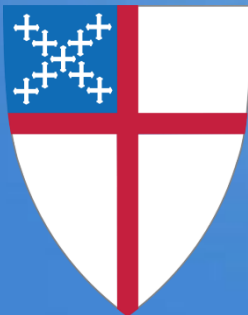
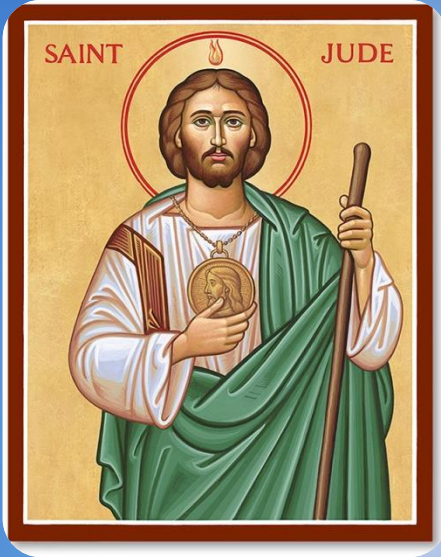
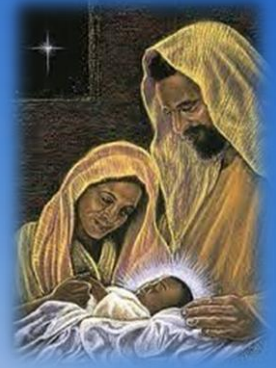


Winter 2020

IKON

The Ascension Messenger



Church
of the
Ascension
Munich

Points to Note

Worship

We worship every Sunday at midday in the Emmauskirche, Laurinplatz, 81545 München, Germany. For up-to-date news and details of services, check our website at: www.ascension-munich.org

Do also take a look at our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/ascensionmunich and our YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/channel/UC4802rHFcPLNCJxnSGeZ3FA

Clergy

The Rt. Rev. Mark D. W. Edington, Bishop in Charge
mark.edington@tec-europe.org

The Rev. Kenneth Dimmick, Interim Rector
revkendimmick@ascension-munich.com

The Rev. Dr. Ali Gray, Priest Associate
revaligray@ascension-munich.com

The Rev. Clair Ullmann, Priest Associate
revclairullmann@ascension-munich.com

Pastoral Care

In a pastoral emergency, first point of contact should be **Joan Case** for the fastest response: mobile: 01728256425 home: 0802449945.
You can also contact the wardens:

Janet Day-Strehlow: mobile: 01707926767

George Battrick: mobile: 015208293438 home: 0896881151

Financial Support

Our church receives no funds from any government body; we are entirely supported by the contributions of our members.

Donations and pledges can be made by bank transfer to:
The Church of the Ascension, Deutsche Bank
IBAN: DE49 7007 0024 0459 8702 00

2 Corinthians 9:7 “*Let each one do just as he has resolved in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver*”

Contents

Editorial	4
A Letter from Fr. Ken	5
Interview with Fr. Ken	7
Annual Convention	10
Covenant for Dismantling Racism	13
Where in the World is it ?	14
Racial Justice: What have we been doing ?	17
A Pilgrimage to Israel with Gray Temple	20
A Recipe Book	20
Congratulations	21
Yuletide Safety Regulations	22
Outreach at Ascension in December 2020	24
Reading the Bible with the Jewish Tradition ...	26
Women's Book Club	27
Stephen Norton – In Memoriam	29
Worship in Nürnberg and Augsburg	32
Coming Events	33
The Twelve Days of Christmas	34
The 2020 – 2021 Vestry	35
Answers	36
50 Years with Emmaus	37
Closing Words	38
Imprint / Impressum	39

Editorial

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ

Saint Jude on the cover of this edition of the **ikon** is often said to be the saint of hopeless cases, but it can be argued that Jude is the saint of hopeful cases, because all who come to the Lord through him in prayer believe that even the most difficult problems can be made right by God.

I think we have a lot of problems at the moment that need to be put right by God. Not the least of which is the scourge of Covid that due to the cold weather will be with us for several months.

Fr. Ken has, however, in his sermons given us glimpses of hope.

We trust that this issue of the **ikon** will give you some hope too, hope that we will live into the covenant decided on at the Convention that we become a loving community. Read all about the Convention that, although online, was a great success this year. Read about our own parish efforts to become a loving community with the Racial Justice Course. Celebrate the diversity in our congregation and test your skills at recognising countries.

Read about what goes on in the book group and at Bible study. Say goodbye to Stephen Norton in thankfulness for all he contributed to our parish.

All the usual items can be found in this issue: Page of congratulations, Worship in Augsburg and Nürnberg, Outreach activities, upcoming events, our relationship with Emmaus.

At the time of writing it is uncertain whether we will be able to look forward to the usual family Christmas, but we hope that the Christmas items will amuse you, but also give you food for thought.

I leave you with wisdom from Friedrich Rückert (1788-1866) and wish you all a very blessed Christmas and a hopeful 2021.

Schlägt dir die Hoffnung fehl, nie fehle dir das Hoffen! Ein Tor ist zugetan, doch tausend sind noch offen.

Peace

Sue



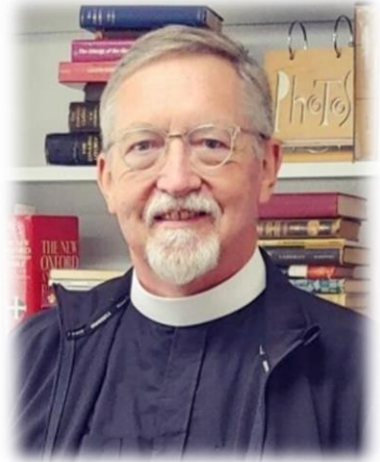
A Letter from Fr. Ken

Dear People of Ascension Church,

I arrived in Munich after a long flight from Houston, Texas - a flight filled with anxiety; I couldn't help but wonder if the Border Guards would allow me through, or if I might be put into a long lock-down upon my arrival. But none of my anxieties came to pass. I was, instead, greeted by our gracious Senior Warden and her husband, who loaded my baggage into their cars for the drive to my apartment. There I was able to fall into a jet-lagged nap, arising to find a new city, and a new church in which to exercise my priesthood.

Ascension Church was not a new and unknown place to me. During my several years living in Germany, I had occasion to worship here, never suspecting that one day I'd be called here to serve as pastor. I now come to Covid-time Ascension. A mere shadow of what Ascension was, even one year ago.

But I am here. Or am I? For most of you, we've not yet met face to face. You've never yet shaken my hand or received the cup of wine I long to offer. I am here, but I am not here. I am with you, but I can't be with you. We can talk on the phone, or on zoom, but I could have done that from Texas.



Am I no closer than I was in Texas? It is a crazy thing, this Covid-time. And I don't like it!

The Ascension Church I would like to serve is the Ascension Church as it should be: Full again with joy, music, people and activity.

I have only been here one month, but I feel honored to be with you. I have come to the realization that even though we are locked-down we are not shut-down. Worship, compassion, and pastoral care have continued with only minor alterations

We spend a lot of time waiting; hoping for a return to the next normal. We are a lot of lonely people, close to each other, but not without connection, gathering

to Zoom our love for one another frequently and regularly.

We are a place of great potential... prudently waiting for the all clear to be sounded.

One day soon, Ascension Church will be back to full glory, revealed through liturgy, service to others, and gorgeous music. What a celebration day that will be!

But even in the meantime, have no doubt that I am thrilled to be your interim rector. It is a true blessing to realize that even at its Covid-restricted worst, Ascension is still a great church, with great people, a great past, and a great future.

How can I, such a newcomer to Ascension Church, make such an outrageous statement?

Because we have a great God who will be with us through it all, and get us through it all, to whom alone goes the credit, the honor, the glory, and the praise, forever and ever. Amen.

Let us put our trust in God, and do all we can in the meantime to prepare for that day when Covid-time will finally be done.

Ken +

*(The Rev. Kenneth Dimmick ,
Interim Rector, Church of the
Ascension)*

Interview with Fr. Ken



We are delighted to have you here at last. How long will you be able to stay?

Well my original contact was for six months from September 1st and my visa would run out on 20th April. As I didn't arrive until the 25th October this agreement could be extended. So basically the good news is that I will definitely be here for Easter.

Tell us something about yourself.

I was born in Wyoming, the state with the lowest population density in the States. Its only claim to fame is that Dick Cheney, Vice President under George W. Bush, grew up there. I left when I was nine so have no strong memories of the place, rather more like a few vignettes. We were a nomadic army family, so I never really had roots anywhere as we moved from city to city - Oklahoma, Omaha, Augusta Georgia, ending up in Kingsville, Texas when I was 17. When my father was serving in Vietnam in 1965 we moved to Denver and lived in the same town as my grandparents. Two siblings of mine died early of lung cancer, but I still have one brother who I am very close to and we are in contact once a week. Even after 35 years as a priest I have never had family close by. This year there is talk of not being able to have a family Christmas. I have always thought more in terms of a church family Christmas.

I went to college at Texas A&M University and majored in history and minored in German and theatre. I got an army stipendium and was guaranteed a job after finishing my studies. This was a real luxury, as I could take subjects that I enjoyed without worrying about whether they affected my job prospects. I had to agree to serve in the army for three years after graduation and that I did in Germany. I soon realized, however, that being a soldier was not what I wanted to be.

So you became a priest.

Indeed. I was sponsored as a postulant in the diocese of Western Louisiana, went to seminary in Nashotah House, Delafield Wisconsin

and was ordained a deacon and then a priest in Leesville, Louisiana. If you can't be in Europe, Louisiana and its Cajun food cannot be beaten! I was there for 15 years after which I was close to burn out. My parish was successful and thriving with no money worries. It was very hard to leave there, but I wanted a challenge, a job in which I needed to depend daily on God. The bishop in Texas gave me a large inner city parish in Houston and that really was a challenge. After that I spent two years in a tiny parish that included a nursing home and a mission named Anahuac. The next and final move before retirement was to Stuttgart at St Catherine's, the church of England Chaplaincy in the Diocese of Gibraltar in Europe.

Did you have any contacts with the Episcopal Church while you were there?

Well I was serving in the Church of England, but I was still an Episcopalian at heart and Bishop Pierre was very welcoming to a fellow American and keen for me to become involved. However, my involvement was more or less limited to CAEGG – I knew Dorothee, Chris Easthill, Tom Pellaton, Martin Schäffer and Steve Smith.

Friday is your day off (and we promise to respect it.) What do you do to relax? Do you still go running?

Unfortunately not, as I have had a knee replacement, but I love swimming and was very excited about the swimming pool in the basement of the block of flats and swam regularly before lockdown. I am working here in Munich, but in some ways I still feel like a tourist. I love walking, not only in the Englischer Garten but around the city, discovering things you would never see in the States. I am curious and conscious that you can never take anything for granted.

You let slip that you are a Gilbert and Sullivan enthusiast. You would have been so welcome here 15 years ago when Jeff still organised productions!

It all stems from the time I had a sample CD of classical music when I was living in Stuttgart - including Rimsky Korsakov, Handel and the chorus *When I was a Lad* from HMS Pinafore. I loved it. This was, of course coupled with an interest in the Victorian Era and the Oxford Movement.*** I have now been to the Gilbert and Sullivan festival in Harrogate four years running and am well- known there and know some of the organizers. I intend to go every year in the future. I get priority tickets so I can foresee an Ascension jaunt to Yorkshire!

Ikon

Anything else you would like us to know about you?

Well, when I retired I bought an historic 116- year-old house in down town Wharton and I rent out the ground floor - a big open-plan space with high ceilings - to a theatre group, as I have retained my love of theatre. I have contacts with an architectural historian in the renovations. It was built in 1904 and has survived innumerable hurricanes. Good and solid

The other thing that you all might like to know is that I am writing a novel and have been for the last 20 years. You could say that I never quite know when I am done. I thought 2020 would be an ideal time to make giant strides with it during lockdown and I did make some headway, but needed a break after three months. Maybe I will do some readings from it in the spring. You never know.

Thanks you your sharing so much with us. We hope your stay here will be a happy and successful one.

Sue Morris

**** (Google John Henry Newman, John Keble, Edward Pusey to learn more, or how about a Zoom with an expert named Ken?)*

Remember that you can listen to sermons from Ken thanks to Paul Pilgram who records them for us. One memorable one was on the 22nd of November and ended with this original poem:

Hosanna, Hallelujah, Amen, Amen.
The day of suffering is at an end.
Hosanna, Hallelujah, Amen, Hooray
Our Saviour Messiah is on his way.
Hosanna, Hallelujah, Glory and Might
The coming day drives out the night.
Hosanna, Hallelujah, faith, hope and love
The Prince of Peace comes down from above.
Hosanna, Hallelujah the end is nigh.
Our shout of joy is heard on high.
Hosanna, Hallelujah, Amen, Amen
In hope and joy this sermon has come to an end.

Annual Convention

**The Convocation of the Episcopal Churches in Europe 2020
October 22-24**

Steve Knowles and I had the honor of representing Church of the Ascension once again as voting lay delegates at this year's Annual Convention. The original plan had been to hold the convention in Nice, France. Instead, we took part in the first ever Annual Convention held entirely online. Taking part in this convention was - as one delegate pointed out very clearly - no less than an act of history-making. Members of Committees and the Order of Clergy were also present (as well as some of their spouses): Jes Villa, David Case, Janet Day-Strehlow, Clair Ullmann, Ali Gray, and Dorothee Hahn.



Except for a few minor tech glitches, the convention proceeded very smoothly. It was easier to concentrate on presentations and to hear everything more clearly, but social contact was lacking. The Friday session was all in Webinar form, and open to the public. In the attempt to keep things short, there were no break-out rooms or social times included. At the end of the convention, there were many voices raised that the lack of social time was a real missed opportunity.

Having said all of that... the content of the convention was FABULOUS. The Bishop's Address spoke mainly to the subject of identity: Who are we now in Europe? He gave a brief history of the Episcopal Churches in Europe, noted how much we have changed, and how much the world around us has changed. He called for a year of discernment through listening and prayer. The convention passed a resolution concerning this that included the following:

That Convocation clergy and Convention delegates engage their communities in mindful preparation for the year of discernment, making use of the prayer at the introduction to this resolution as a way of linking and drawing the Convocation closer together.

The prayer referred to was:

O God, you share your heart and mind with your people, you give direction and purpose to those who seek you. Give ear to our prayer and guide us into the future so that we may glorify you and be a blessing to the nations to which you have called us.

The Bishop's Address can be viewed online here:

<http://www.tec-europe.org/storytelling/sermons/bishops-convention-address-2020/>

We were treated to some inspiring presentations from guest speakers, as well as reports from the four task forces the Bishop had called into being at last year's convention. The guest speakers spoke on the topic of racism and reconciliation. We heard from Dr. Catherine Meeks, Executive Director, Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing, and later, Rt. Rev Deon Johnson, Bishop of the Diocese of Missouri. Some real highlights for me from their presentations were these comments and questions:

We need to start new conversations. Ask ourselves:

How are we trying to justify the status quo?

What are we willing to give up - whether that is privilege or pain?

We should stay willing to give up everything all of the time.

Every day we should ask to be half-a-shade braver.

The reports from the task forces resulted in some very practical and inspired resolutions to the constitution. There are four task forces: Migrants and Refugees, Children and Youth, Stewardship of Climate and Creation Care, Racism and Reconciliation of the Beloved Community. All of the reports from the task forces can be read on the Convocation's website here: <http://www.tec-europe.org/formation/about-formation/about-formation/>

Dr. Tom Huddleston led the task force on Migrants and Refugees. The main points of his presentation were that we must:

- 1) Move from charity to solidarity,
- 2) Improve digital outreach,
- 3) Bear witness by hearing from the refugees themselves,
- 4) See 'welcoming' as a long-term development.

The full report of the task force runs to 40 pages, and produced no fewer than 9 resolutions for the convention to consider.

The Task Force on Children's and Youth Ministry presented their report with clear and helpful recommendations. In the resulting resolution, the Convocation agreed to implement the recommendations, to have the Convocation and all parishes and missions adopt the Faith Formation Strategy as proposed by the Episcopal Church, and to create a paid staff position for a Convocation Children and Youth Ministry Coordinator to assist in the implementation of said strategy.

The Task force on Climate and Creation Care's report inspired a resolution to "integrate more deeply a commitment to climate stewardship in the life of the Convocation, its parishes and missions'. The Convocation would achieve this by:

- 1) Providing resources for the annual observance of a "Season of Creation," from September 1 to October 4, to all parishes and missions,
- 2) Committing to a goal of achieving net carbon neutrality by 2030,
- 3) Creating a network of grassroots local leaders in each congregation to continue the work of raising awareness and stewardship,
- 4) Implementing a new travel policy developed by the Task Force.

The Task Force on Racism and Reconciliation of the Beloved Community's report resulted in the following resolution: The Council of Advice will continue the work of the Task Force, and Convention will adopt the Covenant for Dismantling Racism, Advancing Racial Justice, and Building Beloved Community in Europe (see below).

Before addressing the many resolutions and Canonical changes (yes, there were a lot of them this year), we were treated to an amazing sermon by Rev. Steve McPeck. He shared the story of Hiram Hisanori Kano, a Japanese immigrant and pastor who was unfairly imprisoned by the US government in 1941. Pastor Kano lost everything, but continued serving the Lord in his new surroundings. Rev. Steve also shared his own personal history with racism, and building the courage to forgive. His sermon is online, and can be found here:

https://m.youtube.com/watch?fbclid=IwAR3uWW6cq6PGa2Vw5Dxp6eit6NZfl_8FqkBaFOUGBKbdSD57JIKX8VqFV3M&feature=youtu.be&v=L4WwqgKZizY

As you can see, this particular convention was very rich in content. I have only touched the tip of the iceberg in this short report.

Thank you for the opportunity to be present.

Lois Stuckenbruck



Covenant for Dismantling Racism, Advancing Racial Justice and Building Beloved Community in Europe

Racism is a sin. It disrupts the harmony and oneness that God intends for humanity. Racism is dangerous, divisive and damaging. Racism destroys dignity and disregards the image and likeness of God found in every human being. We are created in the image of God; therefore, to engage in racism in any form is to refuse to acknowledge the image of God in the other; and to deny or ignore the truth of racism and the pain and damage it causes, is to subvert the love of Jesus. We, the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe—parishes, missions and individuals—denounce and reject racism. We also strongly renounce all forms of supposed supremacy, especially the scourge of White supremacy.

Called and challenged by God, we seek to create Beloved Community, working to increase hope by dismantling the sin of racism, learning to understand and own our part in what has gone before by commission or omission, acting with courage to stand up and speak out as we move beyond ourselves to serve Christ and one another.

We Lament...

- As people of faith, we acknowledge our sins and our failure to respect the dignity of every human being. We have, individually and corporately, fallen short of the glory of God, and now call to mind and name the aspects of our lament.
- We lament the Church's role in history in the subjugation, enslavement and genocide of peoples around the world.
- We lament the Church's role in history in profiting from the selling, trading and mistreatment of our fellow human beings.
- We lament the Church's complicity-by-silence in the commoditization, dehumanization, abuse, belittling, exclusion and denial of civil rights of immigrant and other marginalized people.
- We lament the Church's complicity in failing to honor the language, culture, and civil rights of all people.
- We lament the Church's lack of moral courage to stand with and on the side of the poor, the marginalized, and the oppressed.
- We lament the systems, whether structural or informal, of White superiority and privilege present in the Church that have condoned people being viewed as less, inferior, or unworthy rather than as beloved children of God, made in the image of the Divine.
- We lament the ways in which the stories of People of Color have been diminished or erased from the histories of our churches, institutions, and communities of faith.
- We lament the collusion of the Church with systems that directly and indirectly promote racism, oppression, segregation, and disenfranchisement.
- We lament the wilful blindness of Christian leadership in failing to advocate for fair, non-violent policing, mediation, non-custodial sentencing, and adequate pay, social services support and medical care for people struggling in society.
- We lament the resounding silence and the crippling fear that often infects the Church in matters of racial reconciliation and social justice.

We Covenant...

As people of faith, we are called to "love the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our soul and with all our mind, and to love our neighbors as ourselves." Recognizing the places in which the Church and people of faith have fallen short of God's love, particularly in the legacy of racism and White supremacy, we repent and seek to amend our lives to more fully reflect God's dream of Beloved Community. Accordingly, following Jesus and trusting the power of the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to the sustained and arduous work of dismantling racism, advancing racial justice, and building Beloved Community in Europe.

- We covenant to meditate on the life and teachings of Jesus, who restores us to right relationship with God, one another and ourselves.
- We covenant to re-examine the history of our communities of faith and institutions to, in tangible ways, acknowledge racist legacies and to recognize, remember, and retell the stories of enslaved persons and other People of Color, whose labor contributed to White privilege.
- We covenant to engage our communities of faith and experts in critical discourse that propels us forward.
- We covenant to devise and implement standards, policies, and programs that make our commitment to diversity and inclusion a visible reality.
- We covenant to support local businesses that are owned and operated by People of Color, underrepresented, and marginalized populations.
- We covenant to listen to and to validate the stories, experiences, and feelings of People of Color as companions along the journey, valuing those experiences as being sacred.
- We covenant to work towards the dismantling of systems of institutional oppression.
- We covenant to stand up and speak out against everyday acts of oppression or aggression and denial of civil liberties.
- We covenant to educate ourselves, and share with others, the many places where our privilege blinds us from being compassionate to others.
- We covenant to call out bigotry and hate speech in all aspects of our common life.
- We covenant to gather with others, including faith leaders and decision makers, at all levels of the church, to ask the hard questions:
 - Does the leadership of our institution reflect the diversity of those we serve?
 - Are the many faces of the diverse body of Christ represented in decision-making processes?
 - How are we inviting and forming leaders? Who is missing around the table? Whose untold story do we need to hear?
- We covenant that in our corporate worship and other activities of our communities to intentionally cultivate welcome, hospitality, and participation for people of all cultures, ethnicities and backgrounds, and to include their rich musical and liturgical offerings in worship.
- We covenant to engage each other in and across our faith communities to listen, reflect on and seek a better understanding of racism, privilege, and supposed supremacy of any kind.
- We covenant to pray together for an end to racism, privilege, and supposed supremacy of any kind.
- We covenant to join with local community organizations in working for healing, restoration, reconciliation and racial justice.

Where in the World is it?

The Church of the Ascension is an incredibly diverse community. We asked parishioners to give us photos of the country where they were born. In this edition we are NOT concerned with the USA, UK or Germany. That will come in the next edition. So get your atlases out and your thinking caps on. Look at these photos and GUESS WHERE? Answers on page 36. DON'T CHEAT!



Picture 1



Picture 2



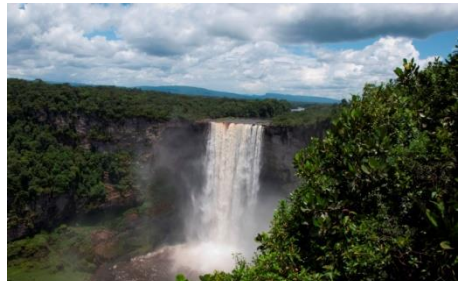
Picture 3



Picture 4



Picture 5



Picture 6

Ikon



Picture 7



Picture 8



Picture 9



Picture 10



Picture 11



Picture 12



Picture 13



Picture 14



Picture 16



Picture 15



Picture 17



Picture 18

Racial Justice: What have we been doing?

“Those who say, ‘I love God’ and hate their brothers and sisters are liars; for those who do not love a brother or a sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen.” 1 John 4:20



What a journey it has been, and we have just begun. Most of us came from the Church of the Ascension and were happily joined by our sisters and brothers across the Convocation from many of the parishes and missions in Germany, as well as from Emmanuel Church in Geneva.

Our eyes were opened, our minds challenged, and our hearts filled with new understanding while we learned about racism through the perspectives of spirituality, theology, whiteness, personal witnessing, and reparation.

We pondered together questions such as:

How would Jesus respond to the Black Lives Matter movement?

How can we describe our own white privilege over and against our non-white sisters and brothers?

How open are our arms for each and every person who comes to Ascension seeking a faith community?

What concrete steps can we commit to in order to live more fully into our Beloved Community? What does it take for each of us to remind one another we are made equally in the image of God? What does reparation mean and how can anyone be repaid for having been denied the possibility of living life to the fullest?

The personal testimonies related by some members of our families at Ascension were eye-opening and shocking. Individuals were willing to make themselves vulnerable and so we, in turn, spoke more freely and openly about our own attitudes and behaviors.

We were reminded often how valuable open and honest conversation is, as well as respectful listening. At the end of each meeting, we found ourselves more committed and eager for the next gathering, to share what we had learned and to hear from others.

We were drawn back again and again to our desire to build more fully our Beloved Community at Ascension. In one of the Academy for Parish Leadership gatherings, we learned about a program called “Welcome, Invite, Connect.” This might be just the right resource as we become more conscientious about incorporating seekers into our faith community with God’s love.

The work of the Holy Spirit was apparent every step of the way through our incredible team of facilitators, moderators, Zoom hosts, organizers, and most importantly the over 50 brothers and sisters who participated. We had an average of 39 at each discussion. Thank you, thank you and thanks be to God.

What is next on this continuing journey? Six areas of further conversation and action have been identified:

- * Education,
- * Local government,
- * Joining other faith groups
- * Asylum seekers and immigrants,
- * The padlet,
- * The Covenant (see page 13).

The aim is to form six interest groups that anyone at Ascension can join and so get involved in our community and beyond to stand up for racial justice.

Right now we are having a period of reflection. In January 2021 we will announce the details on how we move forward.

Everyone at Ascension is invited to join us in studying articles and podcasts that attract your interest that are available on the padlet:

https://padlet.com/millstream/Racial_Justice.

Do also log onto this video <https://youtu.be/LVzCXdpulTI> to become more familiar with the Covenant that was produced by the Convocation Task Force on Racism and is reprinted in this issue of the **ikon**.

As we continue this journey together led by the Holy Spirit, we invite you to pray this prayer now and every month going forward:

God-of-righteous-dreaming,
give us an enlarged imagination to dream new possibilities,
to imagine a world where transformation will happen,
where creation is mended and restored,
and where exiles and strangers can find a home
and live in peace.
Give us overflowing and extravagant hearts
so that our whole lives may be full of love
and mirror your dream and promise
of goodness and promise
in the name of Christ.
Amen.

Clair and Rainer Ullmann

Racial Justice



Pilgrimage to Israel with Gray Temple

This year the Covid pandemic required the postponement of a proposed October pilgrimage from the US and Europe to Israel. Sponsored by Gray's former parish in Atlanta, organized by his successor, it was to offer him his last occasion to lead such a jaunt as primary teacher.

Last year's pamphlet is being updated containing trip details, itinerary, and costs. Though the dates are not yet final, the trip is proposed for the latter half of next October. Its duration will be 11 days. The updated pamphlet will reach Ascension by mail as soon as it's ready.

These trips have received high marks in the past: A liveable pace, a delightful (and German-speaking) local guide, comfortable accommodations, and a *gemütliche* community feel.

Grey and the Group would heartily welcome Ascensionites as part of this community.



A Recipe Book

Puchheim, where our own Goodness Aneke lives, is on the map!

People from 100 different nations live in this town near Munich. Among them are 21 cooks who have shared recipes and published a recipe book:

Mehmet Ismail Birinci and Aveen Khorschied:
Komm in Meine Küche

Published by GU Verlag ISBN 978-3833875557
Price €24

Too late for a Christmas present? There is always New Year or there are birthdays or anniversaries or happy weekend or happy-to-know-you presents.

We used to have a Church of the Ascension Cookbook compiled by Glenys Churcher, sadly no longer with us. How about having a new recipe in each **ikon**?

Idea to the editor who is a vegetarian by marriage so vegetarian recipes most welcome!



Congratulations

It is good to have something to celebrate!

Congratulations to parishioners who

- have celebrated birthdays

Penny Dite 17 October

Rainer Ullmann 31 October

Jeanne Glenz 10 November

- have had additions to the family. May the young ones thrive.
- haven't revealed the date of their birthdays, but were born in the season of mists and mellow fruitfulness.

Congratulations also to:

- Lloyd and Nurtac Denton who celebrated their 6th wedding anniversary on 4th October
- Shema Paul who has finished her thesis. Good luck for the job search. We sincerely hope the search will end with a job for you in Munich.



A Christmas Acrostic

Courage to act
Hope to light the way
Remembrance of the lonely among us
Ideals for those who follow
Sympathy for need and trouble
Thoughtfulness
Merriment
Appreciation of this past year's blessings
Security in God.

By David Cory

Published in Short Prayers for the Long Day

EU Directive 25122020 Yuletide Safety Regulations.

Please be advised that anyone planning to dash through the snow in a one-horse open sleigh, going over the fields and laughing all the way is required to undergo full risk assessment addressing the safety of open sleighs. The assessment must also consider whether it is appropriate to use only one horse for such a venture, particularly where there are multiple passengers.

To avoid offending those not participating in celebrations we request that laughter is moderate only and not loud enough to be considered a noise nuisance (see paragraph 24, subsection 12 of the Silent Night Directive) and therefore must not occur after 11.p.m. or before 7.a.m.

Benches, stools and orthopaedic chairs are now available for collection by any shepherds planning or required to watch their flocks by night.

While provision has been made for remote monitoring of flocks by CCTV cameras from centrally heated shepherd observation huts, all facility users are reminded that an emergency response plan must be submitted to account for known risks to flocks.

The angel of the Lord is additionally reminded that prior to shining her/his glory all around she/he must confirm that all shepherds are wearing appropriate Personal Protective Equipment, including Eye Protection, to account for harmful effects of UVA, UVB and overwhelming effects of Glory.

Following last year's well publicised case, everyone is advised that EU legislation prohibits any comments with regard to the 'redness' of any part of Mr. Rudolf Reindeer. Further to this, exclusion of Mr. Rudolf Reindeer from reindeer games will be considered discriminatory and disciplinary action will be taken against those found guilty of such an offence.

While it is acknowledged that gift-bearing is common practice in various parts of the world, everyone is reminded that the bearing of gifts is subject to Hospitality Guidelines and all gifts must be registered and where necessary, taxes and import duties paid. This applies regardless of the individual – even royal personages.

Finally, in the case of the infant found tucked up in a manger without a crib for a bed, Social Services and the local authority Safeguarding Board have been advised and will be fully investigating. The RSPCA* are also seeking reassurance that no donkeys were harmed during this incident.

Compliance with these guidelines is mandatory in order for you to fully participate with the festive spirit. We wish you a merry Christmas (but bear in mind this must be under 107 milligrams per 100 millilitres of urine or 35 micrograms per 100 millilitres of breath if driving.)

*RSPCA Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Ikon

Which popular Christmas Carols are mentioned in this directive?
(See page 36 for the answers.)

Let the editor know which are your favourite Christmas Carols or the ones you really don't like? (The editor has to admit that she doesn't like Rudolf the Red-nosed Reindeer!)

Results in the next Christmas edition!!



Outreach at Ascension in December 2020

The Sisters at the Soup Kitchen continue to be very busy giving out their packed lunches during the week and a warm meal instead of sandwiches on Fridays and Sundays. During the week the Sisters cater for between 50–80 people and on Sundays the numbers have increased to between 170 and 180. They are therefore very grateful for all the drinks and biscuits which they now receive from the Soup Kitchen basket that you, at Ascension, fill. The contents of this basket represent a very important food supply for the Soup Kitchen and the Sisters particularly wish to thank everyone on behalf of the people in need whom they support. My heart warms when I pick up the contents and see how generous our congregation has been.

As well as food we have delivered enough food containers, knives, forks and spoons to guarantee supplies until the New Year and in addition the Outreach group has supplied 250 disposable face masks that can, in fact, be washed several times. Wendy Mountford has augmented these by making more masks from washable material. Thanks Wendy.

In Advent we will be supplying Christmas grocery bags for the Sisters to hand out to about 30 needy families. The Sisters will be unable to have their Christmas party for the lunch guests this year but we are planning to give them all an extra bag of Christmas goodies, some of which will be provided by the Outreach Committee. We will also give chocolate Santas to children whose parents visit the Soup Kitchen.

The Soup Kitchen is not the only beneficiary of the Outreach committee's efforts. This Christmas we are again supporting the *Münchener Tafel*. In the present circumstances it is not possible to make up shoe boxes as in the past, so we will be supplying the guests with knitted items, chocolate Santas and toiletries. There are now about 250 people going to the *Tafel* daily and this number is expected to increase.

We will also be supplying the preschool of the *Christophorus Schulverein*, a school for children with special needs, with chocolate Santas and *Weihnachtssterne* for their families. This is our latest project and these gifts for Advent are our first contribution. We hope to be able to support the school in other ways next year.

Through Rev. Dorothee, firewood and Christmas shopping bags containing basic foodstuffs and household items will be distributed to needy families in Romania. Items from Romania, such as wooden crosses and lavender bags may be purchased online.

The Outreach Committee



Ikon



Reading the Bible with the Jewish Tradition

In one of our schoolbooks, there is an image of an Orthodox Jewish boy taking a bite from a biscuit, which is in the shape of a Hebrew letter. By doing so, he is meant to develop an appetite for the Torah. For me, this image conveys the idea that the Torah needs to be chewed carefully, and slowly digested, so that it can become part of one's very being.

With its honey glaze, it is sweet; as is the ultimate message of the Torah: God's justice is accompanied by God's mercy. God's vision for man is a partnership in an ongoing creation, leading to life in abundance and spiritual unity.

Understanding this message takes time and effort. It requires engagement with those who have grappled with the Torah in days gone by, and with those of us doing so today. Still, a lifetime might not suffice for complete understanding.

There is so much to be discussed and to be seen from a different perspective. In its texts, one finds astonishing room for playfulness and subtlety, though a substantial portion of knowledge is needed as well. At times, each individual word seems to carry specific meaning, and an underlying message can be found in any seemingly simple phrase.

A bite of this biscuit asks for more. So does every single evening of studying the Bible in the Jewish tradition with Rémy Bethmont. His own ceaseless curiosity, exceptional scholarship and liberating faith could not guide us along any better. What is particularly eye-opening to me is how Rémy continually makes a link between the Hebrew Bible and the Gospel, thus deepening our understanding of fundamental Christian concepts.

Thank you, Rémy, for this most nourishing food for spiritual thought and life!
Thanks to everyone for participating in such an inspiring way!

Petra Teißl



Ikon

Women's Book Club

A book club is a many-splendored thing. It brings readers together, encourages differences of opinion, opens up new ways of understanding. Besides, it's fun. The Ascension Book Club, now in its 7th year, has read and discussed books, from classics to sci-fi, from mysteries to love stories. And members can't wait for the next chapter.

The group was founded by Yvonne Cockcroft over six years ago. Members meet every two months, initially in members' homes, now on Zoom. Anyone can suggest a book, something she has read and enjoyed, and then a vote is taken to choose the books most likely to appeal. Mystery? History? Romance? Classic? Sci-fi? Non-Fiction? Even well-worn books like Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" have been read. After all, there is always something new to learn in a book.

"We laugh a lot," says one longtime member. Perhaps the biggest cause for merriment is the opening query: "Who didn't like the book?" No book is universally popular, after all. Despite the new meeting constraints, the readers read on. And Zoom and chat. But something is definitely missing from the encounters: The snacks, the teapot, the biscuits. Talking about books is hungry work.

The next meeting will be at 14.00 on January 9th and we will be discussing *No Time Like the Present* by Nadine Gordimer. New members are always welcome; if you're interested, contact Mary Wulf mary.wulf1@googlemail.com for information. We'd love you to join us.

Dee Pattee

PS Note Yvonne's special book club mask! Sorry Bettina, Dee, Janis and Mary that you are not featured here!





"There is not enough darkness in all the world to put out the light of one small candle...' I have always remembered those words, not so much for their poetry and imagery as for the truth they contain. In moments of discouragement, defeat or even despair, there are always certain things to cling to. Little things, usually: remembered laughter, the face of a sleeping child, a tree in the wind – in fact, any reminder of something deeply felt or dearly loved."

~ *Arthur Gordon*



"Loving Father, help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and the worship of the wise men."

"Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world."

"Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting."

"Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts."

"May the Christmas morning make us happy to be your children, and the Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen!"

~ *Robert Louis Stevenson*

Stephen Norton

In memoriam A Tribute to Stephen Norton



About 35 years ago, after I had assumed a position at the Bavarian Radio, my good friend Steve Sherman convinced me to try singing in the Choir of the Church of the Ascension. I tried, and because of the wonderful music and inspiring, unparalleled leadership of the choir's conductor, the late Fred Mayer, I am still here. Fred allowed me not only to sing and become a part of the Choir, but he also nurtured my talents as a conductor, allowing me to take over musical responsibility when needed.

About 9 years ago, C of A chorister Jo Westcombe began to badger me, urging me to join a group called the Munich English Choir, whose repertoire and whose founder /conductor Stephen Norton, she praised to the skies. Believe it or not, history repeated itself and the Munich English Choir has become my second musical home in Munich. I can describe Stephen Norton with the same words that I used to describe our beloved Fred. In Stephen's case I can add to "inspiring and unparalleled leadership" the accolades of superb skill at the piano and organ and a deeply founded understanding of and respect for the English choral tradition.

Unlike Fred, who lived into his 80s, Stephen departed this world at only half that age, robbing us of so many years of musical fulfilment. In losing him so soon, we lost a guiding light, a tireless worker, a fighter for perfection and a man who showed almost unfathomable patience as well as boundless love for “his” Munich English Choir.

Like Fred, Stephen allowed me to jump in for him whenever business required him to be away from Munich and for this privilege I will be forever grateful. When discussing points of musical interpretation, he was totally open to my suggestions without the slightest hint of vanity on his side. I treasured his confidence in me as well as his friendship. I looked forward to every Munich English Choir rehearsal conducted by Stephen and every personal meeting with him, whether discussing music or just the world in general. I even listened patiently to his discourses about organ pipes and stops and construction, although I understand next to nothing on the subject.

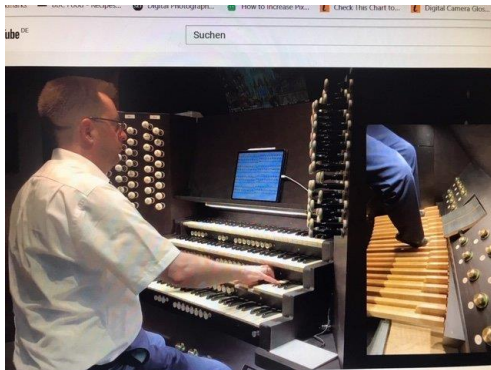
Stephen contributed tirelessly to the music program at the Church of the Ascension, whether as an organist, conducting the Choir, planning and conducting Evensongs or as the superbly animated accompanist of our annual Carol Sing. He may have often been under stress but his ever-present smile became a contagious trademark. We, of the C of A and the Munich English Choir, loved him. In fact, we still love him. He will be sorely missed.

Jeff Leipsic



At the Emmaus church, the organist is normally hidden from view in the choir loft at the back of the church. Since our services have been broadcast on Zoom however, the congregation were able for the first time to actually see Stephen in action at the organ.

Thankfully his skills can still be admired and enjoyed in the fourteen wonderful videos he made on YouTube.



Stephen Norton: A life in music

From 2010 until 2019, I had the huge privilege once a year to be able to sing some of the most beautiful music on the planet, in the most special Service of Seven Lessons and Carols in St Ottilien, with some of my favourite people. All this was made possible by Stephen Norton.

Stephen was so much more than just our conductor. Whether planning the programme with the brothers in St Ottilien, putting together our rehearsal schedule, preparing detailed booklets with instructions for singers and organists, perfecting our processing around the church, (making sure we turned on our toes at the corners), or plugging in lights that made the Abbey glow in Palatinate purple, Stephen was both the creative spirit behind the service and its project manager extraordinaire - all in his “spare” time.

Only now that his life is so tragically over am I learning more remarkable things about Stephen from his parents:

That he, at eight years old, was the third generation of his family to sing at Gloucester Cathedral, England; that he came to Munich in 2002 for work, but, wanting to be involved in church music, studied (again in his “spare” time) to be qualified to play in Catholic churches; that for several years, as Director of Music at Maria Trost in Untermenzing, he gave organ recitals, conducted choirs and orchestras and herded recorder groups.

He really did, to apply an overused but appropriate metaphor, pull out all the stops in his life.

Still, he always had time for the members of his choir, and was generous with his lovely smile. Watching Stephen conducting in the St Ottilien service, bathed in glorious song and with the organ swelling at his back, I'd sometimes be on the receiving end of that smile, accompanied by a raised eyebrow and a particular far-off gleam in his eyes. I'm sure these were expressions of pure joy and fulfilment.

And this is how I will remember him.

Jo Westcombe



Worship in Nürnberg

At St. James the Less we normally meet every 2nd and 4th Sunday for worship at 16:00 in the main church of the Jakobskirche in downtown Nürnberg:

Jakobskirche - Church of St. James the Less
Jakobsplatz 1
90402 Nürnberg



Please come and join us! We would be honoured to have you worship with us. No matter who you are, or where you are on your spiritual journey, you are welcome at St. James the Less. Hygiene rules will, of course, apply due to COVID-19.

Services were unfortunately suspended in November. Check our Facebook page to get the latest information: Anglican/episcopal church of St James, the Less.

www.st-james-the-less.de

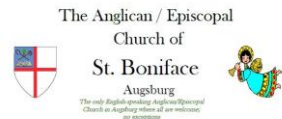
Worship in Augsburg

You are cordially invited to our Sunday Service at 4:30 p.m. local time, which is currently an Evening Prayer on-site that is also shared in a Zoom session. Please feel free to ask for the Zoom code via the Facebook Messenger function or via the contact details indicated on our webpage: www.stboniface.de.



It may, however, take us a few hours to respond. If you want to participate on-site, you will need to wear a face mask and comply with the other usual rules for disease prevention. There is, unfortunately, no singing at the moment; no separate child care or Church coffee.

**Evangelisch-Lutherische Auferstehungs-
kirche,**
Garmischer Str. 2a,
86163 Augsburg (Hochzoll).



*Invites you to celebrate
with us a Service of*

“Lessons and Carols”
with the Traditional
Christmas Story Bible Readings
and Christmas Songs
on

Sunday, 6 December 2020
16:30 h

This year: **all online!**
See Anglican.at/Home for details and links.



Instead of our traditional
Christmas Bazaar
we will offer an online-social meeting afterwards
(follow the above link)

Coming Events

18th December at 18.30

Bible Study on Zoom

24th December at 16:00

Informal Zoom service for people of all ages, including readings, carols and music, lasting around 45 minutes.

25th December at 17.00

Father Kenneth's Zoom meeting will be open again for chat and possibly more. This may be of particular interest to those who come to church (if this will still be possible) for the 12:00 service, and who will therefore miss the Zoom coffee hour following that service.

9th January at 14.00

Women's Book Group on Zoom

Keep reading the notices in the bulletin for news of a Young Adults' Zoom meeting in December.

Look out for the next Quiz Night in January.

Remember the regular meetings:

Tuesdays at 8.30 a.m. Morning Prayers followed by morning coffee

Wednesdays at 3 p.m. Coffee with Ken

Thursdays at 8 p.m. Compline. Social time from 7.45 p.m.

Please take a look at our calendar on the website; this will be updated on a regular basis. The link is:

<https://www.ascension-munich.org/calendar>

If you click on the Google Calendar icon at the bottom of the calendar, it will link your Google Calendar to the Church of the Ascension calendar.



The Twelve Days of Christmas

In Britain the Christmas tree and decorations are usually taken down on Twelfth Night, on the 12th day of the Christmas period. One of the highlights of the Christmas Carol Sing at the Church of the Ascension has always been the singing of the Twelve Days of Christmas, complete with actions.

Folklore has it that this song was written in the 16th century to remind all children of the articles of the Christian faith. This was particularly important in the turbulent times after the Act of Uniformity abolished “old” worship in England, and the practice of Catholicism was forbidden by law until parliament passed the Catholic Emancipation Act in 1829. There are varying versions of the song, implying that there is no definitive one.

It has been suggested that the song’s gifts have hidden meanings. The ‘true love’ is not a human lover but the Christian God; the ‘me’ who receives the presents refers to every baptized person; the partridge represents Jesus Christ.

The other gifts can be interpreted as follows:

2	Turtle Doves	The old and the new Testaments
3	French hens	Faith, Hope and Charity
4	Calling Birds	The Four Gospels
5	Gold Rings	The First Five books of the Old Testament
6	Six Geese a Laying	The Six days of Creation
7	Swans a Swimming	The Seven gifts of the Holy Spirit*
8	Maids a Milking	The Eight beatitudes**
9	Ladies Dancing	The Nine fruits of the Holy Spirit***
10	Lords a Leaping	The Ten Commandments
11	Pipers Piping	The Eleven faithful Apostles
12	Drummers Drumming	The Twelve points of doctrine in the Apostles’ Creed



* Wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, fear

** Blessed are: the poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, the persecuted because of righteousness

*** Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control

Maybe we simply continue to enjoy this song complete with actions in the future!

The 2020-2021 Vestry

The Vestry, together with the Priest in Charge, are responsible for the running of the church. Don't hesitate to contact any member if you have a question.

Janet Day-Strehlow	<i>Senior Warden</i>
George Battrick	<i>Junior Warden</i>
Michael Beer	
Lloyd Denton	
Jeanne Glenz	
Tonda Kemmerling	<i>Clerk of the Vestry</i>
Steve Knowles	
Sue Morris	
Graham Pearce	
Joy Schindel	
Angela Schneider	
Joachim Zeller	

New Vestry Member



Mavis Oteng-Mensah is unfortunately unable to continue serving on the Vestry.

Jeanne Glenz, who received the next highest number of votes at the AGM election, has been co-opted to serve until the next AGM.

Thank you Jeanne.

Jeanne Glenz says:

“The Church of the Ascension has played a very important part in my life in Munich for the past thirty years. During that time, I have served in a variety of positions within the church. I have served on the Vestry, and on the Council of Advice. I was a lay delegate to the General Convention in Denver, and co-chaired the search committee that called Father Tom Pellaton.

Most recently I was asked by Father Allan to be a member of the Regathering Task Force. I am happy to support the church as a co-opted member of the Vestry, especially as our parish continues its search for a new rector. I am a retired psychologist, married with two adult daughters and two adult grandchildren.”

Answers to “Where on Earth is it” on pages 14-16

1 Kenya: Nairobi	Elpinah Riedmeyr
2 France: Paris	Rémy Bethmont
3 Holland	Jessica Grimm
4 The Philippines	Jo Schindel, Jes Villa, Priscilla Klingl, Michelle Perello
5 Bermuda	Laurian Harris
6 Guyana: Kaieteur Falls	Joan and David Case
7 Austria: Kellerjoch/Schwaz	Petra Teißl
8 Zimbabwe: Victoria Falls	Aileen Klarmann
9 Romania: Bucharest	Andreas Bartesch
10 Canada: Toronto	Mary Wulf
11 Sri Lanka	Patrick Kana
12 India: Kerala	Rohit and Shema Paul
13 Australia: Victoria	Kaye O’Connell, Laura Baird
14 Malaysia: Kuala Lumpur	Chris Lim
15 Czech Republic: Prague	Bob Nowak
16 Sicily: Taormina	Dee Pattee
17 Norway	Kristi Nowak
18 Nigeria	Lateef Agbaje

Carols mentioned on page 22

- Jingle Bells
- Silent Night
- While Shepherds Watched their Flocks by Night
- Rudolf the Red-nosed Reindeer
- We three Kings of Orient Are
- Away in a Manger



50 Years with Emmaus

Presentation of a commemorative Plaque to Emmaus Kirche

“The first American Episcopal Church in Germany opened its doors in 1884: this was in Dresden. The Church of the Ascension was incorporated in 1903 as a “mission church” from Dresden. In our first years, we worshipped in the waiting room of the Munich sales offices of the Hamburg-America Shipping Line. Between the wars, we leased from the city the ground floor of what is now the Literaturhaus to use as our worship space and library.



In the 1930s we were offered an endowment from the parents of an American student who had died while studying in Munich, with the aim of building our own church on a site off Ludwigstrasse, but the change of government in 1934 put an end to that plan.

In the 1950s, our activities re-started with a Student Centre in Kaulbachstrasse, and later we worshipped as guests of the Old Catholics in St Willibrord’s Church.

And in 1970, the Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche in Bayern kindly invited us to become guests of the Emmauskirche, which only six years earlier had finished building this wonderful worship space.

We are very grateful for your hospitality over the last fifty years, by far the longest that we have been able to stay in one place. We apologise that, as Pfarrer Reichenbacher has pointed out to us, sometimes some of our members have acted as if we owned the building and you were our guests. And we look forward to continuing our relationship of very practical ecumenicism with you, of which the next step will be that our new interim priest, the Reverend Kenneth Dimmick, has arrived in Munich.

As a token of our appreciation, we would like to present you with this plaque to celebrate our fifty years together.”

Closing Words

Dear Santa,
My grandmother says
to my brother and me
that the best Xmas present
is good health. I have good
health already so I would
like a doll instead.

Love,
Gertrude

The editorial team and the Vestry hope that all the members of the congregation at Ascension are enjoying the good health so important to Gertrude's grandmother.

We hope too that there will be some moments filled with joy and the peace of the Lord in this Christmas season at the end of a year that has tested us all.

Keep safe.

Sue Morris



Imprint / Impressum

Editor: Sue Morris

Assistant Editors: Dee Pattee, Mitchell Woodard

Layout: Roger Houghton

Please help us to fill the magazine with the life of the church and send any ideas or contributions for the next issue of **lkon** to the editor for consideration: sue.morris@web.de

Please note ...

if you want to have anything announced during the church service or in the bulletin, you will need to first run it past the Senior Warden, Janet Day-Strehlow.

Contact Information

Address:

lkon Magazine

Church of the Ascension

Seybothstr. 4

81545 Munich

Phone: +49 (0)89 648 185

Fax: +49 (0)89 644 428

Email Church Office: office@ascension-munich.com



The Church of the Ascension is an Anglican/Episcopal Church in the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe, a member of the worldwide Anglican Communion.

We extend a warm welcome to all!

Our Purpose and Mission

We offer worship in English, serving Greater Munich and the surrounding area. We welcome people of all nationalities to join our community and share in our journey towards a deeper knowledge of God as revealed in Jesus Christ.

We seek to:

- Proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ by word and deed
- Celebrate God through beautiful and meaningful worship
- Minister to one another through worship, fellowship, Christian education and pastoral care
- Care for people in the wider community through outreach projects, both alone and together with others.