

CHAPLAINCY OF ALL SAINTS' MARSEILLE WITH AIX-EN-PROVENCE AND THE LUBERON

NEWSLETTER MARCH 2022



A reflection from the Chaplain

As we approach Passiontide this year, it is hard to dissociate the story we will be recalling from the events we have been witnessing daily in Ukraine. The unleashing of violence; the brutality that boils over in the human struggle for power and influence; the justification of violence by some in the name of religion; the juxtaposition of a claim to uphold the integrity of a faith tradition with a military presence determined to suppress dissent by force. It was all there in first century Palestine. It is all still there in twenty-first century Europe.

How much easier it would be to turn our heads and distract ourselves with almost anything rather than face the truth of the propensity for evil that lurks within the human condition. But to turn away is the one thing we must not do. We are called to walk with Christ through the coming days, to draw closer to him as he faces betrayal, suffering and death, so that we see more clearly the dangers that exist in the world around us and, if we are honest with ourselves, in our own hearts. It is only if we can see them clearly, as we shall do on Good Friday at the foot of the cross, that we shall be able to face them as Christ did and learn to do things differently. Finding in him the assurance, which no human agency is able to offer so convincingly, that goodness is stronger than evil, love stronger than hate, and that (in the words of St Paul) nothing in all creation can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus (Romans 8.39).

I hope you will join us for our services in Holy Week and Easter, either in church or online, as we share Christ's journey from darkness to light. At our Easter Vigil, at 10.00 pm online on Saturday, 16th April, a single candle will be lit from which the light of Easter will be shared across our community, inspiring us to go out and live the Gospel of love that offers hope to a suffering world more than ever in need of it. And on Easter morning, in the different churches of the chaplaincy, we will share in that fullness of joy which the promise of resurrection brings.

The Revd Jamie Johnston, Chaplain

World Day of Prayer – Friday, 4th March

Many thanks to Anne Roumieu for representing us again this year at this important event and taking part in all the preparations. This year the focus for the Day of Prayer was England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Services were held at the Eglise Protestante Unie in Marseille and Aix-en-Provence. As ever, it was a valuable opportunity to deepen friendships and pray together with fellow Christians from different denominations across the chaplaincy area.



Ecumenical service of prayers for peace in Ukraine – Sunday, 13th March

Our chaplain Jamie and curate Roxana took part in an ecumenical service of prayers for peace in Ukraine at the Eglise Saint-Ferréol in Marseille, again attended by fellow Christians from the across the denominations in the city. Roxana led the intercessions and Jamie and three other ministers gave a short reflection on the Beatitudes.

Diocese in Europe Lent and Easter Appeal

This year's diocesan Lent and Easter Appeal is to help those affected by the war in Ukraine, including refugees needing support in the areas of local chaplaincies. The appeal is an opportunity for churches to help via other churches and through aid agencies connected to our ecumenical partners in the region. It is being run in conjunction with the Anglican mission agency USPG, and the response in the Diocese and beyond has been remarkable. Thank you. Chaplaincies are already giving grants to individuals, as well as hospitality, advice and food. More is needed, of course, as the crisis is both urgent and long term. Details of the appeal may be viewed on the diocesan website:

<https://europe.anglican.org/main/latest-news/post/1785-lent-and-easter-appeal-2022-aid-to-ukraine>

Individual gifts can also be made through the USPG Giving Portal.

Online Prayers for Peace

Online Prayers for Peace – Wednesdays at 18:00 CET. A diocesan service of ‘Prayers Across Europe for Peace in Ukraine’ is being held online every Wednesday at 18:00 CET at least until the end of Lent. The simple 30 minute service is a ‘Vigil with Prayers for Peace in Ukraine’. It includes prayers, music, readings and a reflection or some information from a part of the Diocese directly affected by the crisis. The service is on zoom and all are welcome to join. Do let people know who may be interested. The link will be the same each week:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87224945786> Meeting ID: 872 2494 5786

Message from the Chaplain of St Andrew’s, Moscow

Those on our mailing list will already have received a copy of the message which Canon Malcolm Rogers, Chaplain of St Andrew’s Moscow, circulated on 10th March. A copy is reprinted at the end of this newsletter.

Volunteers

Many thanks to all who have come forward and volunteered for the various tasks that need doing around the chaplaincy. We still have a vacancy for another Churchwarden.....

Repairs to All Saints’ Marseille

These have commenced and the building is now watertight again (we hope) following the replacement of a significant number of roof tiles. Temporary works to the cellar have also been completed, to stabilise an area of floor in the church which was in danger of subsiding. More works will be needed to this during the summer months, for which an estimate is awaited. A new ventilation system has also been installed to reduce the damp in the cellar. Thanks to Gaston Roumieu for all his help on this.

AGM

The chaplaincy AGM will be at **2.30 pm on Saturday, 14th May** this year, via zoom. All those on the electoral roll are welcome to attend.

Updated Covid protocol for Church attendance

Our Covid protocol for attending church services was reviewed at the Chaplaincy Council meeting this month. Although many restrictions have now been removed in France, given the recent escalation in the number of cases it was decided to leave the majority of the protocol unchanged for the moment and to keep the position under review over the coming weeks.

We are, however, now able to share refreshments again after services. To enable this to take place at All Saints’ Marseille, and for Jamie and Roxana to be able to spend time with the congregation there after their service ends, from April onwards our Zoom services will begin with our two Readers, Christine and Jane, leading the worship (with the help of some very welcome

volunteers to operate the Zoom controls!). Jamie and/or Roxana will then join us online once the local worshippers have left the church. Again, we will keep this under review to see how it works out in practice.

Concert

Advance notice – on Friday, 20th May, there will be a concert at All Saints' Marseille by the choir *Doubles Croches*, who have performed with us in the past. Details to be confirmed in due course.

Dates for Diary

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| 1 st April | Service of Prayers for healing at 6 pm on zoom |
| 3 rd April | Holy Communion at 10 am at All Saints' Marseille
Holy Communion at 11.30 am on zoom |
| 6 th April | Compline at 10 pm on zoom |
| 10 th April | Palm Sunday
Holy Communion at 10 am at All Saints' Marseille
Holy Communion at 11.30 am on zoom |
| 11 th April | Monday of Holy Week - Compline at 10 pm on zoom |
| 12 th April | Tuesday of Holy Week - Compline at 10 pm on zoom |
| 13 th April | Wednesday of Holy Week - Compline at 10 pm on zoom |
| 14 th April | Maundy Thursday
Holy Communion with washing of feet at 6 pm at All Saints' Marseille |
| 15 th April | Good Friday
All Saints' Marseille (livestreamed):
12.00 – 1.45 pm Reflections on the Cross – A series of addresses with music, prayer and silence, led by the Chaplain
1.45 – 3.00 pm The Liturgy of Good Friday |
| 16 th April | Easter Eve
10.00 pm Easter Vigil and Service of Light on zoom |
| 17 th April | Easter Sunday |

Holy Communion at 10 am at All Saints' Marseille (livestreamed)

Holy Communion at 10.30 am at Eglise du Sacré-Coeur, Oppède

Holy Communion at 4 pm at Eglise Protestante Unie, Manosque

20th April Compline at 10 pm on zoom

23rd April Chaplaincy Council meeting at 2.30 pm on zoom

24th April Holy Communion at 10 am at All Saints' Marseille

Holy Communion at 11.30 am on zoom

Holy Communion at 4 pm at Eglise Protestante Unie, Aix-en-Provence

27th April Compline at 10 pm on zoom

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Articles for the newsletter are always welcome. Please send to Jane as above

Message from the Chaplain of St Andrew's, Moscow

This was written by the Chaplain of St Andrew's Moscow, the Revd Canon Malcolm Rogers - March 10th 2022.

“St Andrew's Anglican Church in Moscow is situated only 10 minutes' walk from the Kremlin, the physical and geographical centre of power. The Ministries of Education, Culture and Defence are near neighbours. We are in the centre of power and yet we are powerless. Today, as many of our dear friends have left Russia, and as we nervously wonder whether or when we should leave, we are even more conscious of our powerlessness. Conflict was predicted and we were helpless, unable to do anything to prevent it. Now that 'special military operations', as they are called here, have begun, there is nothing that we can do to stop them. But it is precisely our powerlessness which means that there are things that we can do. We are gospel people, who serve a crucified but risen Lord. We are the 'nobodies' of 1 Corinthians 1, and it is our very powerlessness and insignificance and foolishness that can also be our strength if it is handed to God.

First of all, we are simply here. We are a community of very messed up people, but as we gather together to hear the Word of God and to receive bread and wine, a community of Russians and foreigners gathered together, centred on and receiving from Jesus Christ, our simple presence can be a witness of what the world can be like, of the future kingdom.

Secondly, in our powerlessness, we can worship and pray. We pray for peace. That is far more than just praying for the absence of war. We praise God for the coming Kingdom, for the hope he has given us. I am struck that in both Mary's song and Zechariah's song we praise God for what we hope will happen, as if it already has happened; and we cry out for God, as we pray and long for the coming of God's Kingdom. We pray for the time when there will be no more 'fake news', lies, betrayals or violence, and no more fear and death. And it is our very powerlessness which opens to us our dependence on God and on him doing wonderful works.

Thirdly, we can still speak truth. There are some things that we cannot say in Moscow, but we can still preach Jesus Christ crucified and risen and reigning. We can call people to repentance and offer people hope. In my 30 plus years of ministry, I have never known a time and a place when people are more hungering for God.

And fourthly we can love and serve our neighbour. We read the news and feel powerless. Most of us are in no position to solve world problems or to bring peace. The job advert when I applied to come to Moscow said that the person appointed could make a difference for world peace. On those grounds I have been a spectacular failure! But we can make a difference where we are, and love the actual physical neighbours who God has given us. For some, the neighbours are Ukrainian refugees.

Yesterday I heard from the woman who I ran our college Christian Union with. Since leaving university, she has been working with Polish Christians, witnessing, and serving mainly among addicts and street women. She wrote of how her team met a family of homeless Ukrainian

refugees and they are now living in her flat. There are many stories like that. Our neighbours at St Andrew's in Moscow are different. They are the young Russian crushed by what has been done in his name; the mother sick with anxiety for her son who has been sent to Ukraine, the foreign student unsure whether to leave or how to leave, the person who has been named on the wrong sort of list, the older person who fears a return to the isolation and economic depression of the 80s. In our hubris we think that we are somebodies who can save the world - and we end up paralysed. But it is when we realise our powerlessness, that in the world's eyes we are 'nobodies', that we can begin to see the neighbour who God has given us and learn to serve them.

Pray for us, for courage and wisdom and perseverance in faith and love. And we will pray for you.”

Rev Canon Malcolm Rogers, Chaplain of St Andrew's, Moscow, The Archbishop of Canterbury's Representative to the Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia, Area Dean of Russia and Ukraine