treasured these are. We have come to realise that worship is not just about ME and my private needs for a spiritual “top up”. Worship is about US – as the South African approach describes: “UBUNTU” – I am because we are. We have also been reminded that worship is part of our DNA as Christians – or as the Westminster Catechism puts it (circa 1646) “The Chief End of man [and woman] is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever.”

Our worship has helped us to stay rooted and grounded in Christ’s love, even in the upheaval of circumstances all around us. Our worship has fuelled our faith and hope in the steadfast love of God for ourselves, and for our world – helping us also to keep looking outwards in loving service. As we remembered in our AGM in October 2020 we have been working out how to sing the Lord’s Song in this exile experience of Covid 19, (Psalm 137).

During 2020 we have moved from a short-term survival approach of “managing until this is over” to creating a certain level of “normality” as we have learned how to draw together in worship online. Of course, we have missed gathering in person and the incarnational aspect of our faith. We have longed to share in the earthy sacrament of bread and wine, of baptism and anointing for healing, of sharing in refreshments after the services – which all point to God’s invisible grace. However, God’s grace has abounded in new ways in our online worship and prayer. We have achieved this largely thanks to the flexibility of our community and the willingness of our church members to go on this adventure together, accepting mistakes and glitches and rejoicing in successes. A constant source of support has been Morning Prayer on zoom from 7.30-8.00 each day – bringing local and global people and situations to God in prayer and offering daily connection with one another and members of other churches.

All in all, I am full of gratitude for the journey we have shared in our worship and the way this has sustained many of us in the turmoil of this year. My special thanks go to our ministry team for their faithful and creative service throughout this season and to our Church Council who have sought to guide us in our worship, balancing safety and our general well-being. Do read these reports in more detail below.

I add here that one big bonus of our worship has been welcoming Revd Julia Chambeyron back to lead services and offer sermons and reflections throughout much of last year. She has been able to do this both in person when we met in her beautiful garden over the summer and also online with recorded services. Sadly, early in 2021 her husband Philippe suffered a stroke and Julia has stepped back to support him in his recovery. We are keeping them both in our prayers at this challenging time.



2. Community

For many of us, church is as much about community as about worship, especially living away from our homelands and wider family networks. One of the major challenges of this pandemic has been loneliness, compounded by restricted travel. So, finding ways of keeping in touch both on screen and behind the “screens” has been crucial. It is hard to measure how well we have achieved this, but I am aware of many positive connections between members of our community which have helped to alleviate isolation.

Our regular small groups which have continued to meet online have offered fellowship and spiritual growth through discussions, Bible studies and prayer together. Key festivals throughout the year have brought many of us together in celebration, for example our Gift week in June. The varied creative themes such as gardening, animals, poetry, prayer walks and pets helped our community to get to know one another and to celebrate our diverse gifts and talents. Our online Advent calendar achieved the same strengthening of bonds within our community. Other such festivals included my surprise 10th anniversary service. The clandestine preparations again brought plenty of people together behind the scenes and screens! Thank you to all of you who took part in this, particularly our La Côte Ministry Team: – to make it such a joyous occasion and one that brought laughter and refreshment to many – including me!

Please read and enjoy finding out more about our celebrations in the various reports below. Our zoom worship has brought our two congregations closer as we have all met online – from wherever we are.

Away from the screens many of our members have supported individuals with shopping, lifts in the car, phone calls, visits and meeting up safely – often outside. These initiatives have helped to lift the heaviness of isolation – especially for those living alone and those who struggle with online communication. Emily, our youth worker, has persevered together with our committed Sunday club and youth leaders to stay in touch with our children and youth and their parents – both online and where possible in person. This has been a real challenge at times with families overwhelmed by the pressures – but she and the team have persisted and been able to offer support, joy and constancy amid so much uncertainty.

Since January 2021 I have set up one afternoon per week to meet with people in an airy safe room with safety measures in place – alternating between the Divonne and Gingins parish rooms. This has given opportunity for in person one to one conversation and prayer together which people have found helpful – as have I.

3. Outreach and service

In some ways reaching out beyond our church circles and welcoming newcomers have been the most challenging in the face of lockdown. I am aware that people arriving new to the area have found it difficult to get to know others online. At times, there has been a natural tendency to hunker down and just keep going, rather than encouraging our community to look outwards. We have also missed a good number of our regular members who have opted out of our online worship, and we have been the poorer without them. On the upside, in this virtual world we have been able to connect readily with our Diocese in Europe and far wider – in worship, study and online training. This has helped us become more aware of belonging to the worldwide church and this has broadened our vision and outreach – especially in prayer.

We have also appreciated beginning to work more closely with Etienne Guilloud, Swiss pastor of Paroisse de la Dôle, for example for this year's Easter sunrise service. Equally in Divonne our interactions with Pastor Daniel Oh and Matthew Kahane have been a source of wisdom and support as we have explored the question of worshipping in person.

In addition, the presence of La Côte Church in this region offered support to the wider community in times of crisis, particularly bereavements, leading people through loss with worship services and pastoral support.

I am deeply grateful for the generous and open spirit of our community and the way we have pulled together to find our way through this Covid storm, staying faithful, hopeful, and open to the new.

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2021

Moving from a room called fear to a room called hope.

Theologian Pete Rollins describes having a hope that draws you into action, that invites you to engage actively with the world.¹ This hope requires courage, but it is also a way that we can keep learning and growing, rather than remaining passive and waiting for things to get better. We need to pray for courage to create paths that keep us moving from a room called fear to a room called hope.

At our AGM I would like us to explore the next steps for our worship and community life. In March 2021 church council member, Dr Ed Kelley, COVID Senior Advisor for WHO, and former Infection Prevention and Control lead for WHO described the virus as having a very long tail. In other words, Covid is going to be present for at least another year, affecting all in-person contact.

However, a year on since the outbreak of Covid, with vaccines being rolled out and a clearer grasp of good safety measures, I would like to gauge what percentage

¹ (Ref: Dumbo Feather, Conversations with extraordinary people, May 2018).

of our congregation would like to explore meeting again in person – and how we can manage the risk in a positive way.

We have no doubt learnt some valuable new ways of worshipping and staying connected online. Thus, going forward we will not simply “return to how things were” but seek to develop a mixed economy with in-person and virtual services – hopefully finding ways of live-streaming our worship from our church buildings.



Three initiatives to help us grow in faith and justice.

In addition to these important practical questions about church life, there are some deeper cultural issues that our Diocese is inviting us to address. These initiatives ask us to reflect deeply and critically on “the way we do things around here.” I look forward to exploring these questions to help us grow in grace, and to learn to act with more justice and mercy in our relationships with one another and our wider community.

The three initiatives are:

- a. **Setting God’s People Free** is a project by the Church of England that was started before the pandemic. It aims to enable the whole people of God to live out the Good News of Jesus confidently in all of life, Sunday to Saturday. The Swiss Archdeaconry has been piloting this initiative. It calls for two culture shifts within our local churches and within Diocesan structures. The first shift is to encourage lay people to follow Christ in whatever their walks of life – to be affirmed to live out their faith confidently wherever they are. The second shift is to recognise that we are all of equal worth in the church – both lay and ordained and equal partners in discipleship and mission. La Côte Church is making positive steps in the second shift by the wide involvement of our church members in the life of our church worship and teaching. I think we still have a long way to go to affirm all our members in their everyday faith from Sunday to Saturday.
- b. **Breathing Life** is a document produced by a working group in the Diocese in Europe to help our churches engage with the question of racial justice within our church structures and cultures.
- c. **Living in Love and Faith** is a report drawn up after wide consultation across the Church. It comprises a set of resources that deal with sensitive and complex questions of identity, relationships and sexuality. These resources will help church groups learn together safely and bravely.

Comings and Goings

During this last year we have sadly said goodbye to members of our church who have moved on to other parts of the world. Mike Oswald and his family have moved to Kuala Lumpur, Helen and Chris Harding and their children have returned to the UK and Pat and Paul Stimpson have retired to the warmer climes of Spain.

In March 2021 Machteld Kelsey, a much-loved member of our church died after eight months of decline with a brain tumour. Her funeral was a testament to her

courage, love and light, drawing together her family and many friends both in person in Gingins church and online.



We have been delighted to welcome two new babies into our midst. Maëlys, born to John and Bene Phillips on 21 January 2021 and Thomas born on 16 February 2021 to James and Adriana Reino Ryan. Our warm congratulations to both these families and our prayers for them as they start their lives together.

Revd. Canon Carolyn Cooke

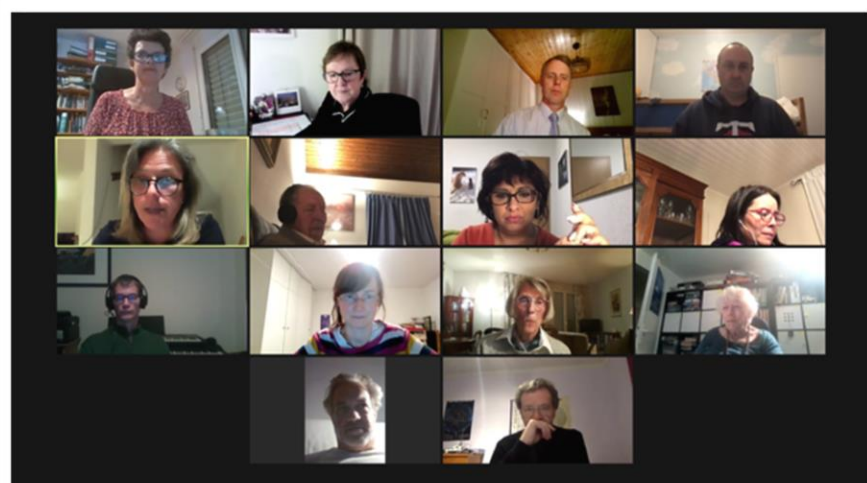
Council Report 2020-2021

The La Côte church council is the leadership body of the chaplaincy, working together with the chaplain to carry forward the worship, pastoral life and mission of the church. The current members of the council are: Carolyn Cooke (chaplain), Julia Chambeyron (assistant chaplain), Austin Ball, Liz Bramley and Dwight Moe (churchwardens), Geoff Senogles (treasurer), Trevor Davies and David Bramley (synod members), Jon Beaulieu, Louise Burrows, Richard Hawkings, Ed Kelley, Jean Mayer and Diantha Terry. Previous members Susan Passmore and Lexa Nicholson stepped down in spring 2020, Susan after many years of faithful service as council secretary. They were replaced on council by Jon Beaulieu and Helen Harding. Helen took over the role of council secretary until she returned to the UK in September 2020. Charlie Whetham also resigned at this time, and Nonalee Dong was co-opted as council secretary.

The council's discussions and priorities over the last year have been shaped by our response to the coronavirus pandemic. We have continued to meet monthly over Zoom, with more frequent meetings when necessary, to keep up with the rapidly evolving situation. When in-person activities became impossible in March 2020, we quickly identified three priorities: worship, pastoral care, and communication. A number of other initiatives had to be put on hold, e.g. the taster sessions for the Emmaus course planned for Lent 2020, the Lenten seminars (eventually held online in Lent 2021), and the strengthening of links with our host congregations in Divonne and Gingins through joint services and social activities.

Our online worship started with a mixture of live and pre-recorded services, that evolved to a weekly live Zoom service which is also recorded, streamed on YouTube and made available on the website soon afterwards. In our lengthy debates about whether and when to resume in-person activities, the council has been guided by our duty of care to the congregation, the need to comply with local Swiss and French

regulations and Diocese of Europe guidelines, as well as an awareness of the



hardships and difficulties resulting from continuing isolation, especially for our older and more vulnerable members. Due to our particular circumstances as a cross-border community that does not have its own church buildings, we have tended to adopt a more cautious

approach than many churches, but did return to outdoor in-person services over the summer, followed by a limited number of indoor services in the autumn before the second wave took hold. At the time of writing, we are planning some limited in-person gatherings over Easter, and keep the situation under review. We remain committed to offering regular Zoom worship for the duration of the pandemic, combined with in-person activities as and when conditions allow. The change of format has also prompted much reflection on what is important in worship, and has allowed old friends from all over the world to participate (e.g. at Carolyn's 10 year anniversary service in November). But we also recognise that many people find it difficult to engage with Zoom worship, finding it a poor substitute for gathering together in person.

The council has also focused on pastoral care, with initiatives to keep in contact with the most vulnerable and isolated in our community, and practical help where needed e.g. when people have been quarantined. During Advent, many people contributed to and enjoyed the 'virtual' Advent Calendar and Christmas Quiz, the 'Candles in the Dark' reflections, and the range of services with musical contributions in different styles from across the community. Our Youth Worker, Emily Reid, continues to inspire us all with her dedication to running an online children's and youth programme under difficult circumstances, together with our team of volunteer Sunday school and youth work helpers. A series of in-person youth activities on Wednesday afternoons over the summer was particularly successful and appreciated by many.

Communication over the last year has relied mainly on our revamped website, now maintained by Louise Burrows with help from her son James, and the weekly bulletins circulated by email. The council is very grateful to Louise, and to Johan Crocoll, who provides technical support for the Zoom services and much else behind the scenes.

The council remains sincerely amazed and grateful for the generosity of all our church members in supporting the church financially over the last year, through pledges, the Gift Week in June and other donations. This sustained generosity has

allowed us to keep going with confidence, as our expenditure is dominated by fixed operating costs that have not been significantly reduced during the pandemic.

Safeguarding remains a key priority, especially in these times of isolation and the increased use of online communication and social media. The council is very grateful to our Safeguarding team, Christine Warren, Cate Bichara and Liz Martinez, for their care and dedication to this role, enabling and encouraging both training and background checks for those whose roles within the church require it.

The council was delighted to learn that Louise Burrows is exploring a calling to the ordained ministry, and enthusiastically gave their support as she begins the formal process of discernment with the diocese. Looking forward, the council is also reflecting on several new initiatives from the diocese and the Church of England, on racial justice, human sexuality, and pastoral care, and how the issues they raise affect the life of our community.

The past year has brought profound challenges and changes for all of us, and the council looks forward with hope to a resumption of many church activities in a more 'normal' setting in the year to come. In the mean time, please do not hesitate to contact any member of council with your concerns or ideas.

Richard Hawkings



Worship 2020-21

La Côte Ministry Team Report 2021

Two years ago, Carolyn gathered together several congregation members to form the Ministry Team. In doing so, she was encouraging and supporting laity sharing in ministry.

As a team, we work collegially with flexibility, humour and much good will as we all seek to serve the La Côte church in several ways, through the planning of events during the liturgical year, leading services and preaching, organising the music for various events and looking after the communications within and beyond the church community.

The Covid-19 pandemic has certainly tested our flexibility. In response to the first lockdown last year, when the congregation was not allowed to meet in person, we first experimented with providing services made up of only recorded sermons and

YouTube clips of hymns. With the passing weeks, we learnt how to produce better integrated recorded services that also included self-recorded video clips of congregation members reading the lectionary scripture passages, leading intercessory prayers and singing worship songs.

When the lockdown finished, there were still restrictions regarding social distancing, and people were understandably wary of the possible health dangers of meeting in enclosed spaces. And so we organized summer Sunday afternoon services in the field adjacent the Gingsins church, and twice in the beautiful, peaceful garden of the Chambeyrons. At these outdoor services, all congregation members were masked as they sat in socially distanced family units and followed the provided order of service, which was led by members of the ministry team. And to cater for the many people who could not attend the outdoor services, we also continued with the recorded services.

By last autumn, it was evident that in-person services were still not possible. We started to experiment with Zoom services which are livestreamed on YouTube. This has allowed the congregation to meet and participate in a service in real time, to celebrate together the special seasonal services such as at Christmas and Easter, and to chat before and after the service. And for those who do not attend the live services, they are able to watch them later as they are recorded.

To diminish the impact of isolation caused by Covid restrictions, the ministry team prepared various community activities via Zoom. During spring and early summer, congregation members were able to take part in a poetry reading evening, participate in an interactive evening that revolved around cello music, send in photos of their flowering balconies and gardens, and contribute to a pet montage. And as the lectionary church year drew to a close, members of La Côte sent in a variety of creative contributions to make up an online Advent calendar. Contact within the church community is



maintained via Zoom, detailed weekly bulletins and email notices, and a regularly updated church website.

The members of the Ministry Team are Louise Burrows, Julia Chambeyron, Heidi Hawkings, Chris Potter, Betty Talbot, and John and Peta Tracey. Helen Harding was also a member of our



team until she and her family returned to the UK at the end of last summer. We miss her company and participation. We are all very grateful for the opportunity to help Carolyn and we share with the congregation the feeling of being blessed to have such an inspiring

chaplain and shepherdess. This feeling was expressed when, without telling any lies, but with much cooperative subterfuge, the ministry team and the congregation surprised Carolyn with a specially prepared Sunday service to celebrate her tenth anniversary as chaplain at La Côte.



Betty Talbot on behalf of the Ministry Team

Ecumenical Activities

Contacts with other churches of different denominations are an important part of the life of La Côte Anglican Church. Necessarily reduced this past year, these are the events and meetings that have taken place.

Let's start with a new ecumenical activity, started during lockdown:

Daily Morning Prayer on Zoom, with fellow Anglicans in Geneva, the French Protestant Church and the Old Catholics – please see separate report!

Pastorale Nyonnaise - Carolyn has attended early morning meetings on Zoom with a group of local church leaders in Nyon to share news, plan and pray together.

Joint Easter sunrise service with La Dôle parish at Gingins - Carolyn organised this with Pastor Etienne Guilloud.

Welcoming Bossey students – This year, much to our regret, we have been severely restricted in our contacts with the students at the Ecumenical Institute. However, an Anglican student in residence, ordinand Kirsty Borthwick, was grateful to have an Anglican church 'family' nearby and kept in touch with us. She and several fellow students from different churches and traditions, enthusiastically took part in our Zoom service for the **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity** in Jan. 2021!



Ignatian Spirituality (hosted by John XXIII RC parish, Geneva) - Betty Talbot was one of the facilitators of a 6-week activity for Lent and Advent 2020.

Cursillo - an ecumenical three-day 'short course in Christianity', in normal times offered twice a year by English-speaking churches in the Geneva area, has held two successful online events. Many members of La Côte have enjoyed and participated in these. Chris Talbot is the Assistant Lay Director and Betty Talbot is Editor of the newsletter 'El Arco Iris'.

Community Bible Study (Geneva) - Betty Talbot is the teaching leader of this group, whose current members are mainly drawn from Crossroads Church in Ferney and Thoiry.

Peta Tracey

Music at La Côte Church

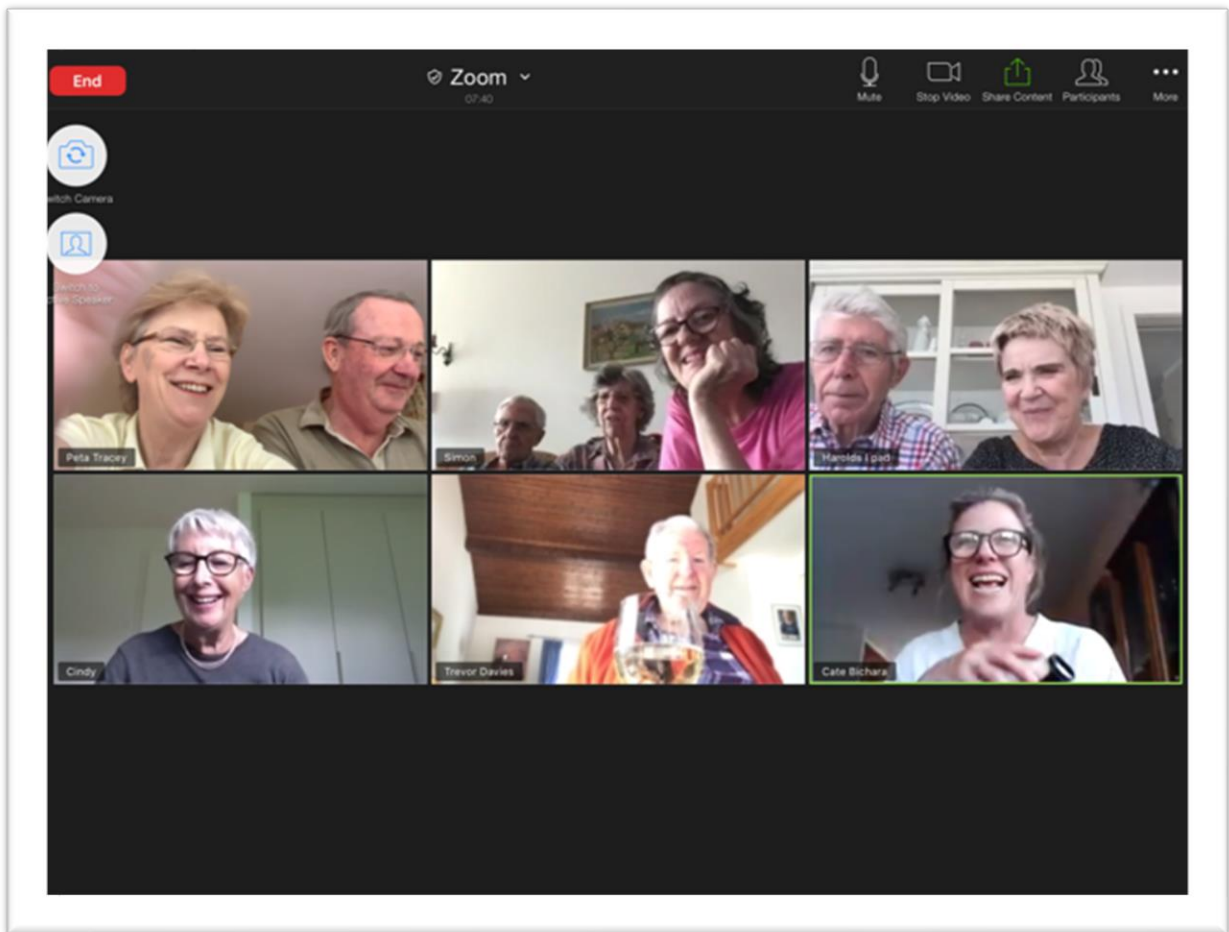
As in other areas of worship, we have had to be flexible and creative in order to keep music an integral part of our services, even though the current restrictions make this a challenge. This has meant putting on hold our usual singing together in person, including not being able to have the two song groups lead the music. Initially, we tried having various musicians/singers play "live" over Zoom for services. Unfortunately, the quality of playing in this way doesn't translate well over the computer waves.

The current arrangement is for different musicians to take turns pre-recording hymns and songs for services, which gives us the added benefit of being able to draw from a small database of home-grown music recordings. Sadly, this format has not been workable for all of our musicians, and we look forward to a time when in-person worship is again possible.

During the summer months of 2020, the temporary relaxing of restrictions allowed us to hold services in person for small gatherings, including outdoors. Although no singing was allowed, various musicians came forward to help out, including some who hadn't before been part of the music rota, and this will hopefully widen our circle of musical offerings going forward.

The use of pre-recorded music has also enabled us to continue to hear from musicians who have moved to other countries – for example, Pat Stimpson in Spain and Mike Oswald in Malaysia. We are also most grateful for regular musical contributions, both instrumental and sung, from: Jeremy and Louise Burrows; Harold and Margaret Corrigan; Alice Debell; Jane, Naomie and Louis Djaté; Nonalee Dong; Steve and Monika Rawcliffe; Jordan Staeuble; John and Peta Tracey; and Richard and Heidi Hawkings. New musicians and singers are always welcome, so please feel free to join in with this ministry of making a joyful noise!

Heidi Hawkings



Morning Prayer

Want a better way to start the day? Join Morning Prayer Group!

We know we should do physical exercises, how about a spiritual workout?

Each morning, Monday to Saturday at 7h30, start off on the right foot by tuning in virtually with 15–20 others who join Carolyn celebrating Anglican Morning Prayer. We maybe start a bit bleary-eyed but we always finish with a smile and a spring in our step.

The idea came up last year to join Carolyn in her daily spiritual exercise on Zoom. Carolyn was, as always, very welcoming and encouraged us to share in the readings, leading prayers and even leading the service (but absolutely no pressure). We include a peaceful 5 – 10 minutes of prayers for the world, the church, our communities, families and concerns. It's a great privilege and a warm, meaningful start to the day.

“What a marvellous thing this prayer group is – holding each other and the world in prayer.....”

Being online, it's developed ecumenically and regionally to regularly welcome new friends from Holy Trinity Geneva, 'Old Catholic' Church Zürich, Protestant Church ChamoniX. It's a warm open-hearted ambience where everyone's encouraged to pop in or out as they can. No stress, only a peaceful positive place to enjoy being part of 'two or three gathered together'. A good place to belong.

“I love the unconditional welcome and acceptance this group offers-whatever we are able to do- or not do- whenever.”

Why not start your day this way? It's only 30mins. To let folks get to work we start at 07h30 and finish at 08h00. For an easier entrée – maybe try Saturday's gentler 08h30/09h00 timing?

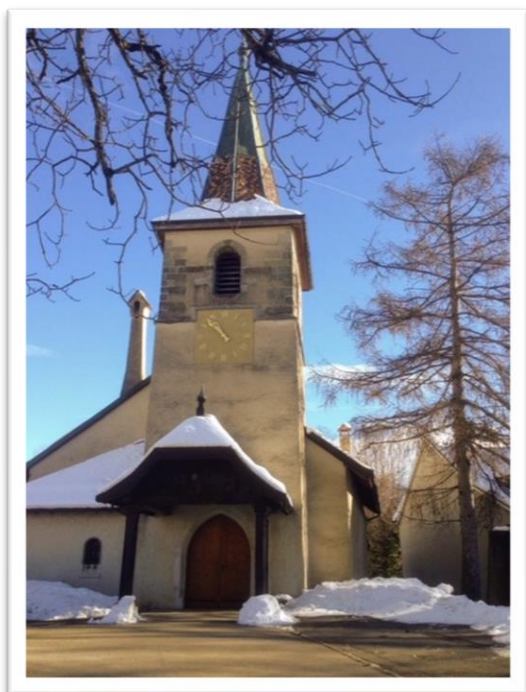
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85122087785>

You're most welcome – and if it's not for you, please know we're praying for you in Morning Prayer Group.

Louise Burrows, Peta and John Tracey

Safeguarding Report 2020-21

Safeguarding is about providing a safe Church environment. Our role is to promote and work towards keeping our church a safe place where our congregation can feel secure and cared for. In 2020 with the confirmation of a worldwide pandemic, abuse did not go away as more violence in the home was reported. It showed quite clearly that safeguarding has become even more important in a confined world when people can feel isolated. During the past year we met together 5 times on Zoom with this very much on our minds. We feel that it is important that our community should be aware that we are here for advice for anyone who is a victim, suspects or observes abuse, or is uncomfortable themselves about a relationship or situation. We are a team that cares, does not judge, and is here to listen and support.



Zoom technology and its use for church services and meetings prompted us to put together guidelines on safe and secure use of this media. This can be viewed on the Safeguarding page of the Church website <https://www.lacotechurch.ch/safeguarding/>

In October 2020 Christine and Liz participated in the second Swiss Safeguarding Officers reunion to discuss General Data Protection Rules (GDPR). Christine also took part in a European Safeguarding Officer's Conference organized by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team in March 2021. It was attended by 62 safeguarding officers from as far as Moscow to Turkey. Both these meetings afforded a great opportunity to share our experiences and work with other safeguarding officers.

We have continued to report regularly to Council on all areas and matters of safeguarding. We enjoy a close working relationship with them, supported by Dwight Moe, our Council safeguarding representative. Our thanks and appreciation to Dwight and Council.

Our objective for the next year is to actively support the Diocesan Safeguarding policy for promoting a safer church and to continue to move forward with online training courses and clearance.

Blessings,

Christine Warren, Cate Bichara and Liz Martinez

Swiss Archdeaconry Synod Report 2020-2021

The Anglican Diocese in Europe has seven archdeaconries. Switzerland is a small archdeaconry in terms of geography but it has over 20 Anglican congregations of which La Côte is one. The Swiss archdeaconry synod normally meets twice a year. However, the last time we met in person was at St Ursula's Church in Berne in January 2020. The mid-year meeting of the synod, planned in Zurich in June 2020, was postponed and then cancelled.

The 2021 meeting of the archdeaconry synod in Berne was reduced to a few hours via Zoom on 20 February. This was primarily a business meeting to approve financial documents and to receive reports from the Old Catholic Church with which the Anglicans are in communion, and reports on safeguarding and from the synod of the diocese in Europe. Carolyn Cooke showed a series of slides on the Vision for the Church of England in the 2020s presented by Bishop Stephen Cottrell at the Anglican General Synod in the UK. It called for the church to be "simpler, humbler and bolder".



We also heard progress reports on the Church of England's *Setting God's People Free*, described as an initiative "to enable the whole people of God to live out the Good News of Jesus confidently in all of life". There was a report on a document titled *Breathing*

Life dealing with racial justice; it asks questions such as "What does it mean to you to be a member of the worldwide Anglican Communion of which the vast majority of members are people of colour?"

We were introduced to another report on *Living in Love and Faith*, published last year with a foreword by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York. Its subheading is *Christian teaching and learning about identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage*. All Anglican congregations are encouraged to read and discuss it (although with over 450 pages that won't be done quickly). This led to a positive discussion in the synod but it was felt that Zoom was not a satisfactory medium for discussing sensitive topics so it was proposed to hold a further discussion when the synod is able to meet again in person.

On a brighter note, each chaplaincy represented at the synod presented short videos, images, texts and commentary showing how life in the churches had continued despite the pandemic. It shows a very positive picture of how the Anglican churches in Switzerland are dealing with the current situation.

David Bramley
Trevor Davies

Children and Youth Ministry 2020-2021

A few words to start with:

If I had to describe this year in one word? Waiting. It feels like this past year all we've done is wait. Wait for the new rules to come out, wait for results, wait to see if we can meet safely in person...

Luckily we haven't been waiting alone. This past year has been a blessing for some but harder for others.

We've seen how difficult it's been for our children and young people. They have been separated from their friends and classmates, unable to participate in their extracurricular activities and being told to stay inside with their siblings (or their parents) all the time. Birthdays have been missed, grandparents haven't been seen, parties and events haven't been had...

I thank God for technology, for the fact that I've been able to see our children and young people through a video call, receive and send texts and emails to them and to their parents. I think I've used the term "Godsend" more times this past year than in my entire (albeit not that long) lifetime.

I am deeply grateful for the support, assistance and friendship that the Children's Ministry team has given and continues to give to the children and to myself.

Children's Ministry

Our Children's Ministry team has outdone themselves this year. Nearly every Sunday after the main zoom service there is some form of Sunday Club, where we take some time to catch up with our kids, learn about a story from the bible, sing some songs and, if we're lucky, make something!

Some very interesting conversations have stemmed from our virtual Sunday Club meetings. We've been introduced to lots of pets, family members have been solicited as "go and find" objects, we've found creative ways to learn together, and we have all been so impressed by our children's wisdom and creativity in answering, and coming up with, deep questions.

During the summer, we were blessed with a freeing up of restrictions and therefore were able to meet together outside for our "Summer Splash" events. They were great fun! We followed the theme of Water and bible stories that had water as a main theme. We all got very, very wet. We learnt about Jesus and the woman at the well at Helen Harding's garden well, about Jesus' baptism by John using creative means in Crassier, revisited Jonah and the Whale under Jane Robinson's trampoline and explored Jesus calming the storm in the forest above La Rippe and even had a barbeque together. We saw well known faces and met new ones. Lots of blue snacks were consumed, some that even left lasting marks on some items of clothing that used to be white. The team had an absolute blast planning and running the program and it seems that the children (and parents) enjoyed it too!

We had hoped to pursue more in person activities, but after only one autumn event, celebrating Harvest and guardianship (and building of bird feeders and insect hotels), restrictions were tightened again and we faced the tough decision of going back online.



From that return to virtual meetings, and many conversations we decided to implement more regular All Age Worship events into our service rotations. The kids have loved being more involved in “big church” and have thrived with reading, saying prayers, making music and generally participating in so many special ways.

At the beginning of Advent, we geared up for many special events for our children’s ministry and for our church. Our All Age services of Christingle and the Crib service filled my heart with joy to see how loved our children are by our community.

Christmas 2019 I would never have guessed that a year later I would be standing in my living room explaining how to build a Christingle at home and my aspiring inner Blue Peter presenter was dancing as I uttered “Here’s one I prepared earlier”. Seeing my screen filled with smiling faces and lit Christingles makes the lockdowns and the distance (nearly) worth it. Our Christmas Eve crib service, where we learnt about some of the symbols we connect with Christmas and how we can relate them to Christ, was tasty and informative.

Since the new year, we have kept on with our Zoom Sunday Club and I pray that we keep on learning from each other and from the youngest in our community.

Special thanks to the Children’s Ministry Team: Jane, Johan, Liz, Naomi, Heidi and Louise without whom I would be totally lost.

Youth Ministry-SAS

Our SAS (ages 10+) group did our best to keep meeting during this year, we met virtually and played countless games of Kahoot!, “Go Get Me”, Pictionary and even did a “Bake-Off” (we were all winners that afternoon) as well as tackling some tough conversations and difficult feelings while being confined to our homes.

During the Summer SAS joined the Summer Splash activities and had an awful lot of (usually slightly destructive) fun. Once school started up again, some extracurriculars did too, and that made it slightly harder to find the right time to “meet” and spend some time together. We moved to every other week to give our young people some breathing space and to take the pressure off them to be online all the time. It’s been a pleasure to see them grow in faith and in life, even if it’s in a virtual manner.

Sherbert

Our Sherbert (14+) group met virtually a few times over the last year, joining in with the Area-Wide Virtual Worship zooms with Tommy & Meghan Bresson.

Staying in touch one-on-one has been the best way of communicating with our older teens, especially as, for quite a few of them, it’s a year of exams and uncertainty. I’m looking forward to a time when I can grab a coffee or a burger with them again, until then I’m glad we have social media to keep up to date with happenings.

Emily Reid

Pastoral Care 2020-2021

Support During Lockdown

Following the first abrupt lock-down of our lives in March 2020, one of our church's first priorities was to ensure that we reached out to all members of our church community, and to make sure everyone was managing with a very changed life.

Firstly Carolyn, Peta and Louise sat down and compiled a confidential list of all members of our church community, with contact details.

Carolyn then appointed two main points of contact for each side of the border. In France the contact was Juana Willumsen. In Switzerland, Diantha Terry was the contact.

Between us and several other key church members, we then either spoke to, emailed or sent messages to anyone in our community who were stuck at home, isolating, having to home school children, or may be in need of help in any way.

Thanks to the generosity of our wonderful community, we very quickly also developed a wide-ranging list of keen volunteers, offering to help with shopping, cooking meals, skype calls with youngsters for tuition and much more.

Over the next few months, we simply co-ordinated people's needs by putting them in touch with our wonderful volunteers.

From this, the list grew to include more helpers to keep in contact with members of our community and on occasion we would hold a zoom confidential catch up, to ensure we were in contact with everyone in one way or another.

This has continued through our second lock down also.

A HUGE thank you to everyone involved in giving their time, and sharing in the care of others. I feel very blessed and proud to be part of this special very giving, La Côte church family.

Diantha Terry

Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministry is a free Christian confidential listening and caring ministry in which trained "Stephen Ministers" meet one on one with people who are facing difficulties in life for which they need support, encouragement, and someone to talk to. The ministry is named after Stephen in Acts 6 who was one of those commissioned to provide practical care for those in need amongst the early Christian community, so as to free up the apostles for teaching and preaching. Stephen Ministers are trained over 20 weeks and cover topics such as listening, assertiveness, boundaries, dealing with people with depression, going through divorce, grieving etc. In addition Stephen Ministers are trained to know when a situation requires a professional referral as we are not trained counsellors. Stephen Ministers meet with their care receivers approximately for an hour a week for as long as is needed. This caring ministry originated in the USA but has been flourishing in Geneva and Pays de Gex over the last twenty years (it was brought to Crossroads first of all by Margaret Loftin) with Stephen Ministers and care receivers from almost every English speaking church community in the region.

This year (September 2020 to March 2021), because of COVID-19, the training was held via Zoom and several members of La Côte attended. Furthermore, there are a number of people within our community who have or are receiving care and Stephen Ministry remains a key resource for all to consider for themselves or for those they love who need such support. If you would like to learn more about Stephen Ministry then please contact Jeremy or Louise Burrows. If you wish to discuss receiving care and being assigned a Stephen Minister, then please talk to Carolyn.

Jeremy Burrows

Lenten Seminars March 2021

Two Lenten Seminars had been planned for Lent 2020. When the COVID lockdown came, reluctantly we postponed them for a year. But on 17 and 24 March 2021, La Côte Anglican Church hosted two seminars by Zoom, dealing with the theme of Distortion of Truth and Manipulation of Fear.

On 17 March, Chris Talbot presented and led a discussion on that theme from the perspective of political power. Drawing upon examples from political movements around the world, Chris spoke of 'alternative facts', 'fake news', the corrosion of language, the management of terror and the manipulation of fear of the 'other'. He

offered potential responses to these challenges for us all as active citizens and as well as some specifically Christian responses. The breakout groups and closing plenary deepened those discussions about options and responses.

A week later, Dr Nigel Rollins opened the same theme of Distortion of Truth and Manipulation of Fear, focussing on the pursuit of commercial profit, specifically in areas related to human health. Examining strong and detailed examples from the marketing of tobacco, soft drinks and breastmilk substitutes, Nigel explored ways in which certain corporations and industry networks have sought to manipulate and capture scientific research, civil society advocacy and governmental policy development to secure commercially desirable outcomes. He suggested ways in which people may respond through democratic initiatives, citizens' engagement, and individual action.

Each seminar was attended by approximately 50 people, both La Côte congregants and friends and others invited. There were participants from several other Anglican churches in Switzerland as well as other countries in Europe.

Each time, the discussion was rich, and people seemed to find the two seminars both challenging and encouraging. PowerPoint presentations of both seminars are available on the church's website.

Chris Talbot

Social Action Committee 2020-2021

The Social Action Committee meets a few times per year to set priorities and to follow up on any issues for the church's charitable giving. The committee is comprised of Liz Bramley, Kate Shepherd, Jon Beaulieu, and Carolyn Cooke. In addition to the CHF 5'000,- regular budget allocated to the fund, we also had an annual quiz night that generated around CHF 3'000,- which helped fund food sustainability initiatives in Ekwendeni in northern Malawi for the past four years. Unfortunately, due to COVID, this was not possible. But I do hope we can come together for another fun evening to support charitable initiatives in 2021 and identify a new project to back for a three year period.

The focus of the 2020 charitable giving was COVID 19 support at the local and international levels. We supported MSF Geneva in recognition to their commitment to supporting communities with interventions of medical, logistical and health promotion staff working in projects across cantons of Geneva and Vaud, primarily assisting vulnerable people, refugees, and the elderly. <https://www.msf.org/switzerland>

Further afield, we supported the Church Missionary Society for Lebanon. More specifically, we backed an initiative of Phil and Sylvie Good, as our CHF 1'000,- was donated to support the building of a school for 130 refugee and Bedouin children, bringing Lebanese and Syrian children back to school in the challenging times of COVID. <https://churchmissionsociety.org/people-in-mission/phil-and-sylvie-good/>

Another project we supported was to help cover school fees for struggling families at the Talitha Kumi School in Palestine. Many families had lost their income due to the pandemic, and we were able to help keep the children in school.

The charities supported by our church in 2020 are as follows:

29.09.20	CHF 200	Host Church
21.10.20	CHF 1'000	Médecins Sans Frontières, Geneva
04.11.20	€340	Les Restos du Coeur - Divonne
01.2021	CHF 500	Bishop's Advent Appeal 2020
01.2021	CHF 1'000	Church Missionary Society for Lebanon
01.2021	€1'000	Talitha Kumi School in Palestine

Jon Beaulieu



Regular Group Meetings 2020-2021



Prayer Group 2020-2021

The Prayer Group has continued to meet every other Tuesday morning over the past year, but had to switch to Zoom meetings with the Covid-19 restrictions. This proved to be quite challenging for us all! We were relieved when we were able to get together a few times in person in our garden, suitably distanced, during the summer months, but as prayers are not something you usually shout - above noise from passing traffic - this was not ideal either!

As Carolyn has said, 'prayer is at the heart of our community' and we gather in the belief - and with the experience - that prayer does make a difference. We give thanks for the many blessings and answers to prayer. We continue to pray for situations and people in need brought to us by members of our church family, who entrust them to us in confidence. This past year has brought many more requests than usual, due to Covid-19 and its knock-on effects. We usually use as a framework the Northumbria Community Morning Prayer service, with its simple Celtic liturgy, readings & short meditation. Occasionally we use a different form of service, such as the Iona liturgy for Shrove Tuesday, which involves mixing the pancake batter as you go along (this was fun on Zoom!).



We look forward greatly to being able to meet again in person - though this is when it will really hit us that our dear friend and partner in prayer, Machteld (RIP), is no longer with us. We give thanks for her faithful presence over many years.

Everyone is most welcome to join us, either as a one-off or more frequently, or to send us prayer requests.

Peta & John Tracey

Rock Solid 2020-2021

The Friday evening trilingual Bible study, now called 'Rock Solid', continued to meet in 2020 in a mixture of French, English, and Farsi. At the beginning of the year, we met once a fortnight in the Prieuré next to the Temple de Nyon and at the beginning of lockdown we met every week online. Hospitality is an important part of this group, which made the transition to meeting online difficult, although this ultimately turned out to be a blessing as we were able to keep meeting together even when some of the group left the area. During the year we looked at the parables of Jesus and followed some of the Emmaus course. In some sessions, we reflected on the passages for the following Sunday in preparation for the service and in Advent some sessions were based on the 'Candle in the dark' reflective meditations. We managed to meet socially distanced outside for a couple of sessions in the summer. The group provides an important source of encouragement and solidarity.

Louise Burrows



Coffee, Cake and Catchup 2020-2021

CCC continues to be an anchor amongst the stormy times of Covid. During Lent last year we embarked on the preparation for the Emmaus Course and it was very good to walk together as a small group of disciples (disciplettes!?) at this unnerving time.

Since lockdown last year we have mostly met online on Friday mornings, weekly rather than fortnightly by popular request. However we did have interludes of meeting in person. Two of the highlights of our year have (amazingly) been a weekend summer retreat in the Portes de Soleil for our annual CCC (PPP, Prosecco & Prayer party or should it be Prayer & Prosecco!!?). Many of our group also took part in the September ESCA walk for Cancer. We called ourselves the CCC Caribous, the Caribou being the animal that migrates the furthest distance in the world. What a joyous occasion to be able to meet together for so many outdoor walks and coffees (and we did pretty well too).



We have continued to base our meetings on a variety of resources. Since the summer we have been working our way through 'An Altar in the World' by Barbara Brown Taylor. This is one of Julia Chambeyron's favourite books and we were very blessed that she volunteered to do audio snippets for us to help us with our studies. Each chapter has a theme eg 'The practice of

encountering others' or 'the practice of feeling pain...'. We had a break from the book over the Christmas period to follow the 'Candles in the Dark' series of meditations by David Adam, again very powerful and enriching using the practice of candles at this poignant time of isolation from each other. Looking ahead to September 2021 we may go on to look at the Living in Love & Faith course by the Church of England.



We have had some sad departures, notably Helen with the Harding family leaving but also new arrivals to the group such as Muriel and Nonalee and with Julia participating. What a joy. We really feel like a blessed and close-knit bunch of women, but always open to newcomers and willing and able to share our highs and lows.

‘Sisters (and brothers)...I do not consider myself YET to have taken hold of it, but one thing I do. Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead...I press ON towards the prize in Christ Jesus!’

Alice Debell and the CCC Group

Tuesday Bible Study 2020-2021

The Bible study has continued to meet during the past year of restrictions thanks to the use of Zoom technology. Our numbers have varied throughout the year but we have around eight regular members.

We continued our study with the overview of the gospel of Matthew during the summer of 2020 with a break in August. In the Autumn we turned our attention to the Old Testament addressing the apparent differences and contradictions. We learnt how to interpret the OT from the viewpoint of the New and through the eyes of Jesus and the early church members. We experienced a freedom of discussion that was liberating and exciting despite differences of opinion. We have enjoyed listening to each other's experiences of living the life of a Christian in the 21st century and the relevance of the Bible to our present day lives.

We are ecumenical in our approach and enjoy the differences of approach and we welcome new members, so if you think you might like to share in this sort of adventure you would be most welcome. We meet on alternative Tuesday mornings from 0930 to 1100hrs by zoom, so please get in touch with me (daviest@bluewin.ch)!

Trevor Davies

La Côte Blokes 2020-2021

While the magnificent "haut cuisine" is a major attraction, meeting together to talk openly as a group of men is what makes the Blokes' Dinners valued. Like so much else in 2020, this was hard to do. We met in limited numbers in the Prieuré when able. We were also hosted in the homes (and garden) of some members which was very special.



Never afraid to try the unthinkable, we had a wonderful evening, led by Chris's daughter, Viv Talbot on the subject of unconscious bias. Never say we are not afraid to try new things.

On the subject of firsts, another memorable moment for me included presenting sous vide duck breast to an external guest speaker who happened to be vegetarian!

Discussion topics included alternative lifestyles, men & mental health and leadership in times of COVID.

Like everyone, we look forward to picking up the pace again later this year.

David Cooke

Thursday Space 2020-2021

Thursday Space has continued to meet remotely on Thursday evenings. Some of the original members have found that they are "Zoomed-out" by the time Thursday evening rolls around but others have appreciated the opportunity to check in for an hour or so for a chat, some discussion around themes or questions, and evening prayer. We are looking forward to being able to meet again in person, maybe after the summer.

Chris Potter