

ST ALCUIN OF YORK IN TOURAINE

2017

www.churchintouraine.org

Daily life

Worship

We celebrate the Eucharist at 7.00 pm on the first Sunday of each month in Tours and at 11.00 am on the fourth Sunday at Savigny-en-Véron, near Chinon.

The core community in both places is very committed. Tours holds its own, with a great deal of enthusiasm, but, sadly, numbers continue to be low, because of the lateness of the service time, something we have started to address. The number who attend at Savigny, including children, has grown during the year and a junior Liturgy of the Word is provided for them. At both places each celebration is normally followed by a 'verre d'amitié', local if possible.

We continue to be well blessed by our organists, Barry Williams and Alix Devienne, who both encourage us to sing heartily in the English tradition.

Each church celebrated a Harvest Thanksgiving—at Savigny in September and Tours in October. The generosity of the gifts, donated to *L'Embarcadère*, a food bank in Chinon, was overwhelming.

This year we held two Carol Services, each with a quite distinct flavour. That in Savigny involved our local community with a number of extra people and had a family flavour with a large number of young people present.

At Tours it was bilingual and ecumenical, including the involvement of an Evangelical pastor and Roman Catholic and Orthodox priests. Our singing was much enhanced by the 'Petit Chœur' of the Eglise réformée. The chanting of his reading, the coming of the Wise Men, by the Orthodox priest, père Jollet, according to his tradition was a spiritually captivating moment.



Publications

As well as service sheets for each celebration we print French versions of the readings and have available an outline Order of Service in French. We also publish a quarterly news-letter *AlcuiNews*. Our website, maintained by Peter Eggleton, has proved to be very useful to others outside our community. We have a flyer with French and English editions. During the early part of the year, we scoured the local telephone directories for people with English looking names living at a convenient distance and sent them copies of the English version. The flyers were offered to us free by our bank, the *Crédit Agricole*, who also paid for the publicity for our Carol Services.

Chaplaincy Council

The Chaplaincy Council met four times in 2017, twice in Tours and twice in Chinon. Membership of the Council is evenly divided between our two congregations and, by sharing lunch together after meetings, a real sense of common mission is developing. Some time this year was spent on reflecting on the challenges we have faced in inaugurating a new Chaplaincy.

Our Family



In June, after our Eucharist at Savigny, we enjoyed a very successful picnic in the grounds of the Château de l'Islette, baby sister to the nearby famous Château of Azay-le-Rideau. Although the morning started out grey, fortunately it cheered up by lunchtime. It was wonderful to have all the children there, happily playing with toys bought for them for the occasion—paid for by a tombola, of course.

Sadly we lost three of our members during the year: Noël and Sandra Morgan returned to Great Britain and, in December, Anne Jauneaud died after a long illness. Anne was a founding worshipper at Tours, for whom our worship was “a boon and a blessing” after so many years of living in France.

Archdeaconry Synod

Although Fr John had been invited to Synod in 2015 and 2016, 2017 was our first attendance as an official Chaplaincy, so he was joined by our lay representatives, Carolyn Dehnel and Lesley Neal. All thoroughly enjoyed the experience, not only for the stimulating input from the speakers, especially Meg Warner's bible studies, but also for the opportunity to meet other Christians in our tradition in a beautiful setting: something of first importance to a small remote (in Church of England terms) Chaplaincy like ours.

Ecumenical and Interfaith Relationships

The Anglican community continues to participate in “*Chrétiens en Dialogue*” an ecumenical bi-monthly gathering of Church leaders in Tours. We participated in the service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, we continue to be listed as ecumenical partners in the Diocese of Tours' *Annuaire* for 2017 - 2018 and Fr John was the featured “profile” in the January edition of *Eglise en Touraine*, the monthly magazine of the Diocese of Tours. Fr John is also a member of the Interfaith Group in Tours.

Partners in the Gospel

The ministry at St Alcuin's is very much a shared enterprise and many people in both our churches work very hard to ensure that our common life runs smoothly, thus enhancing our Christian witness. A special mention this year is to be made of Elizabeth Portway, who made us a pair of wonderful bags to carry our ceramic chalice and paten: they take up much less space in the “*église dans la valise*” than the previous bubble-wrap did and are altogether much easier to handle. A big thank you to her and all who make up our community.