

St Alban's, Strasbourg

We have now been without a priest-in-charge for over four years. However, it says much for the strength of our community, the hard work and constancy of our two priests, Christine and John and the dedication of all those who serve that we have both a resilient growing congregation and that giving has increased over the period.

The weekly service of Holy Communion remains at the centre of our life together. It occasionally has features which are a pointer to the rich diversity of our community, such as Nigerian drums and drummers to accompany the offertory at festival services and the Gloria sung by a Malgache choir.

Our congregation is made up of many nationalities and come from different denominations. One of our American Lutheran families returned to the States early in 2016. To our surprise they wrote an article on their time with us which was published in *The Living Church* (the magazine of the Episcopal Church in the USA). Entitled *The Acts of St Alban's in Strasbourg* the writer describes how much participation in our church life had meant to her. The front cover of that issue featured a photo taken at one of our community events.

At present we have two readers in training, a flourishing Sunday School, a monthly bilingual eucharist in Malagasy and French, monthly prayer breakfasts a well-attended Women's Bible Study and a charitable association which accomplishes much.

The Venerable Colin Williams was the speaker at our Franco-German three chaplaincy annual study weekend. The theme was the poetry of George Herbert, the 17th century priest and poet. Another event the annual weekend sleepover for families was a valued opportunity for families and others to spend time together in fellowship, fun and worship.

Excellent ecumenical relations continue to develop with both the Catholic and Protestant communities as we share worship and fellowship during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and the World Day of Prayer, both of which are important occasions. Another major event last year was the ecumenical service at Saint Thomas to commemorate the 500 years anniversary of the Reformation. We are hoping to continue to develop a shared ministry with the Protestant and Catholic churches in our part of Strasbourg.

For many years we have been invited to hold an Easter service and a Christmas carol service in the nearby city of Colmar. These services are well attended and

have provided an opportunity for us to get to know the English-Speaking Community there. These contacts could be developed further.

We are in good heart and our news can now be followed on our newish website <http://www.saintalbans.fr/>

Pauline Dif, Diane Murray

