

St. John's Anglican Church, 31 Avenue Carnot, Menton
Postal Address: 2 Avenue Pigautier, 06500 Menton, France
Website: www.anglicanchurchmenton.com

Sunday Service – Eucharist – 10.30am

Priest-in-charge: Vacant

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The English Library, St. John's Church, Menton

Books available on loan - Saturday mornings from 9.30-12.30

Wednesday afternoons – 2.30-5.30

Refreshments also available

The British Association Chair: Birgitt Nordbrink Tel #33(0)4 93 28 10 02
The Association continues to meet Saturday mornings in the Louvre from 9.30-11.30

The Anglican Community, Bordighera

The English Cemetery Chapel, Via del Campo, Bordighera, Italy

Eucharist Service: usually 2nd Wednesday of each month – 10.30am
Telephone for confirmation

Contact: Barbara Corry Tel. #39 0184 38 450 nichol.barbara31@gmail.com

The Church of the Holy Ghost, Genova

Piazza Marsala 3, 16122 Genova, Italy

Priest-in-charge: Revd. Canon Tony Dickinson Tel. #39 010 88 92 68

Eucharist - Sundays 10.30am

Holy Communion or Shared Prayers – Wednesdays 12.30

Website: www.anglicanchurchgenoa.org

THE
CROSS BORDER

Newsletter
DECEMBER 2020

ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, MENTON

EUCCHARIST
EVERY SUNDAY - 10.30am

(covid-19 permitting)

ADVENT

CHRISTMAS

THE ENGLISH CEMETERY CHAPEL
BORDIGHERA

No Service at present
please check St. John's website for any changes

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF THE HOLY GHOST, GENOVA

Chaplain: Revd. Canon Tony Dickinson

EUCCHARIST EVERY SUNDAY - 10.30am

A QUIET EUCCHARIST EVERY WEDNESDAY 12.30pm

The Food Bank is open every Sunday and Wednesday after the Eucharist

READINGS for SERVICES in DECEMBER 2020 - YEAR B

December 6 Advent 2	First Reading Psalm Second Reading Gospel	Isaiah 40.1-11 85.1-2, 8-13 2 Peter 3.8-15a Mark 1.1-8
December 13 Advent 3	First Reading Psalm Second Reading Gospel	Isaiah 61.1-4, 8-11 126 or Luke 1.46b-55 1 Thessalonians 5.16-24 John 1.6-8, 19-28
December 20 Advent 4	First Reading Psalm Second Reading Gospel	2 Samuel 7.1-11, 16 89. 1-4, 19-26 Romans 16. 25-27 Luke 1.26-38
December 25 CHRISTMAS DAY	First Reading Psalm Second Reading Gospel	Isaiah 52.7-10 98 Hebrews 1.1-4, (5-12) John 1.1-14
December 27 Christmas 1	First Reading Psalm Second Reading Gospel	Isaiah 61.10 – 62.3 148 Galatians 4.4-7 Luke 2.15-21

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BAPTISMS, CONFIRMATIONS, MARRIAGES, FUNERALS

**arrangements may be made by contacting
the churchwardens**

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The Church of England invites to Holy Communion all baptized persons who are communicant members of other Churches which subscribe to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, and who are in good standing in their own church. Those who are prevented by conscience or the rules of their own Churches from receiving the Blessed Sacrament are invited to receive a blessing.

Peter feels a strong sense of calling to this role. He comments: ‘It is often quoted that you should ‘never go back’. However, when we truly open ourselves up to God’s guidance, such dismissive thought should not be part of our discipleship journey. We offer our lives to be shaped, formed and placed where God knows best and so it is with enormous pleasure and great excitement that I respond to his call to ‘go back’ to my ministerial roots in France.’

I am thrilled that we are able to appoint a priest of such rich experience and skill to this key leadership role, with responsibilities for our chaplaincies across France and Monaco. Please pray for Peter as he begins a major period of transition. In due course I hope you will join with me in giving Peter a warm welcome into his new responsibilities and return to France.

+Robert Gibraltar in Europe

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St. Lucy - (281-304)

Lucy was born of a wealthy noble family in Syracuse, Sicily. She was a virgin denounced as a Christian by a rejected suitor, and martyred under the persecution of Diocletian. Her Feast Day is celebrated on 13 December and coincides with the winter solstice, the shortest day of the year before the reform of the Julian calendar.

Falling in the season of Advent the day of St. Lucy is seen as an event which marks the arrival of Christmas Time, which culminates with the arrival of the Light of Christ on Christmas Day.

Santa Lucia is celebrated in Italy, in particular in Syracuse, and in Scandinavian countries where the winters are long and dark. In Scandinavia it is represented by a girl dressed in white (colour of the purity of baptism) with a red sash (colour of the blood of her martyrism) and with a crown of candles on her head. In Norway, Sweden and in the region of the Swedish language in Finland, they sing songs and the girls dress as St. Lucy and carry biscuits and saffron buns, as metaphorically carrying the light of Christianity through the darkness of the world.

St.Lucy is protector of the blind, electricians, illness of the eyes, famine and oculists.

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*A very happy Christmas to you all
and a prayer that the
Peace of God
will be with you
throughout the New Year*

New Archdeacon of France

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It gives me the greatest pleasure to announce that Canon Dr. Peter Hooper has been appointed to be the next Archdeacon of France.

Peter is currently priest-in-charge of seven rural churches near Melton Mowbray and Area Dean of the Framland Deanery in the Leicester Diocese. He is the Chair of the House of Clergy, is a member of Bishop's Council, sits on various other Diocesan Committees and also serves as the Rural Officer for Leicester Diocese. Much of his time in ministry has been directed to growing Christian communities and presence, both within established settings as well as in start-up situations and secular organisations. Children and young people have been a particular focus, and he has helped two communities register as Eco-Churches. He is interested in national initiatives on clergy flourishing and has co-ordinated a series of projects looking at reducing the administration burden for clergy. Peter has been Area Dean for two different deaneries, both of which have been re-organised under his leadership, and his ministry has emphasised the need to care for and encourage clergy and parishioners who find change difficult.

Prior to ordination Peter worked in agriculture, eventually becoming managing director of a large agricultural seeds subsidiary of DuPont, based in Toulouse, and represented the industry up to national level in France. As a business leader he nurtured discipleship through a 'faith in the workplace' course and continues to tutor on various Diocesan Discipleship programmes. A major part of Peter's ordination training took place at the *Institut Catholique de Toulouse*, though more as a result of geography than tradition, as Peter has a very broad churchmanship. Whilst living in Toulouse he served as Chaplaincy Warden in the Anglican Chaplaincy, so understands well the realities of chaplaincy life in the Archdeaconry from a lay officer perspective, particularly as related to financial issues.

Peter was widowed in 2019 and has two grown-up children, William who is a Chartered Civil Engineer and Catherine, a Human Nutritionist, who works in the Food Industry. Whilst they will not be returning with him to live in France, they are excited about the opportunities to visit. Peter has lived and worked in France for over a decade and looks forward very much to returning to a country that he regards as his home.

Peter will begin work with us on 15 February 2021. He will be licensed initially as Acting Archdeacon, continuing to live in Leicestershire. A move to France will be organised as quickly as possible in these difficult times, when Peter will be licensed as Archdeacon in full title.

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NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS

Services We are pleased to welcome Fr Chris Packman to celebrate the Eucharist at 10.30am on Sunday 6th December.

Organist: Mr. Benjamin Prischi.

Please check on our website that nothing has changed due to covid-19 restrictions.

Library Mrs Julia Wigart and Mrs Joanna Longhorne have done a marvellous job organising hundreds of books, fiction and non-fiction. There are also DVDs available – refreshments too. The Library is open on Saturday mornings 9.30 to 12.30 and Wednesday afternoons 2.30 to 5.30. Come and see.

'Primo Fiore' The kitchen for the needy – Primo Fiore in Sanremo - give grateful thanks to St. John's for their Harvest Festival donation. Due to the covid-19 restrictions, they are unable to welcome people to eat at table in the canteen, which they normally do, but they continue to serve the meal in containers as take-aways. These consist of a first course, a second course, bread, fruit/sweet, a bottle of water and cutlery. More than fifty needy people present themselves – locals and foreigners - and numbers are increasing due to the epidemic.

Fortunately Primo Fiore is also supported by the Sanremo Food Bank, Supermarkets, the Fruit and Vegetable Market, churches, and private people, as well as a large number of volunteers to do the cooking.

Ethiopia We have heard from 'Adoption from a distance' in Addis Abebe where our 'adopted' young boy attends one of their schools. Roberto Rabattoni tells us that the staff were unable to do their usual census work of children and meet them personally in their respective villages. Normally a report accompanies his news. However he has sent us a photo of Fraol and we see he has grown into a fine looking boy.

Roberto went on to write that Ethiopia is suffering a great deal due to the covid-19 epidemic and restrictions. The coronavirus came after a famine, when crops were lost during a long drought followed by very heavy rainfall and floods - without precedence in the memory of elderly Headmen of villages. Swarms of locusts then destroyed the countryside and fields, and completely annulled the harvest. Suffering from a lack of food and the loss of their homes entire families were compelled to find alternative dwellings. Roberto had seen many children wandering along the roadsides, half-naked and cold, begging for food, and the next day lying there dead. He said the famine is worse than the coronavirus. It has been a horrible year.

Roberto continues to stay in Ethiopia at The Centre of Hope for Ethiopia Onlus which does wonderful work in educating children, teaching woodwork, sewing, and farming. Among other things it helps the villagers to dig for and have their own water supply, and the setting up of medical centres with qualified personnel.

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Let us pray together through December

We pray to you Heavenly Father, in thanksgiving, and for

1. Lord may we see you more clearly, follow you more nearly and love you more dearly day by day in Advent
2. all who are suffering in body, mind or spirit, in the coronavirus pandemic.....
3. and those who are putting their lives at risk to care for them
- 4..... give thanks for the scientific advances in treating the coronavirus
5. ... and pray that a valid vaccine will be available for all who need it
6. Praise God, that the church is open for all to meet and worship Him together
7. Be glad of life because it gives us the chance to love, to work, to play
8. may those who feel lonely or isolated from their family have sustaining relationships with friends, and awareness of God's love for them
9. for the Prayer Circle
10. Lord, we cherish the gift of Human Rights and pray for all who do not enjoy them in the measure afforded us
11. may we value and respect each person we meet today
12. for our locums and those who prepare the services each Sunday
13. 'The Lord has done great things for us and we are glad indeed' Psalm 126
14. for God's blessings on our neighbouring churches in France
15. may we always be willing to encourage and support those who are learning a new skill, and respect the results
16. all politicians & diplomats involved in the complexities of international relations
17. for those whose lives feel out of balance through lack of meaningful activity
18. for whom the celebration of Christmas is difficult, those who are ill, or bereaved
19. Guide me by your Spirit, Lord, to show me how to serve you here and now
20. 'My spirit rejoices in God my Saviour' Luke 1.47
21. Lord, open my mind to hear you speak through music, worship and prayer
22. Reflect on your favourite colours today - give thanks for the pleasure they give
23. carers who spend their Christmas in nursing or residential homes
24. for God's blessings on the church of the Holy Ghost in Genova, and their work with refugees
25. CHRISTMAS DAY. May the wonder of the nativity give us hope and peace.
26. for foster parents
27. 'Praise, O praise the name of the Lord' Psalm 148
28. for those who have responsibilities in running St. John's
29. for all European countries as a new future is beginning for them
30. Lord, bless family and friendships that we have - help us to be a blessing to them
31. Thank God for his faithfulness through the joys and challenges of this past year; and look forward with hope and trust to all that lies ahead.

Lord, thank you for talking to us - may we listen and act. Amen.

'O magnum mysterium' by Morten Lauridsen invites us to step into the stable again and join the animals, the Holy Family and the shepherds to find a joy and a wonder there that can nourish the soul. At the crib we can know 'the silence of eternity interpreted by Love' and with the choir we can respond Alleluia.

Revd. Michael Burgess

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Do you need to greet your foreign friends in their own language?

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR in 20 languages

Apache (Western) - Gozhq Keshmish * **Arabic** – I'D Miilad Said ous Sana Saida

Croatian – Sretan Bozic * **Danish** – Glaedelig jul og godt nytår

Farsi - Sal-e no mubarak * **German** – Fröhliche Weihnachten und ein glückliches Neues Jahr

Greek - Kala Christougenna
Ki'eftihismenos O Kenourios * **Chronos Hawaiian** - Mele Kalikimaka & Hauoli Makahiki Hou

Hebrew – Mo'adim Lesmikha. Shanah Tova * **Hindi** - Shubh Naya Baras

Iraqi - Idah Saidan Wa Sanah Jadidah * **Mongolian** – Zul saryn bolon shine ony mend devshuulye

Portuguese - Boas Festas e um feliz Ano
Nuovo Romanian – Craciun fericit * **Somali** - ciid wanaagsan iyo sanad cusub oo fiican
si un An Nou fericit!

Spanish - Feliz Navidad y Prospero Año Nuevo * **Sinh** – Chuc Mung Tan Nien

Swedish - God Jul och Gott Nytt År * **Thai** - Suksan Wan Christmas lae Sawadee Pee Mai

Ukrainian - Veseloho Vam Rizdva I
Shchastlyvoho Novoho Roku! * **Vietnamese** – Chuc Mung Giang

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From another Christmas Cracker

When is longhand quicker than shorthand? WHEN IT'S ON A CLOCK

God in Music

'Glorious the song when God's the theme'
Morten Lauridsen, American composer

In the Middle Ages, at the end of the Christian Midnight Mass, the clergy would often tell the animals' version of the Nativity story and imitate the sound of each animal. The cock would crow 'Christus natus est.' (Christ is born). The cows would moo 'Ubi?' (Where). The sheep would bleat 'In Bethlehem.' And the donkey would cry 'Eamus' (Let us go there). It was a way of expressing something of the joy and fun of the Christmas celebration.

Commercialism with its trappings has sadly made that fun and festivity the be all and end all of Christmas. We need to capture again the heart of the Incarnation, which is a mystery rooted in silence and wonder. The book of Wisdom reads 'For while gentle silence enveloped all things, and night in its swift course was now half gone, the all powerful Word leapt from heaven, from the royal throne.'

Those words remind us that at Bethlehem there is that silence and wonder. The animals may rejoice to tell the Good News of the Incarnation at the Midnight Mass, but at the crib they gather with the Holy Family and the shepherds. We are given no words of Mary and Joseph and the shepherds around the crib. The mystery of what was happening seems to have intensified their silence. They did not know what the future held for this new-born child, but they did know that God was acting in a special way. They were like people standing in the faint light of the dawn, and their response was an expectant and wondering worship.

It is the heart of this month's beautiful and moving setting of some words from the matins of Christmas morning. 'O magnum mysterium.' 'O great mystery and wondrous sacrament, that animals should see the new-born Lord, lying in the manger. Blessed Virgin, whose womb was found worthy to bear Christ the Lord. Alleluia.' The words were set by the American composer, Morten Lauridsen in 1994 and first performed a few days before Christmas in Los Angeles. Since then, the setting has been sung by choirs, both professional and amateur, around the world.

Morten Lauridsen has composed many works for the human voice, and all of them are sensitive and heartfelt responses to the words chosen. No more so than in 'O magnum mysterium.' After the opening chord, the altos introduce us to a motif that pervades the work: D to a rising 4th and a falling 3rd that lights on A. It is like the movement of the heart, rising in praise and resting in hope at the mystery of the Incarnation. The joy is inner and deep and suffuses the music as it reaches a climax with Alleluia. The final words are that all this glory lies in a manger, where the animals gather.

From The Gospel of Luke, 2.

The angel said to them, "do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

**“Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to all men
on whom his favour rests.”**

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Tasty Brussel Sprouts

Ingredients: 900gr. Brussel Sprouts
2 tspns. Olive oil
225gr. Pancetta, cut into cubes

1. Bring a saucepan of salted water to the boil and add the sprouts. Cook for 8-10 minutes, or until tender, drain in a colander.
2. Heat frying pan over a high heat until hot. Add olive oil and pancetta cubes and fry for 5-7 minutes, or until the pancetta is crisp and golden brown.
3. Add the drained sprouts and stir together to warm through.

Serve immediately.

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Jokes from Christmas Crackers

Why did the turkey join the band? Because he had the drumsticks!

How do you handle dangerous cheese? Caerphilly!

What do they sing at a snowman's birthday party? Freeze a jolly good fellow!

What did Cinderella say when her photos didn't arrive on time? One day my prints will come.

What lies in a pram and wobbles? A jelly baby! (4)

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE 2020

In one of our best-loved carols, Christina Rossetti situates the birth of Jesus 'in the bleak midwinter'. She paints a severe and freezing manger scene, with howling wind and deep snow. She represents the frosted earth and water with iron and stone.

From the biblical narrative, it seems unlikely that Jesus was born in the bleak midwinter, as the shepherds would not be putting their sheep out to pasture in freezing conditions. But that does not stop us gladly enjoying Rossetti's romantic poetic licence and reminding ourselves that the conditions of the first Christmas were hard, extraordinarily hard by modern standards.

Mary was a young girl giving birth a long way from home. The town of Bethlehem was crowded with strangers registering with the tax authorities of the occupying powers. Mary laid her new-born baby in an animal's stone feeding trough. And the first visitors were not close family but rough men from the fields.

It is extremely difficult to recover this first Christmas. The festival has become overlaid with medieval nativity scenes and Romantic or Dickensian winter scenes. In the twentieth century, Christmas became the setting of the perfect family gathering. Most significantly, the run up to the commercial Christmas – the 'golden quarter' – is now a vital part of the retail industry's overall wellbeing so that vast sums are expended on advertising to persuade us to acquire more goods and more debt.

But not in 2020. This year it will be very different. Travel bans, lockdowns and quarantines mean it will be harder and perhaps impossible to get together with our loved ones. People are poorer. High streets, at least at the time of writing, are closed in many countries. And even when they re-open, shopping isn't quite the same when you have to physically distance and wear a mask.

Christmas will be simpler this year. And for many it will be sadder. As Covid-19 has progressed more and more families have been affected by the virus and its frightening and sometimes long-term symptoms. Some of us have a relative who has been in intensive care, struggling to breathe. Many of us know someone who has very sadly lost their life, and some of us face the first Christmas without someone close to us. This year, perhaps we more intuitively sense the harshness of the manger scene, the cruelty of death, the pain of a bleak mid-winter.

Another well-known – and much older – carol speaks to us about 'tidings of comfort and joy'. In 2020 we need to hear these tidings. For Christmas is at heart the story of a God who draws near to us in Jesus, sharing the sorrows and joys of human experience. In the mystery of the incarnation, the eternal God wonderfully

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condescends to be born as a human baby, in the roughest conditions. He is 'Immanuel' – the God who is with us.

Whatever conditions you face this Christmas, I hope you will be able to reach out and find the God who is with us. I hope you will take comfort from the presence of God with you, and perhaps also find opportunity to comfort others.

'God rest you merry' in modern English means 'may God grant you peace and happiness'. The unknown author continued:

'Let nothing you dismay
for Jesus Christ our Saviour was born on Christmas Day
to save us all from Satan's power
when we had gone astray
which brings tidings of comfort and joy'.

I wish each of you and your families comfort and joy as we approach this Christmas season.

+ **Robert Gibraltar in Europe**

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Some thoughts for Advent

Be patient, therefore, brethren
until the coming of the Lord.
Behold the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth,
being patient over it until it receives the early and the late rain.
You also be patient.
Establish your hearts,
for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

(James 5. 7-8)

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**The good for which we are born into this world is
that we may learn to love.**

George MacDonald, author and preacher
who inspired Mark Twain and C.S. Lewis
and who is buried in the English Cemetery, Bordighera

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