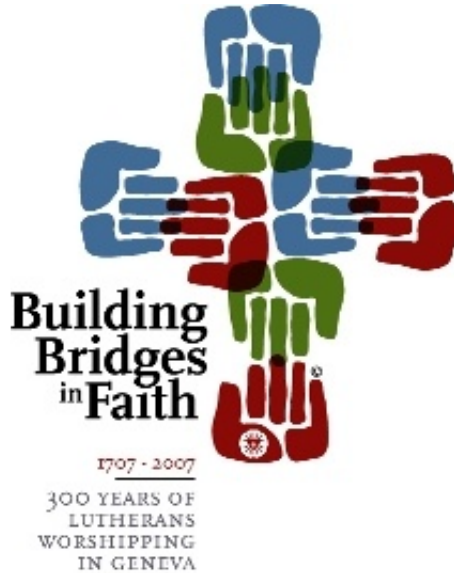


Sleeping Treasures



"Sleeping Treasures", Luther's original pamphlets, the 95 Theses, a representative large part of his legacy, its impact on humanity, the evolution of Western culture; the work of a man who "rocked the boat" some 500 years ago, are going to be on display at the Martin Bodmer Museum and Bibliotheque from August 27th 2007 through the end of the year.

For those who are not aware of the legacy of Martin Luther, a most prominent Christian, this timeless exhibition is a most welcome and rare occasion to bring the very best of Luther to the attention of a wider public. Within the context of a partnership with the Martin Bodmer Foundation and The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Geneva for its 300th anniversary celebrations, we have the pleasure of announcing this truly rare opportunity to view some of the most important works of Luther.

As Mario Botta, a famous modern architect from Switzerland, said, "The documentation written and preserved at the Foundation Martin Bodmer, of which some are single in the world, constitutes an extraordinary cultural inheritance by its quality and its scarcity."

The truly outstanding collection made up of the most important written documents created by man at "turning points" in history are the core of the Martin Bodmer legacy, deposited within his "Bibliotheca Bodmeriana", which since 1971, just prior to his death, became known as "the Fondation Martin Bodmer, Museum and Bibliotheque". Evidently, Luther's impact on European culture would stand proudly in the collection assembled tirelessly by Bodmer during the last century. With one of the most complete collections of Martin Luther's work, some of the most rarely seen documents will be on show. Next to such "icons" as the "Gutenberg Bible", the "Gospel of Saint John" which dates from the 2nd century", writings of Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe, Voltaire and many others that have inspired and changed our world and that recall the "history of civilization", Luther will be honoured for these several months.

You are invited for the private viewing that will take place on Monday August 27th 2007 at 18:30 at the Martin Bodmer Foundation, situated in Cologny Village, overlooking the Lake and City of Geneva. See: www.fondationbodmer.org

Carl-Gustav Bjertnes



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

5 May

Kermesse/Church Bazaar to benefit the 300th Anniversary

3 June

New members luncheon

10 June

Congregational Assembly

28-30 Sept

Congregational retreat

PLANNING YOUR SUMMER?

Want to make sure you're in town for the main anniversary events? Block off in your agenda these days around the actual anniversary day, August 28:

Sunday, August 26 at 10h00: Anniversary worship service

Tuesday, August 28 at 17h30: Historic exhibition opens and continues for two months (Place Bourg-de-Four)

At 19h30: Ceremony for officials and guests (state authorities, church and Lutheran representatives, former pastors)

Week of August 26: Parish feast (fête de paroisse): A week-long celebration with historical lectures

Lenten Fruits



Courtesy: Freedigitalphotos.net

By now some of us have already lost the tiny seed we received the first Sunday of Lent. Others are probably still trying to figure out what fruit has to do with “giving up something for Lent.” Some of us may be wondering if God has really given us any gift at all that is worthy of offering back to God. Where will this fruit image be going that the worship committee has dreamed up? Will there be orange groves at the tomb? Did apple blossoms attend the resurrection garden? Did the angry crowd throw rotten figs at Jesus on the cross? After all it is known that the worship committee has a good imagination. How does the image of fruit connect with the Lenten journey?

The forty days of Lent became a season of the church year to accompany those preparing for baptism on Easter Eve, the most ancient festival of the church. The whole church would join with those studying and praying towards their initiation into the life of the church. In its early days, the season of Lent had little to do with “giving something up.” Rather it was a time to re-orient the community towards the fundamentals of the faith. It was more “taking

something on” than “giving something up.” The community was taking on prayer and fasting and giving to the poor. These were some of the fruits of Lent—lives re-engaged in the cause of the Gospel.

This Lent we kept asking what is the outcome of our lives. What is the fruit of our Christian endeavor together? The Biblical readings for this season forced us to ask many questions of ourselves. What heritage do we pass on? Why do we eat false fruit, which does not satisfy? When fruit turns to vinegar, what hope does it bring? What happens when there is no fruit? Can we still hope or must we expect to be cut down and thrown into the fire?

Lent is a time to ask what is important about our faith, to question ourselves what kind of fruit our lives are producing. It is easy to feel that we can't make any difference at all. But God doesn't view even small attempts at love with indifference. It is easy to feel that we have nothing to contribute. So we don't. But this ignores the gifts that God has instilled within us. It denies the fruits that God expects from us because God created us for that purpose. It is easy to be afraid because the tender parts of our lives have become battered. We get sour like vinegar. But even vinegar was a part of the story of the death of Jesus.

It is not easy to believe that from

our inconsequential, nonexistent and battered gifts can come a resurrection, fruits of the Spirit, nourishing, bold, secure in the knowledge that God made us for precisely this gift, this moment. It is not easy to believe that we can be really alive, sweet, colorful, juicy, burst-of-flavor alive, because the resurrected Christ has made us first-fruits of grace, treasures of heaven. But fruit says it is so.

Terry MacArthur

A REQUEST

Let us paint our roots in the history of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Geneva! We are creating a story about the diversity of our origins to be printed for the 300th anniversary celebrations.

Please help us by filling up a small questionnaire and handing it over to Daphne Martin who will be collecting the information and working on the story. The questionnaires will be distributed this Sunday and the following Sunday. Please do cooperate and help us write a fantastic story about all of us!

You are welcome to share your photos too if you are interested.....

Contact: Daphne Martin
(daphnymartin@gmail.com)

GenevaLutheran Team

Susan Steinhagen, Editor
Federico Besnard
Carl Bjertnes
Jacinta Goveas
Stephen Padre

Regular Church Activities

Every Sunday morning

Christian Education Programme
3-12 yrs. old, 11:00 *church*
Adult Forum, 10:00 *Spaghetti Factory*
Sunday Worship 11:00

Every Thursday

Adult choir, 20:00 *church*

Every Friday

Confirmation class, 17:30
third floor of the church
Junior choir, 18:30 *church*

Monday-Saturday

Open Church, 12:00-17:00 *church*

Third Tuesday of each month

Japanese Bible study, 20:30 *home of Thomas and Koko Taylor, Il chemin Gamay, Bernex*

First Saturday of each month

Worship in French, 18:00
cave routeé at the church

Third Sunday of each month

Concerts for Peace, *church*

Every other Monday

Evening Reflection Group, 19:00
(at various homes)
For details, check website or contact Jacinta Goveas (goveas@unhcr.org)

Bible Readings

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

April 29, 2007
Acts 9:36-43
Psalm 23 (1)
Revelation 7:9-17
John 10:22-30

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 6, 2007
Acts 11:1-18
Psalm 148 (13)
Revelation 21:1-6
John 13:31-35

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 13, 2007
Acts 16:9-15
Psalm 67 (4)
Revelation 21:10, 22—22:5
John 14:23-29 or John 5:1-9

ASCENSION OF OUR LORD

May 17, 2007
Acts 1:1-11
Psalm 47 (5)
Ephesians 1:15-23
Luke 24:44-53

SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 20, 2007
Acts 16:16-34
Psalm 97 (12)
Revelation 22:12-14
John 17:20-26

DAY OF PENTECOST

May 27, 2007
Acts 2:1-21 or Genesis 11:1-9
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b (30)
Romans 8:14-17 or Acts 2:1-21
John 14:8-17

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

June 3, 2007
Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31
Psalm 8 (1)
Romans 5:1-5
John 16:12-15

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

June 10, 2007
1 Kings 17:17-24
Psalm 30
Galatians 1:11-24
Luke 7:11-17

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle Refreshment Duties after Worship

Week 17: 22-28 April

Djibouti, Somalia

Week 18: 29 April - 5 May

Eritrea, Ethiopia

Week 19: 6-12 May

Sudan, Uganda

Week 20: 13-19 May

Kenya, Tanzania

Week 21: 20-26 May

Malawi, Zambia

Week 22: 27 May - 2 June

Botswana, Zimbabwe

Week 23: 3-9 June

Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland

Week 24: 10-16 June

Angola, Mozambique

Week 25: 17-23 June

Brazil

Week 26: 24-30 June

Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay

Week 27: 1-7 July

Bolivia, Chile, Peru

Week 28: 8-14 July

Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela

Every week a neighbourhood group prepares refreshments after worship. If you are not sure which group you belong to, please contact the church.

April 29

Group E

(Servette, Paquis, Vermont, Délices)

May 6

Group F

(Centre Ville, Jonction, Carouge, Eaux-Vives, Acacias)

May 13

Group G

(Chêne-Bougeries, Florissant, Cologny, Vésénaz)

May 20

Group H

(Lancy, Onex, Bernex, France Haute Savoie)

May 27

Group A

(Nyon, Coppet, Crans, Gex, Ferney)

June 3

Group B

(Versoix, Bellevue, Chambésy, etc.)

June 10

Group C

(Meyrin, Vernier, Châtelaine, Lignon)

June 17

Group D

(Grand-Saconnex and Petit-Saconnex)

June 24

Group E

(Servette, Paquis, Vermont, Délices)

About Noah

A performance by the children of the English-speaking congregation

Students are sitting around teacher at the front of the church. Clare and Julia are off by themselves.

Teacher: In today's story, God said to a special person that the weather was going to get really, really bad, and the water would rise and flood the Earth.

Paulo: We know this story already. We've heard it hundreds of times.

Maki: Yeah, we saw it in class just last week. It's called "An Inconvenient Truth".

Amrita: God spoke to Al Gore?

Max: No way. God doesn't talk to politicians. They're all crooks.

Teacher: No, this is not about global warming. This is a different story.

Clare: We're supposed to act out the story.

Julia: Cool. I want to be a bad guy. That's a lot more fun than being a good guy. So I'll drive up in my big old car and brag about my vacation in the South Pacific and kick some sand in your eyes.

Clare: You will not. Besides, I get to have solar heating and live right up the street from where I work.

Julia: Woo-oo! I'm SO-o-o-oh jealous.

Teacher: So, God sent a male and a female of each kind of animal into the ark. Do you know why?

Jared: So they could have babies.

Patricia: So they wouldn't be extinct.

Paulo: I know, I know. We learned about this in school.

Its called 'Bible Diversity.'

Maki: You mean Biodiversity

Paulo: Yeah. Exactly. God didn't want animals to be dying out because of the disaster.

Clare: Looks like we had the wrong story.

Julia: So we are supposed to act like animals? I can do a penguin. Look.

Teacher: So the ark was shut and the rains began.

Max: I don't think it was very nice for God to destroy all those people.

Julia: It's what they deserved. They were having way too much fun.

Amrita: What did the animals do? Did they deserve it?

Maki: The mosquitoes did.

Patricia: If God wants to destroy all the animals, he can. Cause he's God.

Teacher: So, after a long, long time, the Earth recovered from the disaster, and the animals came back and populated the Earth. And Noah was so thankful that God had saved life on Earth, do you know what he did?

Jared: I think I know what my Dad would do. He would open a bottle of wine.

Teacher: He built an altar and thanked God and worshipped God. And God gave a rainbow, as a promise that the Earth would never again be destroyed by the weather.

Max: Even with a happy ending, it's a pretty grim story.

Paulo: Well, don't worry about it. It's just a story.

Crosses and Crossings

An Exhibition in honor of the 300th Anniversary of the ELCG

An article on the pictures that were put up in church during Lent

How did it happen that I started to see crosses and crossings all around me? Was it my age? Was it because I suddenly realized that I live in a town surrounded by many war-cemeteries, with all those countless white crosses, each one remembering a young man? Was it the death of a friend two years ago? Or of this girl-friend of mine suddenly gone? The last years have been a time of decisions, of questions, of confrontations, of crossings.

Where are we coming from? All those lines crossing each other...

For years I have also been asking myself about the religious education I can offer my children in The Netherlands. That was not easy because I am coming from abroad and I have been living in a country with a different background. The Dutch are very "strong" in religion or very strongly against it.

In my home-country, in the Viennese Wood Hills, I often walk through the woods, in the direction of the "White Cross", or, towards the west, to the "Black Cross", and sometimes I climb up as far as the "Red Cross", a large

and severe monument, a dirty rusty iron cross, one of my first photographs of "CROSSES".

As an artist, I already had started to write (and even to collect) texts about crosses, and I slowly started to visualize crosses and crossings with my colour-pencils (drawings completed by copper-wire, in my own technique), or by using my camera. The more I became aware of the subject, the more I encountered it, in nature, on the street, and in my own mind.

Two lines are crossing each other, lines coming from somewhere, disappearing again, leaving inconspicuous or unintentional traces, natural structures. Sometimes they have exactly the "right" shape touching the soul. Don't try to find MORE. This is not religious artwork. Nevertheless, some of the crosses have an outspoken religious or meditative character.

Just look at my crosses with an open heart.

Susanne Kittel-Habock

www.suzysmile.com

The Congregational Committee at Work in 2007

The Congregational Committee (CC) has committed to keep the congregation informed of the work of the CC and key issues and decisions. Below are some of the highlights during the first three months of 2007. The CC meets each month to provide leadership for the congregation. Prior to this meeting, the Executive Committee (President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary) and the Pastor meet, to follow-up on past decisions and plan for the upcoming meeting.

Members

Kathy Bracken, Jennifer Nahn, Nathan Wilson and Monica Yesudian were elected to fill vacancies on the CC until the June 2007 Assembly. These new members joined the Fellowship, Outreach, Worship and Nurture Concern Groups. Monica Yesudian was also elected to the Church Council, joining four existing representatives.

Concern Groups

A meeting was convened for the coordinators of the Concern Groups and the CC liaison person of each group on 14 March 2007. Several issues were discussed, including communication between the CC and Concern Groups, recruiting new members and some areas where CC support is needed. The Concern Groups send regular updates to the CC on their activities; this also helps to identify areas needing strengthened collaboration.

The CC approved recommendations from the Sharing Concern Group on projects: CHF 1000 for the Diakonia Fund (discretionary fund managed by the pastor to assist persons in crisis). Up to CHF 3000 to reimburse members for food purchased for the Geneva Soup Kitchen, upon request. In addition, three projects from different countries in Africa are still under consideration.

300th Anniversary

Preparations to mark this important milestone are ongoing. The committee is looking for people to join the Building Committee, which is responsible for the renovations that were approved in line with the 300 years celebrations.

Other Developments

In January, the Pastor received a request in from a member of the congregation for a blessing of a same-sex civil union. In February the CC reviewed the status of the process, and in March agreed on next steps (see article). An ongoing process of discussions and consultations is planned, including home visits or personal visits from the Pastor. The CC approved the reception of new members of the congregation, a marriage, and a baptism, and also acknowledged some members who had moved away.

Finance

The Treasurer reports to the CC regularly on the 2006 finances. The CC approved the appointment of Mr. Muhungi Kanyoro as auditor for 2006. 2006 was a good year financially for our congregation, especially in December. Both income and expenditure were below budget, with a resulting balance of approximately CHF

15,000. According to the policy adopted by the Assembly, this amount will be divided between the Sharing Fund and the reserve fund. The final report will be presented at the June 2007 Assembly.

Harvest Festival pledges were estimated at more than CHF 8000. However, only CHF 5275 was received in 2006. A little more than CHF 2000 is expected, which should bring the total to close to CHF 8000.

In late 2006, the Lutheran Church of the Reformation in Washington, DC, informed us they could no longer assist our congregation by receiving US dollar contributions for us with the benefit of tax deduction for the donor. Subsequently, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has agreed to provide this service, which will be increasingly important in this anniversary year.

The CC considered salaries of the Pastor and other staff of the Church and decided:

- to amend the current employment contract of Pastor Lusmarina Campos Garcia to provide for an automatic cost-of-living allowance (COLA) increase to her salary each year, effective the beginning of each contract year (1 October), based on the CPI in Switzerland in the prior year. This will take effect retroactively from 1 October 2006 for the current period.
- to provide the same COLA for other employees of the congregation, from 1 January 2007.
- to increase the base salary of the Pastor by a 2% "step increase", as provided in the employment contract.

New Policy on the Diakonia Fund

The church community is occasionally approached by people, from within our congregation or the wider community, seeking financial assistance in crisis situations. The small Diakonia Fund is administered by the pastor at her discretion and allows us to offer minimum assistance. As the fund is very small and the number of requests many, the CC approved a policy framework for the disbursement of the fund – to ensure consistency and provide a basis to assist the pastor. The policy is available at the church office and will be communicated to the whole congregation at the June Assembly. The CC also agreed that two special offerings will be scheduled in 2007 to replenish the Diakonia Fund.

The current members of the CC are Carl-Gustav Bjertnes, Kathy Bracken, Musa Filibus, Jacinta Goveas, Maureen Gumbe, Michiel Hardon, Linda Hartke, Penuel Kiondo, Vinita Manchala, Jennifer Nahn, Stephen Padre, Elliott Paige, Ana Villaneuva, Nathan Wilson, Monica Yesudian. At the June Congregational Assembly, several seats will need to be filled on the CC. If you would like to fill one of these, please contact a member of the Nominating Committee: Kathy Bracken, Maureen Gumbe, Linda Hartke, Ana Villaneuva.

Jacinta Goveas, Vice President, CC

An Invitation and an Unexpected Journey

“Today we are inviting you to join us in a period of reflection and dialogue on an issue that may be very personal for some, foreign or even wrong for others, or something people celebrate. This morning we are inviting you to journey with us in dialogue about whether the ministry of our congregation should include blessing the same-sex relationships of our members who enter into civil union.”

With these words, spoken with an anxious heart and confidence that God’s way would prevail, I invited the members of our congregation to begin this journey on 11 February. Since then, we have engaged with each other actively, thoughtfully and prayerfully. We are grateful to each and every person for the part you have played in this dialogue.

Invitation

The invitation was issued through the announcement, a letter to the congregation and a confidential questionnaire sent to each member. More than 100 persons have responded to the questionnaire, with a strong majority indicating they were prepared to begin the journey of dialogue. The survey results were tabulated and have helped to inform the pastor in understanding the views of our members, their experiences and expectations and suggested resources. The leadership of our congregation is committed to an open and honest process of discernment that will lead to a decision that is right for our community of faith, but with sufficient time to address areas of concern identified by members and space for all to be engaged.

In our diverse congregation, it is unlikely that we all have the same understanding or opinion on the blessing of same sex unions or any other issue. However, we expect all of our members to enter actively, respectfully and prayerfully into this process. Together we will seek as broad an agreement, even consensus, as possible. This process can only strengthen and enrich our life in community and deepen our understanding of the Gospel.

“This issue is of course extremely personal. It is about the life and relationships

and commitment of individuals. It is also a pastoral matter – as our Pastor is asked to accompany, support and care for members of our congregation. And it is a matter for our community as a whole, as we seek to live out the calling to be a community of love and care.”

– from the 11 February letter to the Congregation from CC President Linda Hartke and Pastor Lusmarina Campos Garcia

Listening Beginning to learn

In February and March, three structured sessions, each attended by 60-80 members of the congregation, provided for lively and intense dialogue and helped to identify areas requiring deeper reflection. During this period, the Pastor, President of the Congregational Committee (CC) and a group of advisors met every week to prepare the letter, questionnaires, the three sessions and proposal for the next steps. The Pastor and congregational members serving as advisors have spoken with many members and families about this journey privately (this will continue). A second questionnaire helped to clarify the time people were prepared to devote to the dialogue, when to meet, and major topics for further exploration. Other sessions (formal or informal) may be planned concurrently, as need or interest is identified by members of the congregation. As well, existing groups (e.g. neighborhood, Bible study, youth) within the congregation may chose to continue the dialogue in these groups and can be assisted, if they wish.

Finally, the CC will make a decision, informed by the process we undertake together. The CC does not believe it appropriate to send one of our members to the German-speaking congregation for the blessing. However, the decision on the individual request should reflect the policy of our congregation.

Deepening the dialogue

After the initial sessions and feedback from members, the CC approved an additional period of exploration and dialogue which will take us through the end of this year. The thematic sessions continue the process of learning and dialogue,

moving towards decision. For more information on the sessions as well as resource materials, please visit: www.genevalutheran.ch/blessingdialogue

Looking ahead

The process we are embarking on allows for ten months of reflection on the blessing of same-sex civil unions. It provides for open dialogue and structured sessions, is biblically based, and does not rush or force a decision. In the name of Christian love and commitment to the community of faith, all congregation members are encouraged to participate. Those who are willing to engage may participate in public sessions or private conversations. People who chose to be absent from the dialogue will be sought out, invited and heard. Members who chose not to participate in the process, however, can not prevent others from moving towards a decision.

And we must realize that while this process is going on, a member of our congregation who requested a blessing in January is waiting. This is important to keep in mind, but is not the only factor as we seek to discern what is right for our congregation. Many of you have expressed the need to work deliberately towards an answer to this member of our community and to the direction or policy we will follow, while providing enough time and space for a journey together. We hope that this process will strike balance among different views in our community.

“We therefore ask everyone who is willing to embark on this journey of dialogue, to do so in a spirit of Christian love and mutual respect. We will probably not all agree, but our differences do not need to divide us. We are confident that a loving and patient God accompanies us always, and especially in moments of discernment.”

– from the 11 February letter to the Congregation from CC President Linda Hartke and Pastor Lusmarina Campos Garcia

Prepared by Linda Hartke, President, with input from Jacinta Goveas, Vice President, on behalf of the Congregational Committee.

For the complete article, please visit www.genevalutheran.ch.

Witnessing Together in Geneva

The weekend of May 18th to May 20th, we shall be “Witnessing Together in Geneva” with other foreign-language Protestant churches of Geneva. Under the auspices of the John Knox Centre’s “Witnessing Together in Geneva” committee, the local and foreign-language Protestant communities of Geneva are organising a large public event that will bring together hopefully several thousand people to celebrate jointly in worship at the Cathedral, with the theme:

Christ, source of peace

Sharing the gifts of the Spirit,

Seeking the good of the city,

Praying for reconciliation in the world.

We, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Geneva, are a key organiser to help make this important event a colourful and joyous time to celebrate our faith together in music, prayer and communion, be able to appreciate our great diversity and the gifts that unite us in our city, Geneva.

Sharing the Gifts of the Spirit: In communion with our Swiss neighbours, the Cathedral and the Vaudois parishes, we shall share a common worship in the Cathedral on May 20 followed by a meal together on the Place Agrippa d’Aubigné. Inspiration texts: John 20, 19, John 14, 25-27, Philippians 4, 4-9.

Seeking the Good of the City: Geneva prides itself as a haven for refugees, and rightfully so. From welcoming protestants fleeing persecution in Europe, until today “Geneva, City of Peace” cares for refugees from all over the world while at the same time providing leadership in the role of humanitarian endeavors as a global home to the Red Cross, the UNHCR, UNHCHR, IOM and many more organizations that strive to en-

hance the human condition and improve our planet. Inspiration texts: Jeremiah 29, 1-9, Psalm 122.

Praying for Reconciliation in the World: Let us come “Witnessing Together in Geneva” during this weekend, with a Friday night vigil, Saturday choir performances and Sunday worship and feast. May these days give us strength to go out as “ambassadors” of our faith to be catalysts for building peace and reconciliation. Inspiration texts: Luke 2, 13-14, Luke 19, 41-44.

Brief Programme:

a) Friday May 18 from 18:00 to May 19 08:00: All-night vigil. Several church communities have already signed up for one or more hours. Participating churches will be responsible to animate one or more hours during this night with moments of music, prayer, and other appropriate activities.

b) Saturday May 19: Choir performances at the Temple de la

Madeleine.

c) Sunday, May 20: Intercommunity worship services in about 20 churches throughout the canton. Both foreign and local communities are organising joint worship, communion, followed by a meal in common.

d) Sunday May 20th afternoon, these communities will gather at pre-defined locations outside the old town to form four processions that will meet in front of the Cathedral for a time of music, celebration and the worship that will bring the day to a close.

Carl-Gustav Bjertnes



Colours of the Church

What do the colors we see in our sanctuary mean? A sanctuary is a place set apart by the people of God called Church as a safe haven that provides immunity from the law. In our sanctuary, see these colors on the high pulpit, the lectern, and the stole around the neck of Pr. Lusmarina.

This stole is a symbol of her ordination. The colors: white, red, green, violet and black distinguish the seasons of the church year which begins on the first Sunday of Advent and ends on Christ the King Sunday. The different colors/seasons assist us in our vocation of being Christian: we live in, but not of the world. The church seasons and their colors assist us to be the salt and the light of the world. The colors convey emotions and ideas that are associated with each of the seasons of the liturgical year.

Violet, the color of Advent, is the ancient royal color and therefore a symbol of the sovereignty of Christ. Violet is also associated with repentance from sin and is also used during Lent. Sometimes, a deep blue color is used during Advent to distinguish this season from Lent. White and gold, seen at Christmas and on Epiphany, symbolize the brightness of day and of Jesus as the light for the whole world. Black is the traditional color of mourning in some cultures; it is

used on Good Friday. Red evokes the color of blood, and therefore is the color of martyrs and of Christ's death on the cross. Red also symbolizes fire, and therefore is the color of the Holy Spirit. Green is the color of growth and is used during Epiphany and Pentecost.

During Holy Week, Christians follow the footsteps of Jesus from his entry into Jerusalem (Palm/Passion Sunday) through the Last Supper (Maundy Thursday) to his death on the Cross (Good Friday). Red, the color of blood and therefore of martyrs, is the traditional color for Palm/Passion Sunday and the next three days of Holy Week. On Maundy Thursday, white or gold symbolizes the church's rejoicing in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. But at the end of the Maundy Thursday celebration, the mood changes abruptly: all decorations are removed, and the Holy Table is stripped bare. The church becomes as empty as a tomb. On Good Friday, either black or red is customary—although the use of no color at all is also appropriate. The red of Holy Week is sometimes a deeper red than the brighter scarlet color associated with Pentecost.

Bill Strehlow



The "Torso of the Blessing Christ", carved from one piece of wood, is a gift to us this season. The sculptor, Herbert Klaas, is a member of the German-speaking Congregation.



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