

DIOCESE IN EUROPE

THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND



St Ursula's Berne, Switzerland Chaplaincy Profile

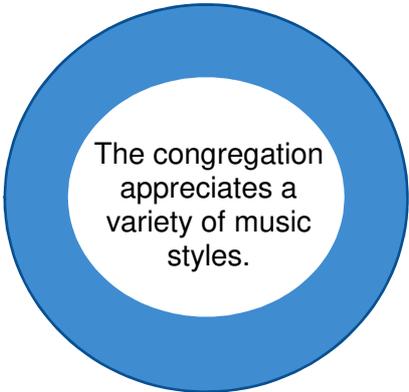


www.stursula.ch

SUMMARY

An open, welcoming, friendly and inclusive church family from a variety of nationalities, backgrounds and denominations, bound together by the love for our Lord and the wish to serve him. Sharing the Eucharist is at the core of our church life. We serve the local English-speaking community but have ecumenical ties with many churches in Berne.

With committed and active members and frequent newcomers and visitors, we are a church of budding opportunities. Looking for a loving and caring gardener, who will help design, shape and grow our church to reach its full potential. Challenges are organizing and encouraging the young church, dealing with generational transition and fostering community and teaching in a geographically distributed congregation.



The congregation appreciates a variety of music styles.



Berne is a World Heritage City and a wonderful place to live.



Opportunity for building up youth and children's ministry, as well as study and prayer groups.



Small but dedicated community in neighbouring Thun with potential for growth.



A diverse, international congregation attracted by our welcome and worship.



Well-maintained and recently renovated buildings including the church house.



St Ursula's is self-financing with a balanced budget and healthy reserves.



Our large catchment area is both a blessing and a challenge.

BERNE – A FABULOUS PLACE TO LIVE

Berne – nestled by the river Aare

Our Church is located in the German-speaking city of Berne, the Swiss federal capital. At an altitude of 542m above sea level, it is the third highest European capital.



The medieval city, situated in a loop of the River Aare, still remains almost completely intact. With its sandstone buildings, fountains, gardens and trees, it is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Environment, cultural mix

Berne consistently ranks amongst the top cities to live in worldwide for quality of life. It is the centre of Government and has a top University. The population therefore is cosmopolitan, with foreigners making up 25% of the population, many working in the service and diplomatic sectors. Berne has a very efficient public transport system.

Culture and meeting up

There is plenty of culture in Berne, including English language amateur theatre groups, stand-up comedy and cinema, as well as concerts and festivals of all sorts. There are also several English-speaking business and social networking groups. There are lots of bars and restaurants for all budgets, plus even an English pub or two.

St Ursula's: elegantly situated

St Ursula's is situated in the 19th century suburb of Kirchenfeld - a quiet location adjacent to woods. Nearby are a small zoo and several foreign embassies. The city centre is just a 15-minute walk or a couple of stops on the tram away.

Academic Berne

Most residents send their children to local German-speaking schools. There are also private schools, including an International School and a British School. The University of Berne has an international reputation.

Sport and outdoor activities

Switzerland is a country for outdoor sports, whether winter sports like skiing or snow shoe walks,



or summer activities like running through the streets of Berne, hiking in the Bernese Oberland, swimming in the rivers or lakes, or cycling or jogging.

Swiss German is the main language spoken in Berne: (81% of the population) followed by Italian (3.9%) and French (3.6%). Every canton has its own form or forms of Swiss German dialect which sound very different to the German spoken in Germany, but English is also widely spoken and understood. If you have learnt High German, then it does not take too long to understand the Bernese dialect.

Did you know that Berne not only has real bears living in it, but also over 100 fountains, each with a story? It really is a fabulous place to live.

THE CHURCH AS PEOPLE

Who We Are

St Ursula's is a friendly and open English-speaking congregation, with a mix of long- and short-term residents and visitors. It provides a place of worship for Christians who are happy in an Anglican environment. This includes people from different denominations, backgrounds and nationalities – not only British, American and Australasian, but also Swiss and people from other countries in Europe, Africa and Asia. There are 116 members on the electoral roll.

Worship



Our worship aims to be open and inclusive, involving members of the congregation in various ways. All services use CW and modern language. The minister and servers are robed, but no one else.

8:30 Said Eucharist twice a month. This attracts around 12 to 15 of our members who appreciate the quiet style of worship.

10:00 Eucharist every Sunday followed by refreshments and fellowship. Attendance is around 50 to 80 – more at festivals. Three services a month are Sung Eucharist. The other is less formal.

Morning and Evening Prayer most days of the week.

10.30 Eucharist on Thursdays followed by tea and cake.

In Thun there is a fortnightly Eucharist service followed by a bible study on a Thursday evening. This is a small, committed group of around eight people.

Junior Church and Youth

The Junior Church and crèche meet every Sunday. The children start with the main congregation before going to their groups. Currently there are only a small number of children, but there is potential for growth

Special events during the year include the nativity play and a sleepover, as well as occasional projects which provide a contribution to worship. Classes for first communion and confirmation are run as needed.

Our ministry to older teens and young adults is an area which needs building up.



Music

There is a committed choir that rehearse regularly for occasional services and special events.

The music group, with a variety of instruments, usually accompany the informal Eucharist service once a month.

Hymns are currently selected by a small team from a variety of sources. The liturgy and hymns can be projected.

Other Activities

In Advent and Lent a Bible study course is held to which everyone is invited.

Pastoral care is mostly done by church members who visit and offer support informally. We have recently appointed a Pastoral Care co-ordinator, to work closely with the chaplain.

Once a month we have a breakfast before the 10:00 Sunday service. There is scope for the development of mid-week activities such as house groups and prayer meetings.

Four or five times a year we hold a "bring and share" lunch after the Sunday service – we encourage everyone to stay, even if they have not brought anything as there is always enough.

ST URSULA'S IN CONTEXT

Involving Everyone

St Ursula's serves all English speakers in the Berne area. As well as our regular members, our services also attract the casual and the curious.

Our popular book and food sales, quizzes, fêtes and bazaar also draw in helpers and visitors who are "on the fringe", as does our patchwork group.



St Ursula's has a wide catchment area so is not a "parish church". Getting members together for Bible studies and other activities is a challenge.

Ecumenical Activities

St Ursula's is a valued member of the Bernese Council of Churches (AKiB). This is not a mere discussion forum but works to support the young, the homeless, the migrants and the addicted.

There is an ecumenical service in the Münster each January. AKiB also co-ordinates the Christian input to the November "Night of Religions". We take an active part in both.

Under the Bonn, Porvoo and Meissen agreements, we have close ties with the local Old Catholic and Lutheran communities. We also enjoy friendly relations with the Swiss Reformed and Roman Catholic parishes. We hold an annual carol service jointly with the English-speaking Roman Catholic congregation which attracts around 600 people. A carol service in Thun in conjunction with the Old Catholics is also well attended.

Other Churches

There are other active English-speaking congregations in Berne, including Riverlife and Vineyard. There is scope for working together, but little is currently happening.

Several of our members also attend other churches, because of family background or proximity.

The Danish and Swedish Lutheran Churches use the church and hall for services and events from time to time. So, too, do a Swiss, an Ethiopian and a Brazilian free church group.

Communication

Our magazine reaches over 300 families. The church's website, www.stursula.ch, has proved an effective means of outreach and communication. So, have our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram sites.

Charity and Missions

St Ursula's Charity and Missions team keeps in active touch with the local and foreign charities we support. Once a year we invite speakers from those charities to a "Missions Sunday" service.



We are currently involved in helping a local refugee family. Our Junior Church are supporting a Tear Fund project in Uganda.

The wider Archdeaconry

Berne is one of ten chaplaincies in the Archdeaconry of Switzerland. The Archdeaconry holds an annual Choir Festival, training study days two or three times a year, synod and chapter meetings and occasional retreats.

Clergy Support

Isolation can be a problem: churchwardens and congregation are happy to assist. Our nearest Anglican neighbour is Neuchatel (30 miles). Vevey, Basle, Zurich and Lausanne are all just over an hour away by car or public transport. The Archdeacon lives some 60 miles away in the canton of Aargau. The two-day Chapter Meeting held twice a year is an important source of collegial support.

Two other clergy with Permission to Officiate live in the area, one of whom is the Diocesan Environmental Officer. We have a recently-licensed young and active Lay Reader who assists in the preaching ministry.

FINANCES AND INTEGRATION

Church Finances

The church is fully self-financing, with a balanced budget. We have a well-supported pledge scheme, and around 70% of our Fr235,000 annual income comes from community giving in the form of pledges, collections or donations. The rest is raised via our quarterly book sales, annual bazaar and other fund-raising events, as well as from renting out our facilities to outside bodies. Staffing costs and running our extensive premises are the largest element in our expenditure. In addition, we give 10% of the monies raised to charities that we support.

Switzerland is one of the wealthiest countries in the world and we can rely on our congregation in times of need. We have just completed an extensive renovation project which we financed solely through our own efforts. We are very proud of this.



Our 3-year forecast is for a balanced budget based on current patterns of income and expenditure. In order to finance new initiatives, we will need to increase our income.

Berne is an expensive place to live, but we offer a generous remuneration package, including not only free housing with all utilities paid, but also family health insurance and a SBB travel pass for the whole of Switzerland for the chaplain and spouse.

Personal Finances

The annual salary on offer is 60,060 CHF. Income tax is deducted, as well as your share of Swiss social security contributions and Swiss pension contributions.

Tax depends on your family circumstances. Child allowance is available.

Assuming a married person with the spouse working, and no dependent children, the salary after deductions will be around CHF 43,900 p.a. (GBP 33,770). If the spouse is not working, then it will be around CHF 46,340 p.a. (GBP 35,646). If there are dependent children, then the salary after deductions will be higher in both examples. The treasurer is happy to give more precise figures on request.

Exchange rate used is CHF 1.30: GBP 1

Using the Big Mac index, a big Mac in Switzerland cost 6.75 USD in Jan18, compared to 4.40 USD in the UK. This factor of around 1.55 is representative of the cost of living in Switzerland.

Integration matters

We want you to be happy with us here in Berne. The first year is the hardest, especially if this is the first time living abroad. A block of language lessons will be paid for, for both the chaplain and spouse, and we can provide locals to practise your skills on, or you can join a local meet-up group to speak German with. Visitors from home are likely to be important as well as days of rest and taking proper time off for holidays.

If you need any help with any aspects of life here in Switzerland, be open with the churchwardens who will do all they can to assist.

THE CHURCH BUILDINGS

A Short History

The church was built at the beginning of the 20th century as part of the elegant suburb of Kirchenfeld. The adjacent church house and the halls were built in the 1950s and extended in the 1990s.

The basic fabric of the church has been well maintained throughout its history. The church roof was renovated in 1999. Our electronic organ dates from 1999. The old wooden chairs were replaced by comfortable seating in 2013.

The hall roof was renewed in 2006 and the floors were refurbished three years ago.

In 2017 the church house was partially renovated. In addition, all buildings were insulated to modern standards and the heating system was renewed.

Church Building



The church is in good condition and has seating for approximately 140 people. Adjacent to the church are two halls with kitchens and toilets. One hall is on the ground floor and the other in the basement. Each is around 110m². The basement hall has access to two cellars beneath the church house.



On the first floor there are two offices, one used by our administrator, and a meeting room.

The church and the halls are regularly used by several different churches, Christian and other

organisations, and generate a regular income. A part-time caretaker and other volunteers look after the premises. In addition, there is a paid cleaner.

Church House

The church house is a typical family house, adjacent to the church.



A significant building programme has recently been completed which includes new windows, a new boiler, exterior insulation, repainting, and a new porch.

The creation of a modern open plan kitchen, living and dining area has created a sense of light and space. A new floor in the dining and living area room makes the house modern and easy to clean. A new oven and hob have been installed.

On the ground floor there is also a study and separate toilet which are accessible without passing through the private areas of the house.

Upstairs there are three bedrooms and a bathroom. There is also a loft and two cellars, one with washing machine and tumble-dryer.

The house is fully furnished, although some of the fittings are not totally new.

There is also a small easily managed private garden to the side of the house with a small outside patio area. The whole makes for a comfortable family home with modern facilities in a good location.

Location

The church is situated in Kirchenfeld, a quiet and beautiful area. The city centre is easily reached by tram (two stops) and nearby are the Dählhölzli woods which lead down to the River Aare. It is less than five minutes' walk to a neighbourhood supermarket.

WHAT WE NEED FROM OUR NEXT CHAPLAIN

Essential qualities – our next chaplain must be:

- Christ-centred
- Able both to preach and teach the Gospel in a way that is relevant to everyday living
- Open to different races and cultures
- An experienced leader, who can unite, inspire and delegate
- One who connects with all age groups
- A good listener
- A person with a welcoming and loving personality
- A person whom people can confide in and look to for support
- A person who has the ability and flexibility to resolve conflicts to the advantage of the whole
- Self-reliant
- ... and must have a talent for church growth.

Desirable qualities – our next chaplain should ideally be:

- Happy to make ecumenical contacts and to take part in activities with other churches in Switzerland and with the local community
- Able to speak German or willing to learn
- Willing to encourage both traditional music and also contemporary singing
- Open to different forms of liturgy within the Anglican tradition
- Computer-literate and aware of social media
- Interested and ready to be involved in the bazaars, book sales and other social events at St Ursula's
- Experienced for several years, preferably in parish ministry
- Acquainted with life outside the UK
- Prepared to commit to at least 3 years in post in order to ensure continuity
- ... and should have a good sense of humour

