



ANNUAL REPORT to LA CÔTE AGM 2017



Rivière de la Versioix, Divonne-les-Bains, France

**Christian communities in
Gingins and Divonne**

www.lacotechurch.ch

Chaplain's Overview



At La Côte Anglican Church, we are committed to growing together in love for God and for our neighbour. As I look back over this last year I am full of thanksgiving for the many people who gave of their time, gifts, energy, and love to build up the body of Christ at La Côte and out into this region. Our annual report is an opportunity to honour all of you who have played your part over this last year and to say thank you. Last year at our AGM we committed to consolidating our two strategic priorities: developing our Children and Youth programme and our Presence in the region.

You will see from the rest of this Report how these priorities have taken shape in numerous ways. In addition, we undertook this last year to focus on our discipleship, as a cross-cutting priority, touching on many aspects of our faith. As Julia, our Assistant Chaplain, pointed out at the last AGM, discipleship also has a practical side, as we offer our time, talents and gifts to the running of our church. In addition we held a much appreciated Archdeaconry Training day on Discipleship in Nyon, so that our Church family had easy access to it. Special thanks to John and Peta Tracey for hosting our speaker, Bishop John Pritchard, and to Liz Bramley who organised this day locally. We also opted for our Bossey Community Day to focus on Discipleship. We put on a “Walk through the Bible” event to help us view the bigger picture of the New Testament, setting the life of Jesus in a geographical and chronological framework.

In terms of practical roles and leadership, I would like to say a big thank you to all who help to lead and host small groups across the chaplaincy, offering support, prayer and learning for many of our church. We have also had some church members step into new roles and this is an opportunity to express our thanks and support for them.

Managing our address list, as well as sending out the weekly bulletin, Bev Espesandin has taken on the role. Her administrative help is invaluable.

Safeguarding: last year we said good bye to Katharine Minton and to Mollie Lufkin, who had worked hard on our Safeguarding Protocol. In February 2017, three of our church members stepped forward to form a safeguarding team for La Côte Church: Cassie Whetham, Catherine Croccoll and Christine Warren. We thank them for their work and commitment to make our church a safe place for all. There will be an updated Protocol in place over the coming months which may well lead to a renewal of safeguarding checks for many of our church members in various roles.

Council: I would like to thank our Church Council for all the work they do both behind the scenes and as we meet to reflect on and plan for the life of our church. We have particularly focussed this year on how to manage our finances, as Craig Thompson stepped down from the role of Treasurer. I would like to thank the members of our Finance sub-group who have worked hard to move us on to enlisting a local accountancy firm in Nyon. Our special thanks go to Geoff Senogles who has taken on the role of Church Treasurer. Although much of the book-keeping has been



outsourced, Geoff is still regularly involved in financial decision-making, and communication. Our thanks also go to Mark Warren for his ongoing work as our pledge administrator. I also take this opportunity to express our gratitude to Mike Gunton for his generosity in auditing our accounts.

Role of Council Secretary: we are profoundly grateful to Val Geschonke who has been Secretary to the Church council for thirteen years now. Val has worked tirelessly in this role, preparing our AGM reports and our monthly Council minutes, and liaising with the Diocesan office in London. Val would like to step back from this role so she can concentrate more on the communications aspect of the church. Thus we are looking for someone suitable to take her place.

Communications: we have continued this year to appreciate Christina Geschonke who ably manages our website. I would like to thank those in our Church who have contributed to our communications, for example by writing articles for the Newsletter, or to send to the Diocese. Our thanks also go to Peta Tracey, for introducing us to Twitter, and to Lexa Nicholson for producing new publicity for Welcome and for Stewardship.

Social Action: with respect to our support further afield, we have been pleased to develop a new link, in partnership with the Scottish Church in Geneva, to support the Ekwendeni Hospital HIV / AIDS project in Malawi. We have committed for the next three years to send funds for the youth resource centre working with those affected by



Aids. Our thanks go to our Social action team who have set up this link and continue to support it. There is scope to build more of a partnership with the Malawian project, if there is an interest among those in our church to do so. Special thanks go to Liz and David Bramley and all who helped to make the annual Quiz Night such a success, raising funds to send to Malawi.

Closer to home, a number of our church have continued to team up with local churches and volunteers to support refugees and asylum seekers. This has been a rewarding and humbling experience for many. Work with the migrant population is always changing as it relies on local government policies. One positive development has been to deliver training for job applications and interviews, set up by Joy and Duane Poppe, and conducted by Vivienne and Chris Talbot, with much volunteer back up. A system of one on one mentoring may well be a positive way forward and we are exploring how we might work in partnership with the local Swiss volunteers. Special thanks also go to Andrea Goovaerts who has taken over the coordination of the English conversation class with asylum seekers, drawing in a wide range of local volunteers. Equally in the Divonne area, the congregation has been supporting a local charity working to integrate refugees and another initiative to support families based near Geneva airport.

As I reflect on the year, I am once again grateful to share leadership with Julia. Although at times ill-health has been a challenge for her, she has consistently given of herself in matters of leadership, spiritual wisdom, preaching and pastoral care. In particular, she has nurtured those in the Divonne congregation and facilitated special La Côte events such as the Summer Garden party and the Lenten Seminars. I am thankful for the way we can share and consult each other as we seek to lead La Côte Church, learning together and supporting each other in the ups and downs of life and ministry. This has also been the case with Calen Gayle, our Youth Leader. I value his faith-filled and enthusiastic commitment to our youth and children, and to our church community in general, not to mention his inspiring musicality. We are also very glad to welcome Betty Talbot, who joined us in September 2016 with her husband Chris. Alison Speed is spending six months with us as an intern with the Church of England Ministry Experience Scheme, until June 2017. We are most thankful for their contribution and leadership in different aspects of church life.



Pastoral care: Julia and I are aware that much pastoral care goes on quietly and unobtrusively when different members of our church community need it. We are grateful for those of you who look out for one another and sometimes coordinate the care of individuals in our midst. We give thanks too, for our prayer group and those who offer prayer after church services. If anyone would like to be involved in this important area of our church life, please let Julia or Carolyn know.

Joint Chaplaincy Worship: Divonne and Gingins congregations came together in worship on 15 June 2016 in Crassier to celebrate Pentecost and the life of our chaplaincy with a **Gift Day**. This joyful service was a new venture, led in worship by members of the Song Groups of both congregations. We had time to prayerfully reflect on our overall giving and what is needed to sustain the life and mission of the

Church. Through very generous giving the church raised SFr.19'000, which went a long way to offset the projected deficit for the year.

LOOKING FORWARDS

Worship as our priority for 2017.

This coming year, we will turn our focus and energies to our worship. Surely this stands at the heart of who we are as a community and as individuals: a people and a community who seek to reverence the living God in worship. Without this self-giving to God, as Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, we would be like any other social club. Our worship should kindle into flames our love for God and for our neighbour and strengthen and guide us as we head back out into the world to serve Him. This is our distinctive calling over and above everything else. I look forward to exploring this calling with you at our AGM and looking for ways of enriching our approach and understanding of worship through the coming year.

The aim of the AGM will be to step back from our weekly worship and to ask what underpins worship and how do we approach it, rather than focussing on the detail of what traditions we prefer. Let us be open to learn and grow together.

Carolyn

Gingins Worship

To all on our worship rota, I would like to start by saying a general word of thanks to all of you on our extensive worship rota who support us week in week out in leading worship. Each Sunday is very much a “team effort” to support one another as we gather to turn our hearts and minds to God in worship. I would like to say a special thankyou to Bev, who helps me put the rota together and calmly pulls together all the different strands to make a coherent whole! **To all who set up and clear up,** this is also an opportunity to say a heartfelt thank you to those of you who may not feature on the rota but help each week behind the scenes, providing for our communion with wafers, wine, linen and candles, setting up for communion and for our worship, fixing up our power point, generally helping with the smooth running of each service and clearing away at the end. For all such behind the scenes service our thanks go to Liz Bramley, Arline and Robert Simon, Anne Dyer and Machteld Kelsey.

To our musicians, I would also like to take this opportunity to warmly thank you all for the music you offer each week on organ, keyboard, flute, guitar, bass, drums and violin!



We have such talented people and are blessed by your gifts that enable us to worship together. My warm thanks also go to those who lead us in singing, especially our monthly song group led by Harold and Margaret Corrigan.

To worship leaders, we would like to convey our appreciation of those who have continued to ably lead us, together with new people stepping forward to explore this ministry. Thank you to the team who have offered lay-led services and supported the clergy in leading worship: namely John and Peta Tracey, Chris Potter, Liz Bramley, Funke Stauble, Alice Debell and Betty Talbot.

To our All Age youth band, we have also been developing the All Age Worship to have more up front leadership by youth and children, both in terms of the music and participation more fully in leading worship. These services happen approximately once a month with the support of adult musicians working with youth and their parents. Special thanks go to Calen Gayle, Chris Potter and Richard Hawkings for heading this new venture.

To those who preach and offer reflections in addition to preaching and teaching from Carolyn and Julia, we have been well served by members of our church throughout the year. My warm thanks go especially to Chris Potter, Betty Talbot, David Bramley and John Tracey. We were delighted to welcome Rt. Revd John Pritchard to preach and preside at our service on 9 October 2016.

On balance through the year, we have followed the lectionary themes, but during the summer months we turned our attention to the theme of “**Sharing our Christian faith,**” which linked in with the Diocesan Strategy.

MORE HIGHLIGHTS IN GINGINS WORSHIP

Baptisms: we have had the joy of welcoming a number of little ones, children and some adults into our church through baptism this year. Last spring and summer 2016 we welcomed:

Nicolas De Loriol-Ryssel	10 April
Ella and Lukas Sayler	8 May
Isabella Clarke	10 July

On 5 February 2017, we held a joyful baptism service for a group of children who are preparing to receive Holy Communion. Since they first had to be baptised in order to be welcomed to the Lord’s Table, Calen Gayle, Alison Speed and Carolyn led a Saturday baptism workshop for the children and their parents to explore the service and symbols of baptism. On 5 February, we gathered to welcome them into the church: nine of the children chose to make their baptismal promises themselves and parents spoke on behalf of three of the younger children.



Adult baptisms: it has been a privilege to welcome adults into our church community through baptism. During the baptism service, our refugee friends from Iran bore witness to the warm welcome they had experienced at La Côte church. Through attending services and small group preparation they had come to make a commitment to the Christian faith which they wanted to express publicly in baptism. Shamal was baptised on 16 October. Omid and Sadiq were baptised on 26 February 2017. All three of them took part in a series

of preparation classes over several months, together with regular attendance at Gingins services. It has been a blessing to have them among us and we have much to learn from their courage, hope and resilience. Thank you to those of you who helped to prepare them for this step: Surush, Duane Poppe, Travis Brown, David Bramley, Alison Speed and Andrea Goovaerts.



Celebration! We like to celebrate the joys of life and were delighted to mark the 60th Wedding anniversary for Arline and Robert Simon on New Year's day 2017 with special prayers in church followed by a celebration cake and bubbly.

Refreshments Our thanks go to Gillian Bollingbroke who has taken on organising the refreshments rota and filling in when there are gaps! Thank you to all of you who help with refreshments, a much valued part of our community life. Of course, we are also grateful to Sabine Shabetai for delicious, decorative cakes for many a thanksgiving moment!

Harvest Thanksgiving: Our harvest theme this year was "Seed time and Harvest" with a focus on the farming taking place in the Malawi project we are supporting as a chaplaincy and the funds we have sent to them to buy grain and seed.

Creation Time: a service with inspiring insights from Mark Aldrich, focussing on the need for creation and re-creation for ourselves and planet earth.

Welcome to Betty and Chris Talbot: Betty in her role as Reader will preach and lead worship in both Gingins and Divonne congregations. We welcome her together with her husband, Chris, and hope and pray they will find blessing sharing in La Côte Church life.

Goodbyes: sadly last summer, we lost Winnifred Elderfield, a much loved member of our church community, who died at the age of 96. Gingins church was packed for her memorial service in July. We were also sad to say good bye to those who left Switzerland.

Helen and Warwick Forster and their children Grace and Max moved back to Australia, and Janet Sidney returned to UK. We give thanks to God for the time they have shared in our church life and gave generously of themselves. We wish them Godspeed, and we pray that they will know his rich blessing and faithful love as they seek to settle and serve him in new settings.

ECUMENICAL WORSHIP

Sunrise service on Easter Day with our host Swiss Reformed church, followed by breakfast together.

Jeûne Fédéral Service in Bonmont: a moment of celebration and welcome to all the local churches in the Abbé de Bonmont.



Bossey Institute Students: welcome to the group following a programme of ecumenical study at the nearby Château de Bossey. Special thanks to Margaret Owen for acting as the link to our church, organising transport and their welcome.

Links with the Pastorale Nyonnaise group of churches. Our Church took part in two ecumenical services: on the lake front in Nyon on 31 July 2016 to celebrate Swiss National Day and on 15 January 2017 in the Temple de Nyon to mark the Week of prayer for Christian Unity, at which Carolyn preached on the theme of Reconciliation.

Carolyn

Gingins Sunday Club OVER 11 GROUP

We have seen a dramatic rise in weekly attendance, a heartening trend in our youth activities generally. Sunday Club has generally followed the lectionary, using the "Roots" curriculum, alternating with the course on preparation for communion, which will be completed in the coming months. We are embarking on a journey to the Lord's Table. Over the course of several weeks, younger and older children have been introduced to the mystery of the faith and the meal that reminds us most closely of this and I am looking forward to the upcoming term. I would also like to thank members of our congregation who have continued to support this group sharing leadership with me, namely Dan and Kate Weston and Geoff and Sharon Senogles. We are sad to lose from this leadership team Warwick and Helen Foster but are grateful to them for all they shared with our young people.

Thanks especially to those who have been a part of our burgeoning youth band, both from Gingins and Divonne, especially Richard Hawkins and Jane Djate, who help our young people to play and sing with confidence as they lead the congregation in musical worship. Special congratulations to our twelve newest baptism recipients. I would like to thank parents for supporting this work in the lives of their youngsters, and for involving me in the same. Thanks also to **Ali Speed**, (right) our Diocesan intern, who has been with us from January 2017. She has helped on the joint ski retreat, contributed to discussions with young people in our confirmation group, led one of the sessions, and has done a fabulous job working with the baptismal candidates as well as designing the baptism service with the Chaplain.



Lastly, we are looking for a name that brings Gingins Sunday Club alive, so if you have a great suggestion, please let us know!

Calen Gayle, La Côte Youth Leader

UNDER 11 GROUP

The Sunday Club has continued to be well supported by children of all ages from two and a half to 17. The six to ten year olds have been following the Roots programme



which follows the church calendar. We have been reading a Gospel passage, talking about it and responding to it through play and crafts.

This year over twenty children in two groups from the age of 6 and upwards followed the Welcome to the Lord's table first Communion preparation course. Naomi Grobéty and

myself take the under 11 group. Four of these sessions were completed before Christmas, marked by a special mention in the November All Age service. In the next few months there will be a five more sessions with a special first Communion service in early June when those over eight can take Communion if they wish. All children will be presented with bibles as recognition of their journey.

The groups could not continue without the support of the whole Church community. In particular, we would like to thank the team of fantastic volunteer leaders; Alice Debell, Kate Shepherd, Naomi Groberty, Tania Ahlstrom and Mary Gosal. We have really benefited from Calen's support this year and we are looking forward to working with Alison Speed.

Jane Robinson

Assistant Chaplain's report WORSHIP IN DIVONNE

We have had another year of varied and rich worship. As ever, we are extremely grateful to all the musicians who enhance services so much by offering us opportunities to draw closer to God through music and song. We are also grateful to all those who give us food for thought in their reflections, sharing their insights and knowledge: Betty Talbot, Nigel Rollins, Sarah French, Mike French, Richard Hawkins and Maree Wilson. Memorable moments included:



Good Friday and the reading of the Passion Narrative
Easter Sunday – 'Whose voice was that?' with musical contributions from our own youth and children

On 24 July Carolyn led a family service which included giving thanks for Arthur and Susan Watts. The theme was 'Getting it right!'

On 28 August we celebrated the new term with a Rentrée Family Communion – 'Who's the most important?'

Harvest Thanksgiving on 25th September, when Sarah French explored with us the theme of 'God's creation'.

Our Christmas Readings and Carols by Candle-light took place on 18 December and last year included meditations from the different characters of the nativity story. Our song group led us magnificently, as usual!

On Christmas Day, Carolyn led a Family Communion service – with a very full church – taking the theme of Christmas cards and messages.

On 29 January, our reader Betty Talbot led a Candlemas service, bringing to an end the Christmas and Epiphany seasons.



Highlights this past year,:

Thanksgiving for Izabella Rose Selby
Nativity Play 'The Inn' written by
Fiona Ball 11 December 2016
Baptism of Tobias Ives on 9 October
2016

Fundraising and social events

Musical Garden Party, 2nd July 2016
Christmas lunch 11th December 2016

Ecumenical news

This year we signed a new agreement with our hosts, the Eglise Protestante Unie de France, covering the use of the rooms, security, practical issues and contribution to costs. For the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, some of our members attended an ecumenical service in the Roman Catholic Church in Ferney. Julia prepared a sermon on the theme of reconciliation but was recovering from flu at that time, and it was ably delivered Daphne Minchin, of Crossroads Church.

Julia

Divonne groups for children

Crèche welcomes 5 children and is led by Katie and Jessica. They have explored themes of blessing, kindness and sharing. The children love singing songs!

7-10 AGE GROUP

In Spring 2016, all the children in this age group took part in the Welcome to the Lord's Table communion preparation course.





The course was coordinated by Mollie Lufkin, with the help of Andrea Goovaerts, Heidi Hawkings and Liz Martinez. On 12 June, Emma and Tim Illig, Arabella and Thomas Ives, and Alice and Thomas Moe received their First Communion. Over many years, Mollie led this children's group with great dedication until her return to the UK. In the Autumn, the group carried on using the Roots material, which follows the lectionary readings. This involves not only a Bible lesson, but also

an activity related to the lesson as well as a time for worship and prayer. There are currently between 4 and 6 children attending the sessions, which are led by Susan Werkhoven, Liz Martinez and Heidi Hawkings. In June, we were sorry to bid farewell to Mollie, but wished her the very best for the future. We were also sorry to see the Illig family depart for the US and are pleased to have good news from them, and from Mollie from time to time.

11-13 AGE GROUP AND CHATFAITH

It has been a privilege to share time with the young people in this group, listening to them as they deepen their faith in prayer, following our fortnightly sessions at Divonne. Ed Kelley and I go along with a planned conversation theme based on a Bible passage, ideas and songs, promoting questions and hearing their responses from the point of view of their refreshing honesty. Topics often instigated by the young people themselves and have included:

The role of Christianity in the formation of modern western culture
The mystery of trust in an invisible God
The quizzical Christmas story and how we tell it
Witnessing amongst peers, conversations on religion in schools
What is repentance?



Families with youngsters aged 10 and upward are invited to bring them along. Some of these kids ask questions that can only be answered from a little bit of careful Bible reading. They want to see God at work. We hope for their increased understanding of God's word, and of the positive contribution of their faith to broader society.

Calen Gayle

Youth Work Report

In this third year as youth leader at La Côte, I have come to know the children of our churches through our ministry to the various groups **SAS**, (Special Activities Scene) for 10-14 year olds, **Sherbert** for 14-18 year olds, as well as the older teens at Gingins, and **Chatfaith**, a similar discipleship programme for older teens in our Divonne based congregation.

Sherbert These are bright young people ranging from 14 - 18, based in Switzerland and France. We convene once a fortnight and want to learn what makes us tick as Christians. The group averages ten on most evenings, meeting either in Divonne or in Nyon at the Fraternelle offices. Our conversations have taken us through a little theology, the purpose of prayer, and now are broaching topics of concern in daily life: studies and stress, science and faith, interreligious dialogue. In addition, the students learn about community building and enjoy games and fun provided by the leaders and students. I am pleased to see newcomers to the group who joined the inter-church bike trip last autumn and are following the confirmation course. A youth service is planned for this coming summer, as well as the confirmation course for those having attended so far. Many thanks to all the volunteers who contributed to these events. We encourage those with interested young people to contact either Calen Gayle or Revd. Carolyn Cooke for the chance to get involved and upcoming dates.



SAS We have typically 6 to 8 youngsters in fortnightly attendance at this group, including some non-members of our or any church, who are invited by our young people. The group continues to grow and parents from the regions around Divonne and Gingins, ferry their children to the houses of the Bolan-Campbells or Ted Talbot for games, food (pizza as standard with a side of nuggets) and fellowship. Discussions take place in a Christian context and this year's theme is "the extraordinary ordinary". We have been introduced to the Little Rock 9, to Syrian refugees under ten showing the world their stories, and the fact that one can change the world regardless of age or nationality. Many thanks are especially due to Scott, Nancy, and Ted, as well as our administrative webmaster Johan Crocoll, for making sure everyone gets the invitations, and also for hosting evenings on occasion. We could not do it without you!

Calen Gayle, La Côte Youth Leader

Chaplaincy Council Report

The Chaplaincy Council will have held 10 meetings in the period between the 2016 and 2017 AGM). In 2016, the Council re-elected Dwight Moe Lay Vice-Chairman and Val Geschonke Secretary to the Chaplaincy Council. Craig Thompson (non Council member) was appointed Church Treasurer until the end of 2016.

Gift Day In order to meet the Church's income requirements, the Council decided on a Gift day as an alternative to the Autumn Fair as a main fundraiser for 2016. This was seen as a day of reflection on how our stewardship and support could find expression and resource the work of the church. The results of the Gift Day were impressive, amounting to over SFr.13,000. and indicated that virtually every family in the community had contributed.

Treasurer Following Craig Thompson's planned retirement as Church Treasurer at the end of 2016, efforts were made find a new Treasurer from among the members of the community. These did not proved fruitful and the Council was therefore obliged to look for an alternative solution. Contact was made with a local accountancy firm for a quotation for out-sourcing until a new honorary Treasurer could be found. Subsequently, the Council unanimously agreed to pursue this option. The Diocese in Europe confirmed that the work of the Treasurer could be outsourced. However, a member of the Council should be the nominal Treasurer who would liaise with the Diocese. Council member, Geoff Senogles, agreed to take on this role.

Church Charity Project Jon Beaulieu of the Social Action team was invited to address the Council and give a presentation on a charity project in Malawi. The Council voted to adopt The Ekwendeni Hospital HIV/AIDS programme in Malawi as the main charity supported by the Church in collaboration with the Scottish Church. La Côte's contribution would be SFr.4,000.- per year for three years from the regular Budget

Refugee Support Proposal The Council looked at a document setting out a "*Church Action Plan* for work with refugees", (later changed to *Framework*) drafted by a sub-group of the Social Action team, in response to Chris Talbot's Lenten Seminar on the Refugee Crisis in Europe. Following this, Hannah Elwyn, a Director of Refugee Support Network in UK, was invited to speak in September to those involved in the local support of refugees to run two capacity building workshops. Council noted that the revised document showed well what individuals were doing and was supportive of the involvement of members of our Church with this community.

Ministry and Vocations in the Diocese: The Council approved the placement of an intern in 2016-17 under the Church of England Ministry Experience Scheme, set up for young people wanting to explore ordination. The Diocese in Europe was looking to expand to Geneva and La Côte had been approved as a possible place for interns as well as Holy Trinity and WCC. Alison Speed joined us at La Côte in January 2017.

Review of Church priorities The Council looked at the Chaplain's document entitled: "Leadership Overview for La Côte Anglican Church" in the light of the Diocesan Strategy and the Church's mission statement. This strategy emerged from the grass roots, covering the main areas of focus of people across the Diocese. Members noted that in our community there was a connection with the strategy and our mission statement reflected this.

Finances The finance group met at the end of 2016 to discuss year-end results and the 2017 Budget. These was approved by the Council at its February 2017 meeting. A deficit was predicted, due to reduced expected income, especially from pledges. This

will prove a challenge. SFr.20,000.- is budgeted for fundraising from a Gift Day. in 2017 Total fixed costs stood at about SFr.220,000.- The Council decided to produce a "welcome package" and improved information about pledging and other ways to support the Church. Financial contributions towards Church expenses were important, but Council also recognized the effort everyone made in support of worship, mission, outreach, care of people within the community and outside it, discipleship and nurture of our young children, and our older youth. The Church ran as it did because members generously gave their time and talents.

Val Geschonke, Secretary to the Chaplaincy Council

Swiss Archdeaconry Synod Report

The Archdeaconry Synod takes place twice a year: in February and in June. La Côte's Synod Representatives were Trevor Davies and Val Geschonke. In 2017, elections will be held in chaplaincies for Representatives to serve for a new three-year period.

The 2016 summer Archdeaconry Synod was held on 25 June at Holy Trinity, Geneva. Following this, the Swiss Archdeacon, Peter Potter, took retirement. We were sorry to lose him, but welcomed Adèle Kelham who succeeded him. The main item on the agenda was discussion of the Diocesan Strategy. Bishop Robert, who attended the meeting, encouraged all archdeaconries and chaplaincies in the Diocese to focus on this. Individually and in groups participants thought how the themes had been experienced in chaplaincies, or if they had seen them working elsewhere. This was a valuable exercise, and it is important to remember that the implementation of this strategy is not imposed from above. It comes from the grass roots, the Christian community. Finally, the Bishop spoke about the implications of "*Brexit*". This could pose several problems for the Diocese in Europe: recruitment, residency rights, pensions etc.

Mary Talbot and Nick Leaver, our two Diocesan Synod representatives reported on the Diocesan Synod, particularly with respect to migration. It is still surprising how little is known about the Diocese in Europe outside of Europe. Our Chaplain, Carolyn Cooke, spoke about the sessions on the Church of England's Shared Conversations on Scripture, Mission and Human Sexuality, which she had attended. Learning and listening to the various experiences of sexuality led towards an understanding of this divisive issue in the Church.

Two visiting speakers attended the 4 **February Synod**: at St. Ursula's Church, Berne: Adrian Mumford, Diocesan Secretary and Revd. Canon John Newsome, former chaplain in Zurich and now Spirituality Advisor in the Diocese in Europe. Adrian spoke about the role of the Diocesan Office, which supports the administration of the Diocese: managing chaplaincy sterling funds, overseeing safeguarding, communication, appointments, ministry teams, synods and the Common Fund, into which all chaplaincies pay proportionate to their members and financial status. Office staff answer questions and give advice on all matters relating to the Diocese. John Newsome asked us to think about Spirituality. His interpretation would be the process by which we become more aware of the gift of holiness and increasingly

conform to it. We are called to share fully in the life of God, to be aware, to focus 100%, to see things with different eyes and recognise them consciously.

Apart from these two special talks, the 2016 accounts were approved, which were within budgeted figures. Two regular contributions are SFr.4'750 to Partner Sein, the Old Catholic - Anglican Aid Agency and SFr.3'000 to the Athens chaplaincy, which does valiant work among the refugees stranded in Greece. The budget 2017 at SFr.23'050, made up from the quotas paid by the chaplaincies, covers these payments and our own Archdeaconry expenses. Safeguarding measures are being implemented in all chaplaincies; supportive help and advice can be sought at any time from the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer, Ian Carter.

Miriam Keller, Archdeaconry Synod Secretary & *Val Geschonke*

French Association La Côte Anglican Church

In 2016 our French Association based in Divonne, supported four charities with a total of €3,330 in donations (as detailed in the Social Action Report). These charities were: Médecins sans Frontières towards their work in Nepal, the Near East and other countries in need; STEJ (Togo) to sponsor two children and contribute towards the cost of a daycentre; ALIAS towards their support of migrants in the Pays de Gex; and Opération Espoir towards their work with rural communities in developing countries. Funds were raised via the Divonne French Association through special collections during Sunday services, the Summer Garden Party in Divonne and the annual Christmas lunch in Divonne. Four Lent Seminar talks that proved highly popular were given in Divonne and dealt with '*Terrorism in Biblical Times and Now*', '*Faith & Science*', '*Europe's Migration Crisis*' and '*Epigenetics, Ethics and Morals*'.

In addition to our present law of 1901 status, an application submitted to the French Authorities for Association cultuelle status under the law of 1905, did not receive any response by end December 2016 and is currently being followed up. In 2017, three Lent Seminar talks have been given in Divonne on the topics of '*Ecumenism as a response to conflict and war*', '*Charity: business or development?*' and '*The rise of populism and the democratic deficit*', each of which drew a good show of participants. Throughout the rest of the year, we plan to pursue our traditional activities in support of charities and welfare organizations, including the annual Summer Garden Party in Divonne, the autumn bake-sale and the traditional Christmas lunch. Further events may be held as opportunities arise over the course of the year.

Georges Mills

Social Action at la Côte

Every three years La Côte chooses a new charity project to receive a major donation from Church funds. Following a presentation by Jon Beaulieu, of the Social Action team, the Council decided to support **The Ekwendeni Hospital HIV/AIDS programme** in Malawi in partnership with the Church of Scotland. The Social Action Team liked the idea of low-cost local solutions to local problems, and direct communication.



The Church of Scotland has maintained the programme for the last 15 years, in an area of 600 square km with 75,000 inhabitants of which 75% are under 35 years of age. The aim is to reduce HIV rates by fostering behaviour change among youth, bring about economic empowerment and train more people. Programmes are for youth-friendly and healthy services with a heavy focus on orphans, home-based care, counselling and testing, a Teens' Club, a library, resource and sport centre. Until now, the Church of Scotland has provided all the Sustainable Livelihood budget.

HIV support consists of strengthening the existing services, conducting mobile HIV testing and counselling services, promoting behaviour change, peer education and life skills, training of volunteers and staff. The goal is to have 30 self-help groups by the end of 2017, working towards sustainable livelihoods. La Côte's contribution will be for the sustainability of funding for food security. The team suggested the involvement of our youth in fundraising with targets, which could be a useful learning experience for them, for education scholarships, computers and book purchases. Additional income from 2016 Quiz Night, also went towards this project.



ASYLUM SUPPORT

Last September people working most directly with asylum seekers in this area were offered deeper training by Hannah Elwyn, Senior Programmes Manager of RSN (**Refugee Support Network**, established in 2009 by a group of Christians in North West London). 15 people from La Côte, Westlake and other churches and institutions attended the meeting at The

Hub, Westlake Church's space in Nyon. The team working on these issues at La Côte Church took away many practical lessons and great inspiration from Hannah's training and example. A retiring collection realised the equivalent of SFR 725,- which La Côte Church donated to the charity.

Charitable giving

Each year La Côte Church donates a sum of Sfr.5,000.- directly from the Church Budget for charitable donations. Additional donations are raised separately during the year. Charities supported by our Church are as follows:

SFr.500.-	Bishop's Lent Appeal - Arab Evangelical Episcopal school, Ramallah
SFr.2'000	Bethany Home & Ikrehab
SFr.4'000.	Malawi project
SFr.750.-	Foundation Théodora Association,
SFr.750.-	Psy pour Haïti:
SFr.400.-	Mama Africa Art Therapy for Refugees.
SFr.2'285.-	Specific project of the Malawi programme
SFr.725.-	Refugee Support Network in England
SFr.300	Host church from the funeral of Winifred Elderfield
SFr.553.-	Present Aid
€365.-	Stej Togo
€625.-	Médecins Sans Frontières
€445,62.-	Favela Phoenix
€1'690.-	ALIAS
€650.-	Global Hope Network International (Opération espoir)

Liz Bramley

La Côte Church Groups



GINGINS SONG GROUP

The Gingins Song Group meets once per month, usually, on a Tuesday evening, for a practice in Luins. It accompanies the congregation in Church on the third Sunday of every month and also at important festivals, such as on Christmas Eve and Easter Sunday. There are currently 23 members on our list and an average of

12 join regularly for practice and Church performances. In October 2015, the Song Group performed for the 100th time since it was formed and sang on its 10 year Anniversary this year, the third Sunday in January. The first performance was held on 20 January 2007. On New Year's Day, this year we had the privilege to sing at a special blessing service for the 60th wedding anniversary Arlene and Robert Simon. Arlene was one of the original members who came to the very first practice and continues to support us. We average about 12 persons per service but our best turn out and performance this year was certainly on Christmas Eve, when we were at least

20. Calen has made welcome guest appearances with the group throughout the year, adding a new dimension to the music! The Gings Song Group is proud to be a part of the fellowship enjoyed by the congregations of our two churches and would be happy to welcome more male voices.

Margaret Ducommun

DIVONNE SONG GROUP

Since the last AGM, the Divonne song group has sung on various occasions, including the Nativity service and the candlelight carol service, as well as joining together with the Gings song group for the joint service for Pentecost, held at Crassier. About 16 in number, we sing a range of music, from modern songs to more traditional pieces that allow us to sing in four-part harmony (sometimes *a cappella*).

We are thankful to those gifted musicians who have accompanied us on occasion, including Jane Djabaté (violin), Calen Gayle (flute), and Nigel Rollins (guitar). Rehearsals take place periodically on Sundays after the morning service. For more in-depth practices, Mark and Christine Warren have kindly hosted us in their home, including for a special practice held in August to focus on new music, followed by a picnic in their lovely garden. Last year, we welcomed four new members - Veronica Hanmer, Mike Oswald, Katie Warren and Lynda Watts - though we sadly said goodbye to Mollie Lufkin and Maggie Wilmshurst, who returned to the UK. New voices are always welcome, so please let Richard or Heidi Hawkings know if you would like to join us.

Heidi Hawkings



TUESDAY PRAYER GROUP

The Prayer Group has continued to meet every other Tuesday morning at the Traceys' home in Coinsins, from 9.15 to 10.30. A dozen regularly attend and we start off with tea or coffee, while sharing news of answered prayers, for which to give thanks, and concerns for our world, our Church and those known to us. We then follow a short order of service to frame these prayers, usually the Celtic Morning Prayer from the Northumbria Community. Once a year we venture out on a Prayer Walk, but this year, for various reasons, we made it a 'virtual' one, using slides of each stop for a reading or prayer! Between us there is the strictest confidence in the names we mention and we welcome your requests for prayer. Believing that prayer is at the heart of our Church community, we welcome everyone to join us, whether for just one time or on a regular basis. We are looking forward to participating in Archbishop Justin's ten-day global prayer initiative "Thy Kingdom Come" from Ascension Day to Pentecost. See <https://www.thykingdomcome.global/>

Peta Tracey

BIBLE STUDY GROUP

As predicted in my last report, the group is STILL making its way through the gospel of Mark! The material we are using (SU LifeBuilder series), together with the ecumenical make-up of the group, generate thought-provoking and enriching discussion and contribute greatly to our interpretation and understanding of the Word. For those who are not aware, Vincent and I have now returned to the Church of Scotland in Geneva after nine years with the La Côte congregation. Consequently, we shall no longer be hosting the group from March 2017, but we will continue to share in its fellowship and study. Trevor and Dorothy Davies have very kindly offered to host the group at their home in Founex and we are thankful to them for their willingness to do so.

Jacqueline Coo

THURSDAY SPACE

The Thursday Space group has now bedded in and has a regular attendance of about 10 people from within and outside the La Cote congregation. It continues to meet regularly on the second and fourth Thursday of each month for study, fellowship and prayer. The group enjoys a light informal meal, holds a discussion on a topic or book, and then concludes with evening prayer.

Christopher Potter

LA CÔTE BLOKES DINNER

Once a month, a number of men, typically twelve in number, from across the two congregations meet to discuss contemporary issues from a faith perspective. We usually meet on the third Thursday of the month. Recent topics have included *Social media, men and ageing, Faith in the workplace* and *The recent shift in global politics*. There is an easy-going atmosphere, generally starting with a beer, followed by a meal and an informal discussion. All are welcome. For more details contact David Cooke via the website.

David Cooke

COFFEE, CAKE AND CATCH-UP GROUP

This year, the group has been growing and changing. We like to nickname it the Coffee, Cake & Canines Group, with at least 4 regular dogs! We now have about 20 names on our mailing list and at least 13 people regularly attend. We are due to lose some of members who will take on



new jobs or move to other countries, but we have been on a steadily growing trend. We find that those who can no longer come, want to keep in the loop, where possible, personally or via by email. We feel as if we never 'lose' our members! The group still provides a place of refuge and respite for many: a place to chat, enjoy our regular cake baking/recipe swapping and more importantly, time to share together on a deeper level and to pray. This past year we have finished the book 'Restless' by Jennie Allen, following the life of Joseph, and since September we have been studying a book by John Pritchard called 'Living Faithfully'. This has led to many good, biblically based discussions around practical life based topics.... everything from decision-making to money, work and sexuality! We also like to mark special times and events in the church calendar. On Ash Wednesday, we sign each other with the cross and have a special Lenten theme. Similarly, we also have an Advent focus. If you feel that you would like to drop in/join or have any questions about this group please contact Alice on debellalice@gmail.com.

Alice Debell

MUSICAL DROP-IN

These convivial evenings continue into their 9th year and are still held on the first Sunday of the month chez Ted Talbot.

The principal is

also still the same: the evenings are not just to provide great live music, but to create an opportunity to meet old and new friends, invite neighbours, discuss burning issues or merely relax in pleasant company. 2016 was another year of wonderful and varied music from a range of talented musicians covering jazz, folk, classical baroque, barber shop and join in and sing! There was even a conga one evening! Despite parking restrictions and the need for a 'parking attendant', numbers varied from 20 to over 40 on one occasion, with at least one new person every month. As ever, these evenings provide people with an opportunity to enjoy exceptional music, de-stress, chat and find out more about the La Côte community.

Drop-Ins are from 7.0 pm to 10.0 pm at 9b Route de Duillier, 1270 Trelex, with drinks and cold buffet provided, (cover charge: SFr.8.00) .

Ted Talbot

