



---

*France & Monaco Archdeaconry Newsletter : Advent  
& Christmas 2017*

NEWS FROM THE ARCHDEACON, AREA DEANS AND THE ANGLICAN COMMUNITIES WE SERVE



## FROM THE ARCHDEACON

The symbolism of light leading us forward, as the axis of the world turns to winter, evokes the atmosphere of this Advent season, as we journey in hope and joy to meet Christ who comes to his waiting people. I hope your keeping of Advent is going well and, when it comes, Christmas will be full of love and rejoicing – as well as being a time of rest and refreshment.

### NEW BEGINNINGS

At the beginning of a new Christian year, it is good to share news of fresh beginnings in the Archdeaconry. Not only have we licensed – and are expecting to licence – new chaplains to new ministries in several chaplaincies; we are also seeing new worshipping communities emerging here in France. I am delighted that the first of our regular ‘focus’ pieces on chaplaincies of the Archdeaconry shines a spotlight on the Church of St Alcuin of York in Tours, where Fr John Neal and the people there are in the early stages of their new life as an Anglican community. I am looking forward to my first visit there, to conclude the Christmas celebrations, on the feast of Candlemas at the end of January. Finally, and significantly, we now have a new Deanery and Area Dean. I am delighted that the Rev’d Tony Lomas, our Chaplain serving Aquitaine, has accepted the Bishop’s invitation to be Area Dean of South-Western France, covering the Vendée, Nouvelle-Aquitaine and Occitanie. This is a large area south of the Loire, and I hope Tony’s appointment will strengthen our support for our church communities in these regions.

### READING FOR THIS NEW LITURGICAL YEAR

Someone asked me recently if I had found any books particularly helpful in preparing for this new liturgical year, when Mark’s (and John’s) Gospel is the focus of the Principal Service Lectionary. At the risk of telling you what you may have already read, I thought I would simply share the books (and their Amazon links) that I have found useful in refreshing my take on the distinctiveness of Mark’s Gospel as I prepare to preach on Sundays during this coming year.

- *Meeting God in Mark* by Rowan Williams (SPCK 2014) is a supremely readable paperback of less than 90 pages. It began life as a series of Holy Week addresses in Canterbury Cathedral when the author was Archbishop. It offers an original, scholarly, accessible and strikingly imaginative background introduction.  
[https://www.amazon.fr/Meeting-God-Mark-Rowan-Williams-ebook/dp/B00N01TKFM/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1510047667&sr=8-1&keywords=Meeting+God+in+Mark](https://www.amazon.fr/Meeting-God-Mark-Rowan-Williams-ebook/dp/B00N01TKFM/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1510047667&sr=8-1&keywords=Meeting+God+in+Mark)
- *The Gospel According to Mark* by Morna D Hooker (A & C Black 1991) is, probably, the classic contemporary commentary. Hooker’s commentary, which follows the traditional format of a biblical commentary, is a snapshot of mainstream New Testament scholarship.  
[https://www.amazon.fr/Gospel-According-St-Mark/dp/0826460399/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=digital-](https://www.amazon.fr/Gospel-According-St-Mark/dp/0826460399/ref=sr_1_1?s=digital-)

[text&ie=UTF8&qid=1510047750&sr=8-1&keywords=The+Gospel+According+to+Mark+Morna+D+Hooker](https://www.amazon.fr/?text&ie=UTF8&qid=1510047750&sr=8-1&keywords=The+Gospel+According+to+Mark+Morna+D+Hooker)

- *Tell No-One! : Preparing to Preach from Mark's Gospel* by Simon Reynolds is new this year (and only available as an e-book at present). Alongside an introduction to Mark, the author focusses specifically on the challenges and opportunities of preaching (with examples). There is a final chapter that helpfully suggests how the large number of readings from John's Gospel in this coming year can be interpreted in relation to Mark.  
[https://www.amazon.fr/TELL-NO-ONE-Preparing-Preach-English-ebook/dp/B076YX7HHK/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=digital-text&ie=UTF8&qid=1510047865&sr=1-1&keywords=Tell+No-One%21+Simon+Reynolds](https://www.amazon.fr/TELL-NO-ONE-Preparing-Preach-English-ebook/dp/B076YX7HHK/ref=sr_1_1?s=digital-text&ie=UTF8&qid=1510047865&sr=1-1&keywords=Tell+No-One%21+Simon+Reynolds)
- *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel* by David Rhoads & Joanna Dewey (Fortress 2012) is the most 'technical' of the four books here. It is also an exciting exploration of the Gospel of Mark, which some may find energizing, challenging, controversial and thrilling in equal measure! In particular, the authors focus on how our understanding of the Gospel is enlarged when we understand it from within an aural culture. This has obvious implications for the way we use it in preaching.  
[https://www.amazon.fr/Mark-as-Story-David-Rhoads-ebook/dp/B00APJRKS6/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=digital-text&ie=UTF8&qid=1510047935&sr=1-1&keywords=Mark+as+Story](https://www.amazon.fr/Mark-as-Story-David-Rhoads-ebook/dp/B00APJRKS6/ref=sr_1_1?s=digital-text&ie=UTF8&qid=1510047935&sr=1-1&keywords=Mark+as+Story)

## 2018 COMMEMORATIONS

There will be a number of events commemorating the conclusion of the First World War at local and national level across France during the coming year. Given the shared history between Great Britain, France, Canada and the USA in the events that are the focus for these commemorations, I am encouraged by those congregations who are involved and playing some part in local commemorative events, and doing so in co-operation with our ecumenical partners. This is an opportunity for Anglican congregations to offer something distinctive to these events and, if people in your congregation(s) are involved in the local council or other civic bodies, I hope you will be able to take full advantage of the connections.

For those involved in planning commemorative events, whether in local churches, or in the wider community, there are liturgical resources available on the Church of England website at <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-worship/worship/latest-updates/world-war-one-liturgy.aspx> and there is a Word document containing a wealth of additional resources (liturgical, literary, musical, artistic and contemporary research on conflict and conflict resolution) on the Diocesan website at [www.europe.anglican.org/downloads/clergy/ww1-resources.doc](http://www.europe.anglican.org/downloads/clergy/ww1-resources.doc)

## **ECUMENICAL CONVERSATIONS**

I had a very good few days, during the second week of November, at the Drumalis Centre in Larne, on the east coast of Northern Ireland, meeting with the Reuilly Contact Group. This is the formal mechanism for the Church of England's continuing conversations with the Protestant Churches in France, under the joint chairmanship of the Bishop of Warwick, John Stroyan; and Christian Krieger, President of the Synodical Council of the Reformed Protestant Church of Alsace-Lorraine. It was my first meeting, and it was useful to meet some of the key ecumenical personalities from the member churches of the Group. Our visit included a trip to Belfast, where our 'tour guide' was the Bishop of Connor, Alan Abernethy. He showed us several vivid – and physical – reminders of the divisions that still linger in some parts of Northern Ireland.

In January, I have been invited to address the Benedictine community of Clervaux in Luxembourg during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. In March, I am giving a lecture at the Institut Catholique in Paris on aspects of contemporary Anglicanism.

## **OUT & ABOUT ACROSS THE ARCHDEACONRY**

I was privileged to give an address at the Armistice Commemoration at Notre Dame in Paris on November 11th. The following day, I preached at St Michael's, Paris where, during this time of vacancy, it was very good to be with Dale Hanson and the congregation there, to spend time listening to needs and visions, as the process of appointing a new priest for St Michael's gathers momentum. On the first Sunday of Advent I presided and preached at St Michael's, in the Gard, another chaplaincy in vacancy. Last Sunday, the Bishop and I were in Strasbourg to Licence Mark Barwick as Chaplain of St Alban's. Rosemary Ulyett, the Secretary to the Archdeaconry Standing Committee and I have met to fine tune some details for the Archdeaconry Synod in April. I hope to send you a finalised programme in the New Year. I have also conducted a couple of Ministerial Development Reviews with clergy. I am glad to have been available to meet with several Church Wardens who needed conversations about various matters. My twitter feed @gaularchdeacon is a place where you can keep tabs on what I'm up to!

## **ORDINANDS REQUESTING PLACEMENTS**

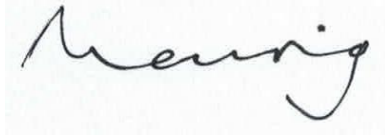
I have received several requests from ordinands from other dioceses, training at English theological colleges, who would like to spend some time gaining experience of Anglican mission in France over the coming summer. They come from a variety of backgrounds and are probably looking for around four weeks each. If you are interested in hosting someone, please get in touch.

## **ARCHDEACONRY WEBSITE**

We have an Archdeaconry website at [www.anglicanfrance.fr](http://www.anglicanfrance.fr) and it would be very good if you could please send news items, including your regular monthly newsletters, to Rosemary at [contact@anglicanfrance.fr](mailto:contact@anglicanfrance.fr) This will help the website to be kept up to date with new information – and make it look attractive to those seeking a place to worship in the Archdeaconry.



May the Lord, when he comes, find us watching and waiting.  
With every blessing on your keeping of this season of Advent.



The Ven Meurig Williams  
Archdeacon of France & Monaco  
[meurig.williams@churchofengland.org.uk](mailto:meurig.williams@churchofengland.org.uk)  
+32 22 13 74 82



## ST ALCUIN OF YORK TOURS

*Serving Tours and Savigny in Touraine*

Chaplain: The Reverend John Neale  
[johnlesneal@orange.fr](mailto:johnlesneal@orange.fr)

At a time when the number-crunchers and headline-writers are telling us that the Church of England is in decline, it is very good to report that, after a great deal of visionary planning, hard work and prayer, our newest chaplaincy in France is very much up and running. With two worship centres, Tours was established in April 2014; and Savigny-en-Véron in October 2015. After the formalities of becoming part of the Diocese in Europe were completed, Bishop David inaugurated the chaplaincy and Licenced Fr John as Priest-in-Charge on 22 May last year, two days after the feast of Alcuin of York. Then began the steep learning curve of setting up an *Association* under French law!

With a committed core congregation in both centres, the Eucharist is at the heart of the life of this chaplaincy. There is provision for young people (with several of them being admitted to communion for the first time just over a year ago). The chaplaincy also has gifted organists whose skill enhances the worship. Alongside Fr John, there is an active chaplaincy council, who work hard to ensure that the quality of the worship is matched by the excellence of the hospitality – epitomised by the church picnic along the River Indre in June.



New young communicants and their families with Fr John Neal

The inauguration of the chaplaincy was accompanied by strong ecumenical support from the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Tours and the local Eglise Reformée (the Tours congregation currently meet in the *Temple*). Like many of our chaplaincies in France, the congregations in Touraine have begun this demanding adventure of faith with very few resources, and certainly no buildings of their own.

Please keep Fr John and the people of this chaplaincy in your prayers – and please be in touch with them if you have ideas to share or stories of encouragement from your own experience.



## BEGINNING NEW MINISTRY IN FRANCE

*We are delighted to welcome new clergy to the Archdeaconry and assure them, and the people they serve, of our prayers as they settle into their new roles and responsibilities.*

**The Rev'd Dr Tom Wilson** was licensed as Priest-in-Charge of St Raphael on October 28<sup>th</sup>. He comes to us from Canada via Paisley in Scotland, where he was Rector of Holy Trinity & St Barnabas Scottish Episcopal Church.

**The Rev'd Dr Mark Barwick** was licensed as Priest-in-Charge of St Alban's, Strasbourg on 10<sup>th</sup> December. Mark is a priest of the Episcopal Church (USA) and has been serving Episcopal congregations in Belgium, based at All Saints', Waterloo, just south of Brussels.

**The Rev'd Dan Langdon-Griffiths** will be licenced as Priest-in-Charge of Midi-Pyrenées early in the New Year. He comes to us from the Diocese of Liverpool, via St Paul's, Monaco, where he has been the locum priest for several months, and where he has already cut his teeth on the distinctive experience of ministry in the Diocese.

**The Rev'd Robert Dennis** will be licenced as Priest-in-Charge of St Andrew's, Pau, in the New Year. Robert has been a parish priest in the Diocese of St Asaph, in the Church in Wales, where he was Vicar of Connah's Quay.

In April, following the Archdeaconry Synod, **The Rev'd Robin Adams**, will be formally licenced as Priest-in-Charge of Christ Church, Brittany. He will begin work there at the start of January, for which we are very grateful indeed – and we look forward to introducing Robert and Donna his wife in the next newsletter.

## APPOINTMENTS & VACANCIES

We are currently advertising vacancies at **St Luke's Fontainebleau**. **All Saints Marseille** will also begin the process of recruiting shortly.

After much area-decanal groundwork by Canon Debbie Flach with the **Pas-de-Calais Chaplaincy**, as well as strategic conversations between our own Diocese, the Diocese of Canterbury, and USPG, the structures and finance are now in place to advertise for a priest to serve this chaplaincy. There will, of course, be a particular focus on the needs of the many migrants who are living in an around Calais; and the partnerships involved in this appointment reflects a commitment to joined-up-thinking by the Church on both sides of *La Manche*. An advertisement will appear in the new year. Amidst the challenging situation in Calais/Dunkirk, this partnership is a very good news story.

Many of you will have heard by now that **Canon Matthew Harrison** has announced that he will be leaving **St George's, Paris** in April 2018. There will be opportunities to thank Fr Matthew in the coming months for the distinctive fusion of continuity and growth that he has enabled there over the many years.

Anyone (from within our without the Diocese) interested in current advertised clergy vacancies in France is very welcome to be in touch with the Archdeacon for an informal conversation.



## ARCHDEACONRY PRAYER DIARY

Sustaining our own ministry – and sustaining one another in ministry – is always grounded in prayer. We are very grateful to **Gareth Randall** who has carried out a vital piece of practical spirituality in preparing the Archdeaconry prayer diary. Sadly, Gareth is giving up this task in February. If you feel called to pick up and run with this ministry, or know anyone who might be, please contact the Archdeacon, who will be glad to discuss the details.

So much hard work is carried out in our chaplaincies by our **Wardens**. Much of it goes on behind the scenes, but is a vital part of enabling us to flourish as



Christian communities. I know of some church wardens who have recently retired from their duties and we thank them all and assure them of our prayers and best wishes for the future.

If chaplaincies are experiencing **casual vacancies** of wardens, please do remember that the Church Representation Rules apply in these situations. They can be found at <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/policy-and-thinking/church-representation-rules/church-representation-rules-online> In particular, chaplaincies should be aware of the sections 'Qualifications of Persons to be Chosen or Elected at Annual Meetings' and 'Conduct of Election of Church Wardens.' Specifically, the stated periods of notice prior to an election should be observed; and, once elected, new wardens should be formally sworn-in before commencing their responsibilities. Chaplaincies are very welcome to address any uncertainties or questions to the Archdeacon or Area Deans.

### **A BOLD NEW PLAN... COMING SOON TO A SCREEN NEAR YOU!**

At the Bishop's Council in October, it was agreed that the Diocese needs to be better resourced to be able to serve the needs of a growing and changing situation. Three areas were specifically identified: safeguarding, communications and archdeacons; Bishop Robert and Bishop David have recorded a video message, which can be accessed at <http://europe.anglican.org/main/latest-news/post/1318-bold-new-plan> in which they explain the thinking behind the new proposals. It would be very good if chaplaincy councils could watch this video, discuss it, and send their feedback via the Area Deans.

### **SAFEGUARDING TRAINING**

Two Level 2 training days are being planned in 2018:

Saint Raphael: April 28

Strasbourg: April 14

Do sign up for one of these days if you haven't done so yet. You will join the 150 people throughout France who have attended our training days thus far.

### **And last but not least....A Recommendation from the Area Dean of Northern France:**

*A Church Observed: Being Anglican As Times Change* by Andrew Norman, formerly Principal of Ridley Hall, Cambridge, and Director of Ministry and Mission in the Diocese of Leeds. It can be pre-ordered at

[https://www.amazon.fr/s/ref=nb\\_sb\\_noss?\\_mk\\_fr\\_FR=%C3%85M%C3%85%C5%BD%C3%95%C3%91&url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=A+Church+Observed+Andrew+Norman](https://www.amazon.fr/s/ref=nb_sb_noss?_mk_fr_FR=%C3%85M%C3%85%C5%BD%C3%95%C3%91&url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=A+Church+Observed+Andrew+Norman)



**WHO'S WHO**  
*in the Archdeaconry of France*

**Archdeacon of France & Monaco**

The Ven Meurig Williams

[Meurig.williams@churchengland.org](mailto:Meurig.williams@churchengland.org)

+00 32 22 13 74 82

**Area Dean of Northern France**

The Rev'd Canon Debbie Flach

[debbieflach@outlook.com](mailto:debbieflach@outlook.com)

03 28 52 66 36

**Area Dean of South-Eastern France**

The Rev'd Canon Giles Williams

[gilespw@gmail.com](mailto:gilespw@gmail.com)

04 93 94 54 61

**The soon to be.....Area Dean of South-Western France (including the Vendée)**

The Rev'd Tony Lomas

[revtonylomas@gmail.com](mailto:revtonylomas@gmail.com)

06 72 31 72 87

(Further details about Tony's Commissioning will appear shortly)

[www.anglicanfrance.fr](http://www.anglicanfrance.fr)

[www.europe.anglican.org](http://www.europe.anglican.org)