

ANNUAL GENERAL REPORT 2023

La Côte Anglican Church

Contents

Contents.....	1
Looking Back on 2022/23	2
Church Governance.....	2
The story of La Côte Church in 2023	4
Church Council.....	7
Worship	7
La Côte Ministry Team	7
Music: musicians and song group	8
Morning Prayer.....	8
Ecumenical Activities.....	9
Safeguarding.....	10
Synod Archdeaconry Review	10
Sunday Club	11
Pastoral Care.....	12
Social Action Group.....	12
Food Bank.....	12
Lenten Seminars	13
Regular Group Meetings	13
Window on Wednesday.....	13
Prayer Group.....	14
Blokes' dinner.....	15
Bible Study.....	15

Looking Back on 2022/23

Gratitude always!

Before we dive into the story of La Côte Church in 2023 I would like to offer an overview of our church governance. If you are familiar with this, you are welcome to jump ahead to page 4.

Church Governance

La Côte Anglican Church belongs to the Anglican Diocese in Europe, which is one of the 42 dioceses in the Church of England. As such we operate within the Anglican structures of governance and accountability. To find out more about the Diocese in Europe, click here: <https://www.europe.anglican.org/>

The Chaplaincy Council is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The composition and remit of the Council is governed jointly by Swiss law, French law, and the Anglican Canons, in particular the statutes of the Swiss La Côte Church Development Association, the French Association Culturelle and the Church Representation Rules 2020.

The lay membership of the Chaplaincy Council is decided by election. Normally there are two people elected as the chaplaincy wardens. In addition, there are 5-6 elected lay members. They normally stand for three years and may then do a second term of three years. If they are staying on council for longer, this needs agreement at the annual general meeting.

The clergy are ex officio, i.e., by virtue of the positions that they hold, deemed members of the Council. So too are the chaplaincy's representatives to the Archdeaconry Synod, who are chosen by the congregation in separate elections for a three-year tenure (last elected in 2023). In addition, the Chaplaincy Council can appoint people to its membership (co-opted members).

The present Chaplaincy Council is thus made up of:

Clergy: ex officio

Carolyn Cooke

Julia Chambeyron (on extended sick leave)

Betty Talbot: Reader and Ordinand who will become our curate in training in June 2024.

Church Wardens:

Liz Bramley – standing for re-election

Austin Ball – standing down

The elected lay members who are standing for re-election this year:

Louise Burrows

Phil Clifton

Steve Rawcliffe

Kate Shepherd (Council Secretary)

Diantha Terry

A new member standing for election:

Ron Carpenter

Co-opted member – Church Treasurer

John Ingham

Archdeaconry Representatives: elected for a three-year term from 2023-26

Alice Debell

Nonalee Dong

Safeguarding Team

Currently three lay members make up the safe-guarding team: Cate Bichara, Ever Gutierrez and Liz Martinez. One of these representatives attends each council meeting. We have a strong team of committed and caring safe-guarding officers. Their work is crucial to creating a safe environment to welcome everyone. I take this opportunity to thank them for their work on behalf of our community and encourage you to get to know them and to support them.

The Chair of the Chaplaincy Council is the Chaplain, currently Carolyn Cooke.

The Treasurer, Secretary and Lay Vice-Chairs are appointed each year at the first Council meeting after the congregation's annual meeting. In 2023 the vice-chair role has been mainly shared between Phil Clifton and Louise Burrows. Council normally meets monthly. The agenda for the Council meeting is prepared by the standing committee, made up of the chaplain, church wardens, vice-chair, and secretary.

We have sub-groups who report to the Council on matters of:

Finance

Social Action

Fund-raising

In addition we have a working group for

Youth and Children

We are developing a working group for

Eco-church, together with our host churches especially regarding our buildings

The Electoral Roll Officer is currently Steve Rawcliffe who prepares our electoral roll each year. You need to be a member of our electoral roll to vote on church decisions and policies.

The La Côte Swiss Development Association is the charitable body recognised by Swiss Law. Our Church governance complies with Swiss Law with the La Côte Swiss Development Association sitting within our Annual General Meeting and operating under the governance of the church council. In addition, Swiss authorities recognise the President of the Association, John Tracey, the Secretary, Liz Bramley and the Treasurer, John Ingham.

The Association La Côte Anglican Church was constituted in December 2013 (under the French law of 1901), due to our presence in Divonne in worship and community life. This gives us legal status in France, as a recognised **Association Culturelle**, which enables us to raise funds for other charities. Although this association has a separate AGM, it largely operates like the Swiss association, under the governance of the La Côte Church Council.

May I take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude for all who serve on our church council and in our associations. Thank you for your faithful leadership and for all the hard work that goes on behind the scenes for the smooth running of our church.

This year Austin Ball is stepping back from his role as Church Warden. I would like to thank him for many years of dedicated service, for his strategic perspective on church life and finances, and for his oversight of Divonne as this community has taken root in French soil. I am personally grateful to him for his loyal care and support of me as Chaplain. With Austin stepping back, Liz Bramley will be the sole Church warden while we look to appoint someone to work with her. I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to her for her unstinting commitment and hard work as Church Warden, and her dedicated support for me as Chaplain.

The story of La Côte Church in 2023

At the start of the year the Church Council agreed to three priorities as we emerged from the pandemic. These priorities were: **Worship, Welcome and Community.**

I look back over 2023 with wonder and gratitude to God for the way our church has honoured these areas of our life together. We are always keen to learn, but we give thanks for all that we have achieved with God and with one another.

Worship – We have a gifted and faithful group of church members who have led us in worship each week. **Thank you to all our musicians**, ably steered and encouraged by Richard and Heidi Hawkings. In addition, thank you to all who join in our song group, which has enhanced our worship in festivals, such as Remembrance Sunday and our Christmas carol service. **Thank you to our Ministry team** who have met regularly to reflect on the direction of our services, so that together we have set the themes and shared in preaching, reflections, and meaningful worship throughout the year. **Thank you to the many volunteers who participate in worship** as welcomers, readers, intercessors, setting up and serving, managing the power point, preparing and service refreshments, and praying with people after the service.

Thank you to our team of committed Sunday club leaders, who have nurtured faith and friendship with our children each week. It has been a privilege to prepare four children to receive Holy Communion, and in addition to involve children and youth in leading us in All Age Worship through the year.

Some additional services that were held in 2023 include:

A service to mark the Coronation of King Charles III in May 2023, followed by festive refreshments.

An Ascension Day service, when twenty of our community gathered for worship in the charming Roman Catholic Chapelle Notre-Dame de Riantmont above the village of Vésancy, France.

An additional animal blessing service celebrated the feast of St Francis, welcoming in 14 dogs and one brave cat!

The priorities of welcome and community overlapped throughout 2023, so I address them together.

I am deeply thankful for the warm welcome our community has extended to newcomers and regulars throughout the year in Sunday services. In addition, it was a delight to reinstate our popular annual Social Action quiz which embraced many in our wider English-speaking circles and raised funds for The Lost Food Project. Thank you to everyone who has shown hospitality through meals together, such as monthly Sunday lunches in the Auberge de Coinsins, monthly La Côte Blokes' dinners and discussion, Lenten seminars in Divonne, potluck lunches in Crassier, a Morning Prayer lunch gathering chez the Tracey's and a festive Christmas lunch in Divonne. Children and their families were



Sunday lunch at the Auberge de Coinsins

equally given a warm welcome to take part in the Christmas nativity play and then again at the Christmas Eve Crib service.

Welcome and community are also strengthened when smaller groups meet for prayer, Bible study, discussions and friendship. Thank you to all who have hosted and led these groups over the last year, especially for the Tuesday Bible study, the La Côte Prayer group, Window on Wednesday, and the online Morning Prayer community. There may be scope to set up another small group. Please speak to the Ministry team or Carolyn if you are interested in participating or helping to lead such a group.

Our community has been there to care for one another at times of illness and grief. In September 2023 we said goodbye to Ted Talbot, a much-loved member of our church family. For many years Ted was active in our church community, with a passion for helping young people find faith, setting up the Special Activity Scene (SAS) youth group. Over many years he opened his home on a Sunday evening for the popular musical drop-ins. He was also a committed member of the Tuesday Bible study group and the La Côte Prayer group. Beyond church, Ted was deeply involved in various organisations including Friends of India, GAOS and the ecumenical Geneva Cursillo. Many La Côte Church members gathered to support his family and wide circle of friends in a thanksgiving service on 9 September 2023. During the year La Côte church also took part in farewell services for Carol Logan, Peter Oxenham, Thomas Fohgrub, Jeanne Cook and Ruedi Schwegler. I am grateful to many of our community who reach out and care for one another in difficult circumstances, with prayer, practical help and loving presence.



Ted Talbot, 2017

Our community cherishes porous boundaries, so people can step in and test the waters. Although many choose to make this region and our church their home, we also have to say goodbye to people who move on. Last year we bid farewell to John, Bene and Maelys Phillips who relocated to Winchester, UK. We also said goodbye to Johan Crocoll who became the church IT advisor and had regularly managed the Power Point in our services. In September he stepped back to commence full-time work at Swisscom in his field of expertise. On the other hand, we were delighted to welcome baby Emilia Paola Doss-Dadaglio through baptism in Divonne in October. I also had the privilege of preparing three couples as they embarked on married life together: Jeannie Joseph and Julien Gautheret, (Temple de Gingsins, 15 July), Ben Weston and Carolyn Brown, and Francisca Guanter-Buss and Glen Millar (Holy Trinity, Geneva, 2 September).



John, Bene and Maelys Phillips

As part of developing our community life, in 2023 Council approved the implementation of ChurchSuite, a programme to help our members communicate with each other and participate in the rota for worship. Our special thanks go to Anne de Tréverret, in her role as

Chaplain's Administrative Assistant, who set up this platform and is working tirelessly to enable our community to use it well.

Fundraising has also offered creative ways of enjoying fellowship. We had three fresh initiatives in 2023.

La Côte Church Cookery Book displaying a wonderful range of dishes with anecdotes from many of our members.

Bring and Buy Sales after church in Advent 2023, selling home-made goods and bric-a-brac.

A sponsored Cold Water Lake Plunge in December 2023 for the brave- and mad-hearted.

I am full of gratitude to all of you who took part in any way in these creative ventures, which raised much needed church funds and built up our community as we shared in the fun!

Pledge Administrator In addition to fundraising, the weekly church offerings and extra donations, your crucial pledges enable us to budget for the coming year's priorities. Our warm thanks go to Mark Warren, our pledge administrator, who manages our pledging scheme with efficiency and discretion. If you would like to find out more, please contact Mark at mark.warren@yahoo.fr

Youth and confirmation In the absence of a youth worker in 2023, Council agreed to employ Joy Vanstaalduinen, based in the Netherlands, who has been conducting online youth work since the pandemic. In October 2023 she started ably leading youth sessions with six young people from La Côte Church, exploring faith with a view to confirmation if they so wish. In the meantime, I have been grateful for the support of church members who care about our youth and our Sunday club leaders who have faithfully assisted me in the ongoing search for a part-time children and youth worker.

Reaching out into the community. Alongside our church gatherings we have branched out into the wider community through social action projects and connections. The Food Bank in Nyon, in partnership with Coup de Main, actively involves at least fifteen members of our community and many others who donate provisions. The Lost Food Project, which is the umbrella organisation for this food bank has built a sense of community for the many volunteers from across the region. On the French side, we have continued to support Restos du Coeur through generous harvest donations, and we have maintained connections with Alias, a charity in the Gex region supporting local refugees.

La Côte Church has continued to build ecumenical and interfaith relationships through the **Pastorale Nyonnaise**, a gathering of church representatives in the Nyon area who meet bi-monthly to share news, challenges, and mission. **La Côte Church belongs to the FACCV**, "Fédération des Eglises Anglicanes et Catholique-chrétiennes dans le Canton de Vaud". Anglican chaplaincies and the Old Catholics in Vaud are currently applying for state recognition, alongside the already recognised Swiss Reformed Church, Roman Catholic Church and the Jewish Community. As part of this process, we participate in an interreligious platform to develop dialogue and trust between Muslim, Jewish and Christian communities in Vaud.

There are many reasons to give thanks. I would like to thank you for our shared life, ministry, prayer and fellowship. Thank you too for your faithful and generous support to the church. What we share together is very precious. I am sure you will enjoy reading the individual reports or seeing pictures of the different groups and activities. In addition, you can scan a year in the life of La Côte Church in pictures, prepared by Liz Bramley, click here:

<https://www.lacotechurch.ch/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/La-Cote-Church-2023-compressed.pdf>.

Revd Carolyn Cooke

Church Council

Our La Côte council typically meets monthly, usually online but sometimes in person, and discusses a wide variety of issues concerning all aspects of our church and community life. We are made up of the Clergy, a cross-section of elected Church members and in the past few months a member of the Safeguarding Team.



Phil Clifton

Over the past year we have looked at the service patterns, gained feedback from the wider congregation and given support and input into the pattern of key services, for example at Christmas and New Year. We also monitor the finances carefully, instigating fund raising activities where required.

We meet in prayer as a team and in January 2024 we held a day of reflection and planning (see photo). If anyone is interested in joining the Council please don't hesitate to contact me or any other member.

Worship

La Côte Ministry Team

It has been six years since 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 community in several ways, through the planning of events during the liturgical year, leading services, preaching and offering reflections, organising music for the services, and looking after communications within and beyond the church community.

Special Sundays that stand out in our collective team memory include the Christingle service, the riotous fun of the nativity services at Divonne and Gingins, the solemn Good Friday service and the joyful Easter service. Various team members supported the locum priests who came to lead and preach during Lent and Eastertide. They also collaborated with the Swiss Church in providing activities for "Messy Church," which are bilingual services that are characterised by creativity, hospitality and celebration for all ages.

The members of the Ministry Team are Louise Burrows, Heidi Hawkings, Chris Potter, Betty Talbot and John and Peta Tracey.

Betty Talbot on behalf of the Ministry Team



Messy Church/ Célébrouillons

Music: musicians and song group

Our musical worship at La Côte is led and supported by a group of volunteer musicians. We are most grateful for musical contributions in this last year from: Jeremy Burrows, Jane Djabaté, Ray Fiander, Steve and Monika Rawcliffe, Pam Walsh, Richard and Heidi Hawkings. We have also been able to count on the help of Oliva Rakotonanahary, musician of the Swiss Reformed Church.

In 2023, the La Côte song group sang at the services on Palm Sunday, Gift Day, Remembrance Day and at the Candlelight Carols service. Practices usually take place on Saturday mornings, one week before the service at which we are invited to sing. In August, we enjoyed a morning of singing followed by a barbecue, graciously hosted by Christine and Mark Warren. New musicians and singers are always welcome, so please feel free to join us!

Heidi and Richard Hawkings



La Côte song group summer practice and barbecue, August 2023

Morning Prayer

It's hard to believe that four years have hurtled by since we started meeting on Zoom for Morning Prayer. Back in those anxious early Covid days when we couldn't go out to church, we discovered the joys of just 30 'virtual' minutes from 07h30 every weekday (with a long lie-in on Saturdays with an 8h30 start). We're usually about a dozen on-line which includes regulars from other churches in Geneva, Lausanne, Chamonix, Zürich, London, Derby and Johannesburg. It's become a great community and form of outreach to others.



We follow the Anglican morning service, allowing us to share the readings, reflections and prayers. We bring our prayer requests which are included in a quiet time of prayer in complete confidence. We've experienced that prayer is very helpful in times of stress or difficulties and have seen prayers answered – sometimes after years of worry and despair.

Would you like to join us? There's a link in the bulletin. Everyone is very welcome to pop in and out as their schedule allows. We may start a bit bleary eyed, but we always finish on a fun, upbeat note and leave with a spring in our step. In any case, please know we're praying for you and that you'll always be most welcome!

John Tracey



Ecumenical Activities

This report covers Jan-Dec 2023. There is a certain amount of overlap with last year's report, which covered the time between AGMs rather than the calendar year.

In his 2023 New Year address for world peace, Pope Francis stated "Our greatest and most fragile treasure is our common humanity, as brothers and sisters, children of God. We cannot be saved alone." Members of our church practise many forms of ecumenism, learning from each other and accepting our differences. La Côte Church is itself ecumenical, welcoming and valuing many from different church backgrounds.

Pastorale Nyonnaise - an active and engaged group of local church leaders and representatives from diverse traditions. Carolyn has attended their bi-monthly breakfasts in Nyon. They also initiated an 'open doors' programme to welcome members of each other's churches to a service. On 12 Nov. 2023, John Tracey attended a Mass at La Colombière RC Church in Nyon. There was an explanation of the Mass beforehand and a 'welcome apéritif' afterwards. It was a very enjoyable time of sharing.

The Ecumenical **Food Bank** in Nyon is an outworking of learning to do good and seek justice together.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. In January 2023 the joint service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was held in La Colombière RC church in Nyon, at which Carolyn preached on the theme: "Do good; seek justice", from Isaiah 1.

Journée Mondiale de la Prière (World Day of Prayer) was held in Nyon on 3 Mar. and prepared by the women of Taiwan.

Swiss National Day (1 Aug.) ecumenical service in Nyon was attended by Peta & John Tracey on behalf of La Côte Church.

With our host parish of La Dôle - Pastor Etienne Guilloud continues to be very welcoming and open to joint services and events, such as the 'Blue Christmas' service, early morning Easter Day sunrise service, both in collaboration with Chris Potter, and the current monthly Taizé services. Members of our two communities (20 in all) enjoyed a day out, organised by the parish of La Dôle, exploring Romainmôtier and the inspirational Jan Michalski Foundation for writing and literature at Montricher. We also celebrated together the **Jeûne Fédéral** (17 Sept.) with a contemplative prayer walk, concluding with Taizé prayers in Bonmont Abbey. The international students studying ecumenism at the Château de Bossey were able to participate in this act of worship.

Welcoming Bossey students to our services - We attended the graduation ceremony in Jan. 2023 of the students who had been studying at the World Council of Churches Ecumenical Institute for the previous semester (photo). Since Sept. 2023 there has been an Anglican student from Nigeria at Bossey, Revd Ishaya Anthony, who is studying for a Master's until June 2024 and it has been a pleasure to meet him at our services. We are grateful to members of our congregation



who volunteer to drive the students to and from our churches, particularly Maria Dengeli and Trevor Davies this past year.

An extra opportunity arose for connecting with the **World Council of Churches** in Oct. 2023, when Betty Talbot did a three-week placement in their Communications section, as part of her ordination training. She particularly worked with the WCC's 'Thursdays in Black: a global movement for a world without rape and violence', and produced material for their website (<https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/bible-studies/a-double-whammy>).

Ignatian Way days (in English) are offered four times per year at the Château de Bossey by members of Pope John XXIII parish and are open to all seeking a quiet day, with time for personal reflection on scripture passages and group-sharing on related questions.

Daily Morning Prayer on Zoom entered its fourth year since the start of the pandemic and participants include members of the French Protestant Church and Old Catholics, as well as of the RC Church in the UK – please see separate report!

Cursillo - This ecumenical three-day course in Christianity continues to be offered twice a year (May & Nov.) by English-speaking churches in the Geneva area, and last summer celebrated its 40th anniversary with a wonderful gathering in Bonnie Fatio's garden by the lake. Many members of La Côte Church have enjoyed and participated in Cursillo weekends and provided background support.

Community Bible Study (Geneva) - Betty and Chris Talbot participate in this group, whose members are drawn from Crossroads Church Ferney and Thoiry and the UK. There are monthly hybrid meetings where those living locally meet face to face and those in the UK join in via Zoom.

With our French host church in Divonne, L'Eglise Protestante Unie de France - we continue to value a positive and warm working relationship. We appreciate the regular contact with Matthew Kahane and Pastor Daniel Oh as we share the buildings. Carolyn attended the **Joint Service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity** on Sunday 22 January 2023.

Peta Tracey, with Carolyn Cooke, Betty Talbot, Louise Burrows, Maria Dengeli.

Safeguarding

The team has continued to raise awareness about the importance of Safeguarding and to do our best to get the relevant people trained and cleared. We appreciate the cooperation of those who have complied and encourage those who haven't to make a good resolution this year. We realize that this may not seem to be a priority, and we ourselves are often not as assiduous as we should be, but it is very important that clearance is taken seriously by everyone just in case somebody comes to La Côte with bad intentions. Unfortunately there are wolves in sheep's clothing and we may not be as good as we imagine at spotting someone who can do harm. In addition to this regular work we carried out a well-attended bilingual training on Safeguarding at Westlake Church for the foodbank volunteers.

Cate Bichara, Ever Gutierrez and Liz Martinez

Synod Archdeaconry Review

2023 comprised three meetings, two on zoom and one in person at St. Andrew's Church, Zurich. It was an election year, welcoming new representatives and standing committee members. We recapped the purpose and structure of synod. Emphasis was placed on three-year planning and moving forwards in individual chaplaincies and together across the synod. Key issues were

identified and discussed including finances, climate responsibility, refugee and migration work, safeguarding, unity within diversity etc with a view on which are best served at archdeaconry level, chaplaincy level or other special interest groups. All meetings were founded in discipleship and prayer. We give thanks to Bishop Innes, Clare Amos and Juliet Evans for their input and look forward together to what the future has in store.

Yours on behalf of synod, Alice Debell and Nonalee Dong



Picture taken at Archdeaconry Synod, St Andrew's Church Zurich, September 30th 2023

Sunday Club

Sunday Club and nurturing the future of our Church in La Côte has always been a big part of our community. Throughout 2023 we were blessed with a very willing group of leaders and helpers, and lots of super children. However, in recent years (not helped by the Covid period) we have noticed a marked decrease in regularity and, despite the willingness of the leaders to provide a constant welcoming and fun environment for the children in our communities in Crassier, Divonne and Gingins, there has not quite been the same constancy with the children; the pace of family life has increased, and Sunday activities may be harder to fit in. Some weeks we may welcome just one or two children, at other times we can have five or six in a class, and on occasion, no children at all.

This being said, many of our children had a great time rehearsing for, and interpreting, Daphne's beautifully crafted Nativity Poem, firstly in Divonne, and a second time in Gingins. What a success!

The introduction of 'Messy Church' services in Crassier at the end of 2023 gave a great opportunity to worship with the French-speaking community in La Côte and has been successful in encouraging both children and adults alike to reflect together in a different way about their faith.

The leaders Naomi, Susan, and Kylie and helpers Liz, Daphne, Betty, Funke, Julie and Louise all enjoy this special Sunday Club time with the children in our La Côte Church family. With the help of the 'Roots' material which follows the themes of the Church year, some modern technologies, and a lot of fun and games, we all hope that the children take home something in their heads and hearts that will help them on their journey with faith.

Naomi Grobety

Pastoral Care

The Church Council has identified pastoral care as a key need in our community. While a huge amount of pastoral care goes on informally, there is a risk of a disproportionate amount of this work falling on a small number of people and of people 'falling through the cracks'. In order to address this, a strategy has been developed to support Carolyn in her oversight of pastoral care. I (Louise Burrows) have been appointed to the role of Pastoral Care Coordinator and aim both to support those people already providing care and to build a team of new pastoral visitors. I have prepared basic training materials for pastoral visiting and assembled a very small team of people who would like to serve in this capacity. This is a new approach to pastoral care at La Côte Church, and I am slowly feeling my way forward; as yet it is not clear how things are going to land. If you would be interested in joining the team of pastoral visitors or in providing practical help, please let me know.

Louise Burrows

Social Action Group

The social action group has been composed of Jon Beaulieu, Liz Bramley, Kate Shepherd, Scott Campbell and Carolyn Cooke. The charities supported by our church in 2023 were:

From the budget:

CHF 500	Bishop's Lent Appeal
EUR 1'000	ALIAS
CHF 2'000	LOST FOOD PROJECT
CHF 500	Morocco earthquake appeal
CHF 500	Médecins Sans Frontières (relief work in Libya)
CHF 500	Bishop's Advent Appeal

From special collections:

CHF 1'630	Médecins Sans Frontières (relief work in Turkey and Syria, earthquake)
CHF 1'000	PARKINSON SUISSE (in memory of Ted Talbot from funeral)
CHF 1500	Médecins Sans Frontières (relief work in Libya)
CHF 800	www.watts4you.org (Ukraine)
CHF 2'614	Lost Food Project (Profit from November Quiz Night)

Social Action Committee

Food Bank

The Lost Food Project Switzerland (TLFP) is a non-profit organisation focused on reducing food waste and redistributing food and essential items to those in need. The goal is to prevent landfill waste while providing for diverse groups, regardless of religion, gender, age, disability, or ethnicity. Among their beneficiaries are Ukrainians (the largest group, spanning all ages), non-Ukrainian refugees (mainly men in their 20s and 30s) and Swiss nationals (mostly older people; although the smallest group, they reflect a significant but 'unseen' level of poverty).

The organization emphasizes that their work is part of waste reduction, helping to combat the stigma associated with receiving food donations. TLFP collaborates with various agencies, including



La Côte Church - many of our members volunteer regularly. The role of the volunteer is vital for TLFP and a whole team is needed to boost morale and ensure efficiency, balancing food, distribution, and volunteer resources to avoid bottlenecks. The Lost Food Project Switzerland is playing a vital role in reducing food waste and supporting those in need.

Ever Gutierrez

Lenten Seminars

Impacts of the current phase of the war in Ukraine: Reflections after one year

During Lent 2023, La Côte Anglican Church hosted three seminars in the parish rooms in Divonne, entitled *Impacts of the current phase of the war in Ukraine: Reflections after one year*. Although the war in Ukraine had lasted more than nine years, the Russian invasion of the country on 24 February 2022 was a massive escalation in the intensity of violence and suffering.

On 28 February, **Nina Kiderlin**, a PhD researcher in sociology and a Research Fellow in the Centre for Finance and Development at the Graduate Institute, Geneva, explored the macro-impacts of the war in Ukraine on international diplomacy, energy supply, trade and food security.

The war in Ukraine has hugely influenced how firms do business. The second seminar, on 7 March, was led by La Côte church members **Phil Clifton** and **Dan Weston**, senior executives of international corporations, based in the Canton de Vaud. In a lively conversation, Phil and Dan examined the war's impacts on management of human resources, procurement, supply chains, markets, corporate culture and corporate social responsibility.

The intensification of the war in Ukraine in February 2022 prompted a massive outflow of Ukrainians into neighbouring states and other European nations. How have communities receiving and hosting Ukrainian refugees been affected by the influx? How have those communities responded? The final seminar, held on 14 March, opened up these questions. It was led by **Giulia Bonoldi**, Managing Director of the Joel Nafuma Refugee Centre, Rome, and Chief Welcoming Officer [*what a wonderful job title!*] for Refugees and Asylum Seekers of the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe.

At each seminar, the questions from participants and discussions were deeply moving and thought-provoking. The La Côte Lenten Seminars do not aim to provide neat solutions to contemporary ethical problems; they do seek to deepen our understandings, reflections, prayer for and engagement with challenges facing humanity.

Chris Talbot

Regular Group Meetings

Window on Wednesday

During autumn of 2023, CCC had a rebrand and is now known as 'Window on Wednesday' or WOW.

WOW continues to meet every other Wednesday morning between 9.30 and 11.30 to come together in faith and companionship, always with something delicious to eat and lots of tea and coffee. Led by Alice & Diantha, we finished reading John Pritchard's book "Living Faithfully" in summer 2023, and our end of term sessions ranged from a thought-provoking talk on gender-based violence from one of our members to a line dancing lesson!

We were very sorry that Alice had to step back from the group owing to work commitments and since September 2023, Kate has joined Diantha to jointly lead the group. We have been reading “Twenty Questions Jesus asked, and how they speak to us today” by John Pritchard, which uses a story based, imaginative telling of the Bible.

Many of our group also enjoy taking part and supporting charitable work, such as the annual steps challenge for ESCA. During this 3-week challenge we enjoy meeting up to share walks. This year some of us walked from Vescancy (after our Ascension Day service) to Nyon, via our three churches in Divonne, Crassier and Gingins.

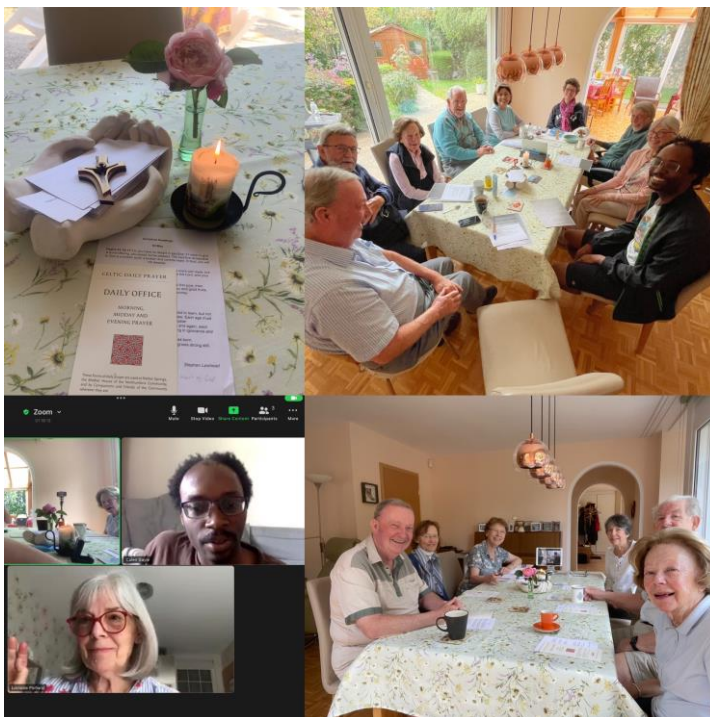


In our bi-weekly WOW group, we have anywhere from four to fourteen attendees, women and men. We also stay connected through our WOW WhatsApp group, which consists of our regulars who attend and others from La Côte, who cannot always come along, but enjoy the contact with our group. This group and our WOW morning are both faith affirming and supportive, we all feel very blessed to be part of it. Newcomers are also very welcome!

On behalf of all of us at WOW,

Diantha Terry and Kate Shephard.

Prayer Group



The Prayer Group has been meeting every other Tuesday morning at our home in Coinsins, with the option of attending on Zoom, with 10-12 attending in total. We pray for situations and people in need in the world, the Church and our church 'family', using a Celtic order of service. We were very sad to lose a long-standing, precious member of the group, Ted Talbot (RIP) in August '23 and then recently in Feb. another much-loved former member who had returned to UK, Janet Sidney (RIP). All are welcome to join us, either occasionally or regularly, or to send us prayer requests in confidence.

Peta & John Tracey
peta.tracey@lacotechurch.ch

Blokes' dinner

The size of the table varies as do the discussion topics. What doesn't change is the high quality of the home-cooked food and the excellent company. All (men) are very welcome to join on the third Thursday of each month.

David Cooke



Bible Study

The Church provides a variety of groups to enable us to sustain and deepen our Christian faith. The Bible Study group is one such meeting. It is an ecumenical group of 12-13 mostly retired people who wish to explore the Bible and its relevancy today. We meet on alternate Tuesday mornings to the Prayer Group. With the help of various Lifebuilder booklets originally produced by Scripture Union, our discussions have ranged from Parables, to Good and Evil, to specific books of the Bible. Below is a photo of some of the members of the group.

Trevor Davies, on behalf of the group

