

NEWSLETTER

VOL 28/2 MARCH 09

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Chaplain's Message

We have made the acquaintance of *Fasnachtschüechli*, and very good they are too. The principle seems to be the same as the British tradition of pancakes – using up all the eggs, sugar and fat that we are not supposed to have in Lent.

When you have done without something for a while, it seems so much better when you return to it. Lent is a time of preparation – a time not only for getting the church ready for Easter and preparing the glorious festival but also for preparing our hearts for what is to come.

Lent is the time when people were traditionally prepared for their initiation into the Christian faith by Baptism and First Communion. We are doing something similar at St Ursula's, as we have a group of young people preparing to receive Communion with their families. Their first Communion will not take place at Easter but a little later, to ensure that they have had time to prepare properly for this important step. Please continue to support them in prayer.

By tradition, the Church has a Sunday in Lent when the discipline is relaxed a little. The fourth Sunday in Lent became known as Refreshment Sunday. It was also called *Laetare Sunday* because in the middle ages the words of the main service began with the words *Laetare Jerusalem* – Rejoice Jerusalem.

Nowadays, that Sunday is known in Britain as Mothering Sunday (not to be confused with the Swiss *Muttertag* or the American Mother's Day). The focus of the day is not only mothers but also our mother the Church and also Mary, the mother of Jesus. Mothering Sunday falls on 22 March this year and we shall be rejoicing as we welcome at least one new member into the Church through her baptism.

One of the other things that we are encouraged to do all through the year is to pray for the life of the diocese each day. We remember Bishops Geoffrey and David and call to mind each of the congregations in turn. The Diocesan Prayer Diary (copies available in the church porch and the hall) contains all the details. This year during Lent, it would be good if we can get into the habit of joining others in the diocese to pray for each other and, as God's people, turn our hearts and minds back to God.

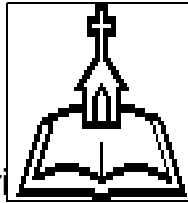
And whilst on the subject of prayer, this year's Lent course will be looking at various styles and traditions of Christian spirituality. Why not come along and find out more?



Rotas for March 2009

READERS

- 1 P Jayaraj+W Astor
- 8 B Morgan+C Hodler
- 15 A Thomas+E Pfyffer
- 22 I Jordan+J Wong
- 29 A Funkhouser+A Masciadri



INTERCESSIONS

- 1 A Thomas
- 8 I Jordan
- 15 S Faillettaz
- 22 B Morgan
- 29 H Davie

SIDESPERSONS

- 1 S Faillettaz+Helper
- 8 S Klein+Helper
- 15 S Higson+Helper
- 22 P Perrett+Helper
- 29 B Morgan+Helper

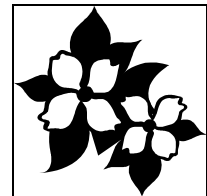


COFFEE & TEA

- 1 Köniz Group
- 8 J Josi+A-M Low
- 15 Wildhaber family
- 22 S & M Brawand
- 29 Ittigen Group

FLOWERS

No flowers during Lent.



If you would like to help with decorating the church for Easter, please contact Yojena Chittazhathu at ☎031 859 64 12 or the church office.

SERVER

- 1 A Thomas
- 8 D Goepfert
- 15 J Hutchison 22 M Wildhaber
- 29 L Robb



CHALICE ASSISTANTS

- 1 R Freiburghaus+H Davie
- 8 E Hutchison+K Chittazhathu
- 15 H Davie+P Perrett 22 B Morgan+S Zysset
- 29 A Funkhouser+E Hutchison



DUTY COUNCIL MEMBER

- 1 H Davie
- 8 J Eze
- 15 K Sovilla
- 22 M Wildhaber
- 29 E Hutchison

AUDIO

- 1 Hj Gusset
- 8 D Sovilla
- 15 A Tomczak
- 22 H Wenger
- 29 P Perrett

Junior Church

Junior Church teaching themes in March

- 1 March *Matthew 13:1-23* **Aim:** To realise we need to respond to Jesus' teaching.
- 8 March *Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43* **Aim:** To know that God will deal with bad people.
- 15 March *Matthew 13:31-33* **Aim:** To be excited to be part of something that is growing.
- 22 March *Matthew 19:13-15* **Aim:** To hear Jesus teach how children are a model for how we come to God.
- 29 March *Matthew 10:46-52* **Aim:** To see that Jesus has authority to heal.

A note about when children return to Church:

Junior Church classes will return to the service at the peace on the 2nd, 4th, and 5th Sunday of each month. If you would like your child to return every Sunday for Communion or a blessing please let the teacher know and it will be arranged. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to call Kelly on 031 921 5592

NURSERY ROTA MARCH

- 1 Chloë Hodler & Catherine Augustine
8 Marty Hebeisen & Jana Kutesko
15 Querida & Olivia Long
22 Karla Romberg & Rebecca Giuliani
29 Claudine Aeberli & Walter Bisig

Laughlines

Why was Goliath so surprised when David hit him with a stone?
Because nothing like this had ever entered his mind before.

Did you hear about the two peanuts that went walking around
the Bronx in the middle of the night? One of them was assaulted.

Rainbow Rhymes

Poems and Promises to cut out and collect.

Two Onto One

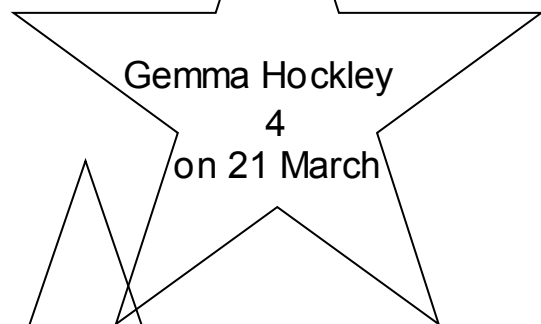
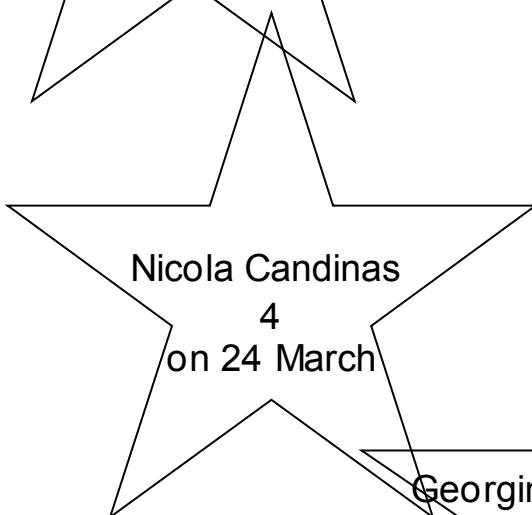
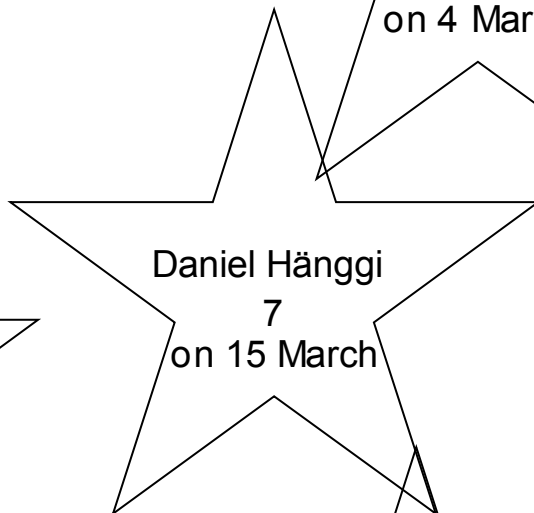
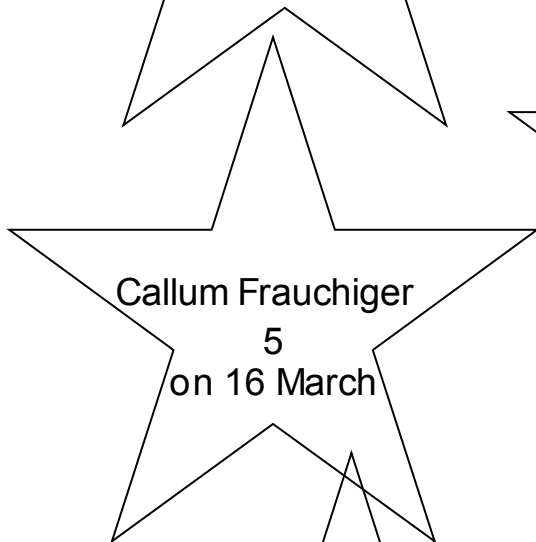
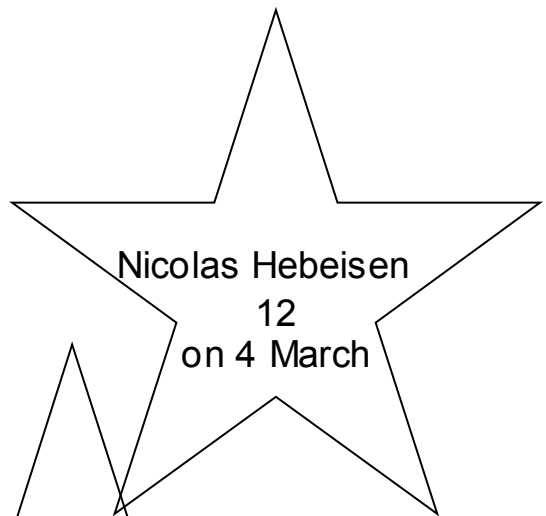
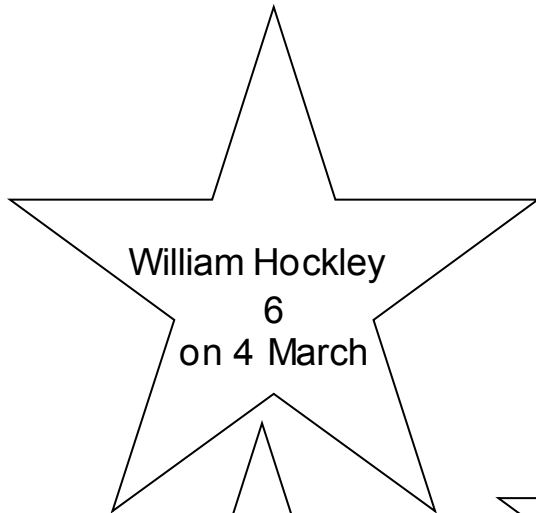
Rachel's not friends with me.
She says that I smell.
She's poisoned Rebecca
Against me as well.
They won't share my hymn book,
Or help mix the paint.
They say if I'm near them
They both want to faint.
They say if I'm near them
They both want to faint.
They're whispering about me
They giggle and lie,
I know tears will spill out
If I open my eyes.
Why are they mean to me?
What have I done?
It never seems fair
When it's two onto one.



Do for others what you would like them to do for you. Mt7:12(NLT)

Poem by Daphne Kitching, Picture by Elaine Hill, Coloured by

**Congratulations
to our Junior Church Children with
Birthdays in March**



Hear my prayer?

I am sure we are all perfect. We pray without ceasing (1 Thess 5:17), we pray for those who abuse us (Luke 6:28) and we have the sort of faith that moves mountains (Matt 21:21). If only!

More realistically, we are all selfish. We pray that our children will get better marks than average in examinations, we pray that the sun will shine when we go skiing, we pray that our daughter will marry “Mr Right” - meaning someone we approve of, or someone who we can boast about to others. We forget that in the same breath, we are praying that other children will get lower marks than ours, that the next day's skiers will miss the fresh falls of snow forecast for neighbouring resorts, that if our daughter has her own feelings, she should reject them in favour of our own.

Of course, not all prayer is selfish. Prayers for our neighbours who are sick, prayers for peace, prayers for the spread of God's word, “intercession”, in the sense of asking something for other people – these cannot be said to be selfish. Nor can the prayer our Lord taught and commanded us to follow, “hallowed be your name”. Here we all pray together for the coming of God's kingdom, for universal forgiveness, that we all pass through the time of testing and come to the day when we share God's heavenly banquet.

But even if our prayers are selfless, the sick still die, the poor still starve, wars do not cease, evil regimes do not crumble. What has gone wrong?

This is not a new question. It is Job's question, “Why me?” It is the Psalmist's question, “Why, Lord, do you stand far off?” (10:1). It lies behind Jesus' words to Peter, James and John, after his fervent prayer in Gethsemane, “Enough! The hour has come; the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.” (Mark 14:41)

One easy answer to what has gone wrong is to see in unanswered prayer “the hands of sinners.” The poor still starve because we in our selfish indifference cannot be bothered to create a social system that ensures wealth is adequately shared. Wars go on because the leaders of the parties at war are not interested in agreeing on a fair way to live together. The horrors of the concentration camps, the wanton acts of al-Qa'eda, were committed by people who did not see Christ in their neighbour, but who had depersonalized their victims.

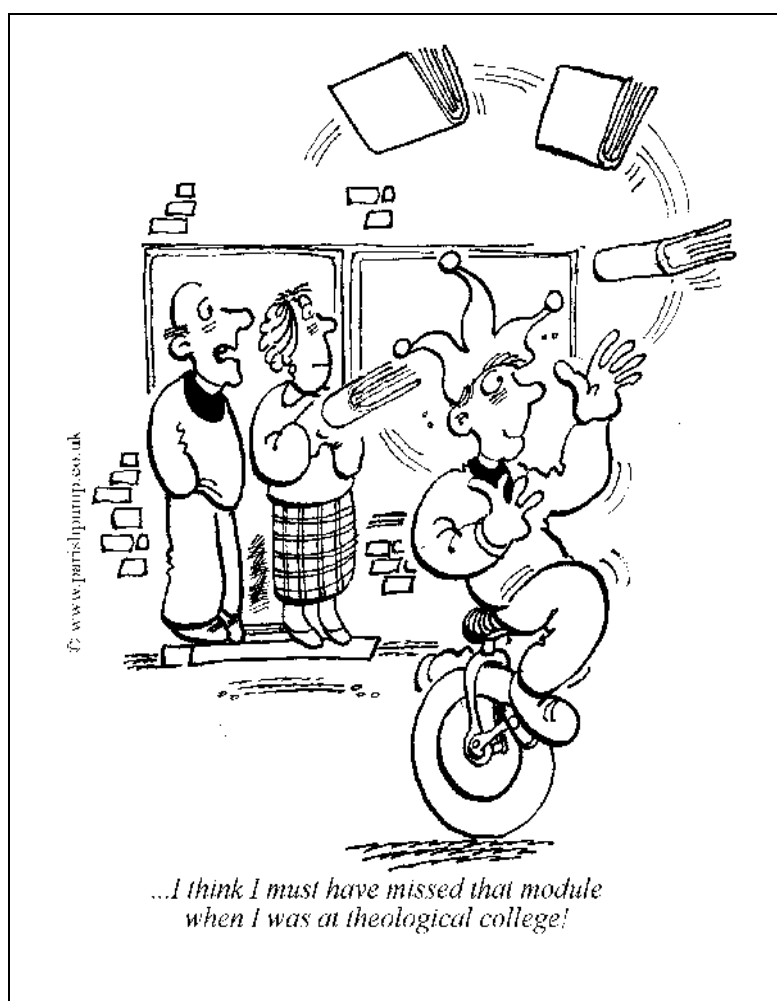
But if God could dazzle Saul into changing his ways on the Damascus road, why does God not also dazzle Robert Mugabe, Osama bin Laden, the leaders of the warring sides in Gaza? Why did he not enlighten Adolf Hitler?

Perhaps the answer lies in the Cross. God was working on Caiaphas, on Pontius Pilate, on the centurion who stood by. But God only speaks a voice in our ear, and does not point a gun at us. We have a choice, and so do the sinners. God cannot change the rules of the world around us: we cannot put

the clock back, we cannot break the laws of gravity, or of cause and effect.

Prayer is not “asking God to do something” about a situation. Prayer is a chance to talk to God about our own cares, our own worries, and about the whole of God's world – for our own peace will not be complete until every sword has been beaten into a ploughshare, and every hungry mouth has been fed. Prayer is a chance to listen, and to reflect. If we feel that God has not listened, that God has got it wrong, then we should pray some more, and listen some more. If we feel God has got it wrong, we are not listening. For God never gets it wrong.

HD



For Your Diary March 2009

Regular weekly events

Mondays	09.30-10.00	Morning Prayer
Wednesdays	09.15-11.15	Parents and Tots
Fridays	09.30	Patchwork
	12.00-13.30	Pathways – An Introduction to Spirituality
	19.00-20.30	Pathways – (as above) (not on 27/03)
	19.00-21.00	Youth Group
Saturdays	09.30-11.30	Choir practice

Other events

Sunday	1	10.00-11.15	Children and Communion Course
		12.00	Lenten Soup Lunch in aid of Cecily's Fund
Tuesday	3	19.30	Church Council
Friday	6	12.00-16.00	Book Sale Set-up
Saturday	7	10.00-14.00	Book & Food Sale
Sunday	8	10.00-11.15	Youth Course
Sunday	15	10.00-11.15	Children and Communion Course
COPY DATE			
Wednesday	18	18.30	Ecumenical service and address Petrus- und Pauluskirche
Sunday	22	10.00-11.15	Youth Course
Monday	23	19.00	Workshop on pastoral visiting (details to follow)
Thursday	26	09.00-11.00	Magazine Collating
Wednesday	25	18.30	Ecumenical service and address Petrus- und Pauluskirche

Odds and Ends

Future dates

1 April	18.30 Ecumenical service at Petrus- und Pauluskirche
9-12 April	Holy Week and Easter Services – see below
26 April	1200 Annual General Meeting (AGM)
1-3 May	Archdeaconry Retreat
8-10 May	Archdeaconry Choir Festival
6 June	1000-1400 Book Sale
18 June	Songs of Praise Service in Thun
29 August	1000-1400 Book Sale
4-6 September	Church Weekend Away in Aeschi
27-28 November	Christmas Bazaar

(Dates in March are on the 'For Your Diary' page)

Holy Week and Easter services

9 April	Maundy Thursday 19.30 Commemoration of the Last Supper
10 April	Good Friday 10.00 Family Service – Making the Easter Garden 12.00-15.00 Meditation and Liturgy of the Last Hour
12 April	Easter Day 09.00 Sung Eucharist with Easter Ceremonies 10.30 Easter Family Communion <i>(More details in the April Magazine)</i>

Summer Time

Summer Time, believe it or not, begins on Sunday 29 March. Remember to put your clocks forward by an hour on the Saturday night, or you will be late for church.

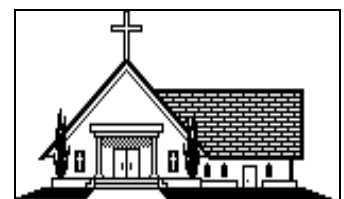
English Church Services and Housegroup in Thun

Thun church group meets on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month.

The **19.30 Eucharist** service is combined with bible study. Everyone is welcome to join us!

Services are held at the "Pavilion" of the Reformierte Kirchgemeindehaus in Bubenbergrasse, Thun.

For more information please contact Sharon Bachmann
033 336 93 78.



News from Neuchâtel Church

Regular Services: 2nd and last Sunday of each month at 5 pm

Chapelle des Charmettes, Rue Varnoz 1, Neuchâtel

2nd Sunday : Family Communion Service

Last Sunday : Communion service (During the sermon and liturgy, children leave to follow their own programme in Junior Church)

Minister in charge: **The Rev. Roy Farrar** Tel: 032 730 51 83

Chemin du Chasselas 11

2012 AUVERNIER

www.neuchatelchurch.ch

HOUSEGROUPS IN MARCH

Our Bible studies on the Beatitudes continue on

Tuesday 10 March at 8pm at Roy and Mieke's flat

Tuesday 24 March at 8pm - venue to be arranged

HOLY WEEK IN NEUCHÂTEL - Dates for your diary:

Maundy Thursday, 9 April at 7pm. There will be an **AGAPE MEAL** with communion. The liturgy ties in as we share a simple meal together, remembering our Lord and his disciples sharing the pass-over meal. Soup and bread will be provided; please feel free to bring wine or a cake for the dessert course.

Good Friday, 10 April at 7pm. Service of meditation around the cross. Please bring a poem, reading, music you would like to share, or request a favourite hymn. Roy would appreciate knowing in advance so that he can co-ordinate the input.

Easter Day, 12 April at 5pm. Family Communion Service

ADVANCE NOTICE

Neuchâtel's Annual General Meeting will be held after the service on **Sunday 26 April** followed by a shared meal.

Important points are to be discussed at the meeting including:

- 1) Presentation of the revised statutes of the Neuchâtel Church
- 2) Election of a new churchwarden

Please think about this meeting and pray for guidance

FAQ - What does the Church of England stand for?

Anyone who is on the electoral roll of this chaplaincy is automatically a member of the Church of England, whatever their previous church background. In fact, by being added to the roll you are agreeing to be regarded as a member. What, then, does it mean to belong to the Church of England? The first thing to say is that it doesn't make you English (and I write as one born in Ireland and having spent nearly nine years in Scotland before coming to Switzerland).

Unlike Protestant churches, the Church of England does not have a confession of faith. The Church of England (and the rest of the Anglican Communion) does not have its own doctrine but simply accepts and professes the faith of the universal Church.

Anglican churches contain and respect both Catholic and Protestant features and all recognise the leadership of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Although Anglicans are reluctant to define too closely what their church stands for, the essentials were set out in a document of 1888, known as the Lambeth Quadrilateral. It is so called because it was drawn up at Lambeth, the residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and because it states that the Church should be founded on four basic principles:

- Scripture as “the rule and ultimate standard of faith”.
- The Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed as the sufficient statement of Christian faith.
- The sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion, using the words and elements (i.e. water, bread, wine) ordained by Christ. In the case of Communion, the sacrament is to be administered by a priest ordained by a bishop.
- The Historic Episcopate (i.e. government by bishops consecrated by laying on of hands in unbroken line from the time of the apostles).

These constitute the “bottom line” for deciding what makes an Anglican.

Over and above that there is the heritage of prayer, spirituality, music and worship, a concern for order and dignity, a sense of historical continuity and a steady, but often understated, faith.

All in all, a rich treasury to share with any who wish to join us.

PMP

LENT COURSE 2009

PATHWAYS

An Introduction to Christian Spirituality

Fridays in the Hall

12.00 to 13.30

repeated

19.00 to 20.30

starting on 27 February

light refreshments

Midweek Services in Lent

***Wednesday 18, 25 March and 1 April
at 18.30***

Holy Communion and Sermon

Petrus-und-Pauluskirche, Rathausgasse

A joint service by the Anglican, Lutheran and
Old Catholic churches

A Lenten Collect

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing that you have made
and forgive the sins of all those who are penitent:
create and make in us new and contrite hearts
that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our
wretchedness, may receive from you, the God of all mercy,
perfect remission and forgiveness;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns
with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

A Thought from St Augustine: Meeting God in our neighbour

If it is shameless for a farmer to reap a crop where he knows he hasn't sown any seed, how much more shameless must it be to look to God to be rich in giving, when you have declined to listen to a poor man asking? It's through the poor person, after all, that God, who is never hungry has asked to be fed. Let us not, then, spurn our God when he is needy in the poor, so that we in our need may be satisfied by him in his riches. We have needy people, and we are needy ourselves; so let us give, in order to receive.



*...actually, I've decided to give
up abstinence for Lent...*

COPY DATE !!!

for the April issue 15 March

COLLATING DATE

26 March 2009

Confirmation Class – Advance Notice

We are considering starting a new confirmation class for young people after the summer holidays. If you are interested in this class please contact the chaplain.

Coffee Rota

Thank you to Libby Stewardson, who has looked after the Coffee Rota for the past five years. Mary Mead (☎ 031 982 00 37) has kindly offered to take her place, so our tea and coffee after the service are assured!

Bishop Fritz-René

We send our prayers and good wishes to Bishop Fritz-René Müller of the Old Catholic Church in Switzerland, as he retires from full-time ministry on 1 March. Please keep our sister church in your prayers during this vacancy and as they prepare for the election of a new bishop.

Pastoral Group Set Up

We now have a group of four volunteers (Joanna Davie, Donna Goepfert, Jennifer Hockley and Shareene Potter) who will be working with the Chaplain to coordinate and support pastoral care in the church. The intention is not to replace or devalue what people are already doing but rather to try and make sure that care is being offered where it is needed. We are planning a workshop for anyone who visits, probably at the end of March, and a social event in June. Please look out for more details in the weekly notice sheets or the next magazine. Shareene has agreed to act as the contact person. As ever we rely on being given information about people who would like a visit, phone call or prayers, so please let us know.

- P M Potter -

Patchwork

To Grandmothers, Godmothers, Mothers, Aunts

If you are looking for a present for a new baby, for a friend or for a relation, why not consider contacting St Ursula's Patchwork Group? They might be able to help you find a quilt, a wall hanging or any other item, small or large. If you wish to find out more, please get in touch with one of the patchwork ladies. They meet on Friday mornings in the church hall. Or make a phone call to *Elisabeth Pfyffer* on 031 721 7541

Kamay Krafts

At the next BOOK SALE on 7 March check out the table with

Handbags from Manila, Philippines from Kamay Krafts

Kamay Krafts Cooperative is a Community Empowerment Project that provides a livelihood amongst the urban poor women of Manila. The women produce quality handcrafted bags in various sizes from recycled material, reasonably priced.

- From the Charity Committee -

A.S.A.P.

There's work to do, deadlines to meet;
you've got no time to spare,
but as you hurry and scurry -
A.S.A.P. - ALWAYS SAY A PRAYER.

In the midst of family chaos
quality time is rare.
Do your best: let God do the rest -
A.S.A.P. - ALWAYS SAY A PRAYER.

It may seem like your worries
are more than you can bear.
Slow down and take a breath -
A.S.A.P. - ALWAYS SAY A PRAYER.

God knows how stressful life is;
He wants to ease our cares,
and He'll respond to all your needs -
A.S.A.P. - ALWAYS SAY A PRAYER.

Church Council Report

Two council meetings have been held in 2009 – on Tuesday 13 January (too late for a report to be included in the last magazine) and Tuesday 3 February.

In both meetings the financial situation (reasonably healthy), the AGM planning (for 26 April) and building/maintenance work were discussed briefly. The building committee is preparing a prioritised list of projects, including replacing the roof of the church house, putting laminate flooring in all upstairs rooms of the church house, replacing the carpet in church, replacing the chairs in church, converting the garage into a meeting room, checking the state of the big trees in the garden and much more. The broken light shade in the church will be replaced, but as it has to be made specially this will take some time. Broken chairs in the church will be removed and either repaired or thrown away – if you notice one, please tell a council member or the sidesperson.

Youth work is an important topic which was discussed at both meetings. Council agreed to employ a 50% youth worker from the summer – a profile has been drawn up and sent to various organisations who may be able to help us find someone. If you have an idea, please speak to a council member. Until the summer, YWAM (Youth With A Mission) is running a youth group on Friday evenings for those aged 14 – 18. In addition, volunteers are offering a session on Sunday mornings approximately twice a month for the same group of young people.

The sound system in church is under review – we hope to be able to solve the technical problems and set up a system that works satisfactorily. Also to include an induction loop. The new beamer and laptop work well. Council agreed to continue using them in worship, with the provision of printed sheets for those who cannot see the screen – the person giving the notices will mention that they are available. Helpers are still needed for preparing slides and for operating the beamer during services – contact a council member if you can help.

Planning for the weekend away is going well. Council discussed various aspects, including the finances. You should find more information in this magazine.

A major topic that has been discussed at both council meetings is the future of ministry at St Ursula's. It is agreed that we want to develop shared ministry, involving various people (both clergy and lay), but more discussion is needed on exactly how to develop this.

At these two meetings, council also had to recognise that various people could no longer fulfil the roles they had done in the past:

- Hans Wenger will step down from leading the building committee after the AGM, Edi Wildhaber will take over.
- Kelly Sovilla will step down from leadership of the Junior Church at the end of June. A successor is being sought.
- Sharon Bachmann is stepping down from her roles as Catering Coordinator and Outreach Coordinator immediately. Successors are being sought.
- Libby Stewardson will step down from organising the coffee rota from April. A successor is being sought.

Many other small items were discussed and agreed, like social events with the Old Catholics.

If you would like more information about these meetings or about council in general please contact a council member – list at the back of this magazine.

- *Tricia Carrick, Acting Council Secretary* -

From Giuseppina Günthert

Dear friends

I would like to thank you for your support and prayers. But last Tuesday the Council of St Ursula's decided not to support my application to start the selection process of the Church of England for non stipendiary ordained ministry. In this process my vocation would have been checked and analysed by the Diocesan Director of Ordinands, by our Bishop and by a selection conference. So by people who are trained in these matters. I am convinced that if I would be "a danger" for this parish God would have been able to intervene and speak through this process. Council does have the authority to decide what or who is worth to go further. Some one phoned me and asked why I did choose to do the Certificate in Christian Studies by St. John's Extension Studies Nottingham instead of BSF. I just can say that I also do pray as they do and my best friend in my life who saved me at least four times is Jesus Christ our Lord. So if God is calling me down a path which is different from the path they took whom shall I follow God or them? People are always talking about the richness of diversity and how much they do trust in God. But this seems to work only as long as no one comes along who thinks and feels differently.

Beside this disappointment I was so pleased and grateful to see that a few people in our Council “fought like Lions” and they did not only fight for me but for you all in our congregation. Thank you for your courage and love.

If a boat on sea has a few crew members who are afraid to put the sail into the wind and to discover new coasts and to meet other people in other boats who have fun to sail in the wind of the Lord, they will discover one day that the food and water is gone and hunger and thirst will be their daily pain. If we really do trust in the Lord and believe that He is almighty then we can be sure that He sent us the right skipper who is confident with the waves and storms we could cross on our journey. It is up to us now to show confidence and trust into the Lord and this does not depend on what we want but what the Lord wants from us.

In love for you all and in love with Christ,
Giuseppina Güntert, Berne, 6.2.2009

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

This year’s AGM will be held on **Sunday 26 April at 12.00**. Please note this date now. We hope many members of the congregation will be able to attend this important church meeting.

At the AGM we will elect church wardens and church council members. If you would like to be able to vote at these elections (or perhaps stand for election yourself) you need to be a member of the Electoral Roll. If you are not already on the Electoral Roll, please consider joining. There is an application form on the next page of this magazine. Application forms are also available in the church hall or can be obtained from the church office or from the Electoral Roll Officer. The closing date for the receipt of applications is **Monday 6 April**.

If you have questions about the Electoral Roll or are unsure whether to join please speak to the Electoral Roll Officer or a member of council (contact details at the back of the magazine).

There will be more information about the AGM, together with the official invitation and agenda in the next magazine, but please note the date and time **now**.

- *Tricia Carrick (Electoral Roll Officer)* -

APPLICATION FOR ENTRY ON THE ELECTORAL ROLL

I,
(full Christian names, surname and title (Mr, Mrs, Miss etc))

of

.....
(full postal address)

apply to have my name entered on the electoral roll of the chaplaincy of

St Ursula's Church, Berne

which is part of the Church of England Diocese in Europe.

1) I am baptised

2) I am aged sixteen or more years

or I shall reach my sixteenth birthday on (being a date before the AGM)

(delete as appropriate)

3) I am a member of the Church of England or of a Church in full communion with the Church of England

or I am a communicant member of a Church which subscribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity and am in good standing with that Church

(delete as appropriate)

4) I have been a participant in public worship at St. Ursula's or one of the affiliated churches in Neuchâtel or Thun during a period of three months prior to the date of this application

or I have been on the electoral roll of my previous Church

(delete as appropriate)

Signed Date

When completed, this form should be returned to:

The Electoral Roll Officer
St Ursula's Church
Jubiläumsplatz 2
3005 Bern

A Word for the Month - Scripture

“All scripture is inspired by God, and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,” we read in 2 Timothy 3:16. What did the writer mean? Or is it obvious?

In the first place, the sentence obviously does not refer to the rest of 2 Timothy, which hadn't yet been written. Scripture, when the word is used (and it is often used!) in the New Testament, refers to the Old Testament. “The scriptures” were made up of three parts. There were the five books of the Law, sometimes referred to just as “Moses”. There were the Prophets, which were the books which we would call the historical books (Joshua through to 2 Kings), plus Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the twelve “minor” prophets (Hosea through to Malachi). And there were the Writings – which included such books as the Psalms, the Proverbs and Job, but also Daniel and the two books of Chronicles.

In Jesus' day, there was no agreed canon of scripture – no list of which of these “writings” should be taken seriously. It was partly this that led to the disputes between the Pharisees, who accepted all of the Old Testament as we know it, and the Sadducees, who accepted only the five books of the Law. Jesus and his followers certainly drew for their teaching on the whole of the Old Testament – they saw Jesus as “the son of man” in the light of the Psalms (8:4, for instance) and of Daniel (7:13) – and possibly other books we do not find in our Bibles today. (The Jews agreed their own canon at the beginning of the second century.)

But secondly, the writer asserts that all scripture is written “for our learning”. The same claim is made by Jesus himself (“You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that testify on my behalf.” (John 5:39), and in Acts (17:11-12) we find Paul making converts in Berea because his listeners check in the Old Testament, and find that what he has said agrees.

This is what our passage is saying – we can find sound and useful teaching in the Old Testament, but only if we can see it in a Christian light. Throughout Luke's account of the spread of the gospel, from the meeting with Jesus on the Emmaus road, through the whole of the Acts of the Apostles, we find preachers explaining how to interpret the Old Testament, just as the Gospel writers add little asides: “This was to fulfil what was written.” “For our learning”, yes, but only if our eyes have been opened by faith.

And thirdly, the writer calls scripture “inspired”. The Holy Spirit is at work – as Paul writes to the Galatians: “The scripture ... declared the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying 'All the Gentiles shall be blessed in you'.” (3:8) The scriptures are not just words in a book, they are a living message – God's message.

The early Christians also saw the writings in the New Testament as authoritative. 2 Peter 3:16 suggests that Paul's writings already had authority, and in the course of time church leaders generally agreed on the current canon, with four Gospels, the letters of the apostles, and the Revelation, which was felt to be from the apostle John. (A few churches include other books, and at the Reformation an attempt was made to exclude such books as Hebrews and Revelation.)

By the Reformation, "scripture" was felt to include the Old and the New Testaments. And one of the mottos of the Reformation was *sola scriptura* – the scriptures alone were our guide to learning about God, just as *sola fides* – faith alone, was our guide to our relationship with God.

This led to a leap in Protestant scholarship. For if the Bible had to be stripped of the traditional interpretations that had been overlaid on it, it was necessary to analyze its original text more rigorously, to find out what it actually did say. Did God create plants before human beings (Gen 1:12) or after (Gen 2:5), was Joseph's father Jacob (Mat 1:16) or Heli (Luke 3:23), did God really ask Moses to commit genocide (Deut 7:2), was Jonah really swallowed by a big fish, how exactly did Jesus feed the five thousand, how many people went to the empty tomb?

This is a little different from the Anglican view, that "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." Here, our faith comes first, and scripture confirms, supports and widens it.

The scriptures affirm our faith, and we should read them for the support they give. They allow God to speak to us, though they are not the only way that God can speak to us (as we recall when we sing the Gospel proclamation on Sundays – we live by every word that proceeds from God's mouth (Deut 8:3): something God's people were reminded of long before any scripture was set in writing!) . They are a part of God's message, and one that we can carry with us, refer to, look at for comfort and guidance. Let us take them to heart!

HD

Lesson in Lying

A minister told his congregation, "Next week I plan to preach about the sin of lying. To help you understand my sermon, I want you all to read Mark 17"

The following Sunday, as he prepared to deliver his sermon, the minister asked for a show of hands. He wanted to know how many had read Mark 17. Every hand went up. The minister smiled and said, "Mark has only sixteen chapters. I will now proceed with my sermon on the sin of lying."

Charity of the Month - Refuge Egypt

For many years St Ursula's has supported Refuge Egypt, a charity in Cairo, working out of All Saints Cathedral. We recently received an update on their work from Dr. Suzanne Holt of their Development Office. She writes:

For the past year, Egypt has been relatively stable politically. One can argue that compared to previous Governments, the current administration's reforms have brought about substantial progress in the legal, tax and investment infrastructure of Egypt. However, despite these achievements, much of Egypt's population lives below the poverty line and many experts estimate that the unemployment rate could be as high as 30%. There are over 20 thousand recognized refugees under the care of UNHCR. These are predominantly Sudanese (73%), Somalis (18%), Ethiopians (2%) and Eritreans (1%). 61% are male and 39% female; children comprise 34% of the total recognized refugees. It is estimated that there are 40-50 thousand refugees in Egypt; most of them live in Cairo.

This past year Refuge Egypt continued to provide relief to refugees through several project areas: **Emergency Assistance** (8'105 food packages were distributed and 1'438 individuals received clothing); **Self Reliance (Tukul Crafts** continues to thrive into a self sustaining business, and has helped to support projects such as the **Single Mothers and Widows); Health Programs** (we conducted 11'438 medical consultations); and **Education and Advocacy** (presently 301 refugees are benefiting from the Literacy and Adult Education English program).

The **Clinics** in Zamalek and in Arba wa Nus, continue to thrive. We continue to partner with the UNHCR to be the largest provider of medical services for refugees. Through this link we are also able to serve a significant number of Iraqi refugees referred to us by UNHCR. However, refugees from Sub-Saharan countries (Sudan and Eritrea) comprise the majority of our clients. The **Well Baby Clinic**, established in 2007, continues to grow and operates in four different locations across Cairo. In March 2009, we will start an extension of the WBC called the **Child Baby Clinic**, dealing with children through age 5. There have again been many opportunities for training for our medical staff, particularly focusing on HIV and the administration of Antiretroviral Treatment (ARVs) in anticipation of the start of our own programme. We have also recognised the need to raise awareness in the community and have reached the refugee community through HIV and TB awareness days. We have also been able to address other critical health and social areas like female circumcision, nutrition, family planning, and breast feeding. Dr Eman, our Clinic director, frequently participates in staff development activities and conducts numerous community workshops. During this quarter, she, along with two staff members from the Youth

Department, participated in a child protection course that was sponsored by Tear Fund. Dr Eman also conducted a TB awareness day that was attended by over 100 refugees. In October, all staff attended a session that dealt with anxiety and depression, and in November, Dr Eman and Dr, Neni participated in a conference that focussed on reproductive Health, sponsored by UNHCR and UNFPA. For the period Jun-Dec 2008, the Clinics conducted 37 sessions on HIV.

Our **Counselling Program** is a very active ministry of Refuge Egypt and continues to offer Basic, Intermediate and Advance Christian counselling courses to individuals from refugee churches and communities in and surrounding Cairo. The staff also provides individual counselling to struggling clients. The needs of clients are numerous and varied and range from: HIV/AIDS, TB, to victims of physical abuse. This ministry also conducts conferences and workshops that focus on issues facing the refugee communities in Cairo, such as marriage conflict, raising children, culture shock and dealing with integration into the Egyptian society.

The **Youth and Counselling Department** also conducted a retreat on 20 and 21 December 2008 at Bethel Centre, Kalioub. Over 70 individuals from Refugee churches attended this event that focused on inner healing.

The **Happy Child Preschool** in Maadi has continued to thrive and has yielded many positive outcomes. We continue to provide an environment where the children are safe and secure; along with providing an atmosphere where God's love is evident to all. The majority of our students are still from Sudanese background with a couple of Ugandan children and a few Ethiopians. All of our teachers are Sudanese. The current number of students in the school is 51.

Please Pray:

- that donors will be led to continue their support of the work of Refuge Egypt;
- that we find favour with the government officials as we advocate for refugees;
- that Tukul Crafts (a self reliant project) will find buyers for their products;
- for emotional, physical and spiritual healing for the refugees who have been traumatized;
- for wisdom for all Refuge Egypt employees and that more volunteers will come our way.

Support Us: Here are some of the ways in which your financial contribution can help disadvantaged refugees:

- Sponsor a woman throughout her pregnancy. The comprehensive

package we offer costs US\$171. For the cost of a new outfit you could make a difference in the life of a struggling new mother-to-be.

- Cover the treatment of a TB patient: The six months treatment regime costs us US\$152.
- Blankets for families in winter: The price of a cup of coffee (US\$7.60) will purchase one blanket. Would you sacrifice 10 cups of coffee this year, to help us purchase 10 blankets for needy families and their children?
- Food packages: A standard food package costs almost US\$7.60. How about giving up eating out for a month, so that vulnerable refugees can have one decent meal per day.
- Clothing: Would your Sunday School, Youth Group or School class, consider sponsoring one month out of 2009, to help supplement our clothing supply. (US\$423)
- Education: Help sponsor a child through nursery or primary school (kindergarten/elementary)! US\$ 190 would go along way in helping to educate the next generation of refugees and providing them with the chance of a better future.
- US\$400 will purchase a computer so we can begin a computer lab to train refugees in computer usage so they can get jobs.
- Youth: The cost for sponsoring a Sudanese Youth Soccer team for one year is approx US \$2'000. We aim to prevent young men and women from becoming involved in local gangs through a host of activities. This might seem trivial but we desperately need funds for this area.

From Esther Hutchison for the Charity and Missions Team



For Sale

Judy Gfeller has the following items for sale:

- French antique-finish cherrywood desk with green leather writing surface, 63 x 123 cm, height 77 cm. One centre drawer, two side drawers on the right and one drawer for suspending files on the left. Only six years old and in perfect condition. Cost new Fr2'820, selling for Fr800
- Matching computer table 52 x 132 cm, height 75 cm. Two shelves, plus one retractable shelf for PC keyboard. Cost new Fr1'650, selling for Fr800
- Two-door cabinet, maplewood veneer 40 x 83 cm, height 116 cm. Three interior shelves and one open shelf. Only four years old, perfect condition. Cost Fr370, selling for Fr165
- Two pairs Tasco binoculars 8x21, selling for Fr25/15

Contact Judy on 031 961 52 22 or email judith.gfeller@bluewin.ch

Also contact Judy if you or anyone you know has difficulty walking and would like to buy a red Swiss-made four-wheel electro scooter which has been used for only a few months. No driving licence is required for a scooter of this type. Cost new Fr7'300, selling for Fr3'600. Judy also has an electric powered armchair for sale. It has a leg-rest and adjustable seat and back.

Laughline:

A clergyman was walking down the street when he came upon a group of about a dozen boys, who had surrounded a dog. Concerned that the boys might be hurting the dog, he went over and asked "What are you doing with that dog?"

One of the boys replied, "This dog is just a stray. We all want him, but only one of us can take him home. So we've decided that whichever one of us can tell the biggest lie can keep the dog."

The clergyman was taken aback. "You boys shouldn't be having a contest telling lies!" he exclaimed. He launched into a ten minute sermon against lying, beginning, "Don't you boys know it's a sin to lie," and ending with, "Why, when I was your age, I never told a lie."

There was dead silence for about a minute. Just as the clergyman was beginning to think he'd got his message across, the smallest boy gave a deep sigh and said, "All right, give him the dog."

This month's hymn

*Lord Jesus, think on me,
and purge away my sin;
from earthborn passions set me free,
and make me pure within.*

Synesius lived in North Africa some 1600 years ago, but his thoughts had a lot in common with those of the present day. He was a country gentleman, who studied Greek philosophy at Alexandria, and who wrote several (pagan) philosophical works. He married in 403. His wife was a Christian, and soon after this, Synesius became a Christian too.

Around 410, he was consecrated Bishop of Ptolemais, one of the cities of Cyrenaica, the eastern province of present-day Libya. His wife accompanied him. He was active in ensuring the Christian message continued to be preached at a time when the Roman Empire was disintegrating.

The hymn is based upon the last of ten odes which Synesius wrote, mainly expressing the great themes of Christian doctrine. In the tenth ode, however, Synesius adds a personal message – one of supplication.

All ten odes were translated by Allen William Chatfield (1808-1896) for his *Songs and Hymns of the Earliest Greek Christian Poets, Bishops and others*. He was a vicars son, and was himself ordained. Chatfield admits that the translation of this last ode is a paraphrase rather than a direct translation - it omits the first, eighth and ninth stanzas of the Synesius original. (*Hymns Ancient and Modern New Standard* contains only four verses.)

The hymn is usually sung to Southwell, a tune published in 1579 by the organist at Queen Elizabeth I's Chapel Royal. Like most hymns throughout the ages, it is rich in biblical references. They include *Psalm 106:4, 51:2, 1 John 1:7, 3:3, Isaiah 38:14, John 12:26, Matthew 11:28, Psalm 139:24, John 14:6, Hebrews 10:20, Hebrews 1:3, and 1 Peter 5:10*.

A collector of rare books ran into an acquaintance who told him he had just thrown away an old Bible that he found in a dusty, old box. He happened to mention that Guten-somebody-or-other had printed it.

"Not Gutenberg?" gasped the collector.

"Yes, that was it!"

"You idiot! You've thrown away one of the first books ever printed. A copy recently sold at auction for half a million dollars!"

"Oh, I don't think this book would have been worth anything close to that much," replied the man.

"It was scribbled all over in the margins by some guy named Martin Luther."

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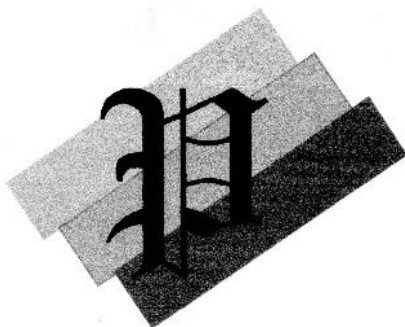
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Laughline

God is sitting up in heaven when Richard Dawkins flies up and says: 'God, we don't need to believe in you any more. Science has worked out a way to create life out of nothing. We can now do what you did in the beginning. 'Really?' replies God. 'What exactly do you mean?' 'Well,' replies Dawkins, 'We can take dirt, form it into your likeness and make it live.' 'That's something I'd like to see,' says God. 'Why don't you show me?' So Dawkins bends down and starts to mould the dirt into the shape of a woman. God grabs hold of his arm and pulls him back. 'Hey, not so fast,' he says. 'Go and get your own dirt.'



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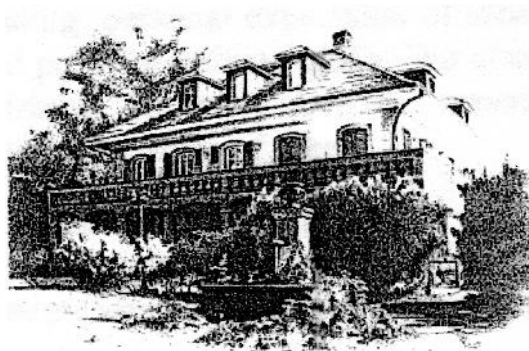
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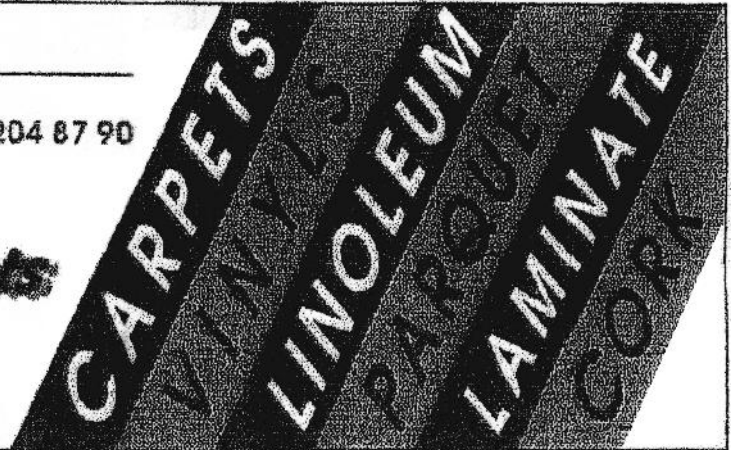


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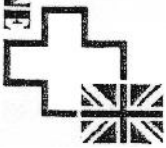
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New members are always welcome. Our website hosted by the Federation of Anglo-Swiss Clubs is: www.angloswissclubs.ch

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A Hymn for Lent

by Synesius of Cyrene (c. 365 – c- 414)

Lord Jesus, think on me
And purge away my sin;
From earthborn passions set me free
And make me pure within.

Lord Jesus, think on me,
With many a care oppressed;
Let me thy loving servant be
And taste thy promised rest.

Lord Jesus, think on me
Amid the battle's strife;
In all my pain and misery
Be thou my Health and Life.

Lord Jesus, think on me
Nor let me go astray;
Through darkness and perplexity
Point thou the heavenly way.

Lord Jesus, think on me
When floods the tempest high;
When on doth rush the enemy,
O Saviour, be thou nigh!

Lord Jesus, think on me
That, when the flood is past,
I may th'eternal brightness see
And share thy joy at last.

Lord Jesus, think on me
That I may sing above
To Father, Spirit, and to thee
The strains of praise and love.