

Chaplaincy Profile

Anglican Church Freiburg

Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany



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Anglican Church Freiburg - A brief history

Believe it or not - the Anglican Church was one of the four biggest attractions in Freiburg!





The Anglican Church (ACF) in Freiburg was founded in the 19th century when many British military personnel retired to this region. The community built a red sandstone, very British looking, church, named St. George and St. Boniface, in the Wiehre, a wealthy area of the town. The foundation stone was laid in 1894 by the Grand Duke and Duchess of Baden in the presence of the American Consul.

With the outbreak of World War I the community was no longer able to maintain the building and it was sold to the town of Freiburg in the 1920's. A former member of our congregation, Sheila Scheer-Cockbaine, who came to Germany after World War II,

was instrumental in reviving the Anglican Church in Freiburg.

At that time the church met on a monthly basis supported by the permanent chaplain in Basel. Over the course of time, as the congregation grew, the chaplain from Basel travelled mid-week to Freiburg once a fortnight to lead us in bible study.

The desire for a minister of our own grew. A mission survey carried out in the late 1990's by Rvd. Robert Crossley encouraged us to start on the quest to employ a full time minister.

Rev. Dr. Robin Stockitt joined the ACF from 2001 to 2014 as a “gentle pioneer” and during his time with the ACF he achieved significant growth, despite the challenging financial circumstances and uncertain future. He was succeeded by Rev. Canon Christopher Parsons in 2015. Christopher had a young family himself and attracted young families to our church. The pioneering days were over and we sought a more “shepherding” role. We enjoyed an influx of new families to the ACF during his time, new developments in children's worship and ventures into new fields such as Celtic Worship. Christopher's calling, however, took him and his family back to their roots in Canada, to a new ministry in Toronto. He left Freiburg in July 2020 to return to Canada.

Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany



Freiburg has a population of approx. 230 000 and is located in the Upper Rhine Region in the well-known tourist area of the Black Forest. This beautiful town, full of character, enjoys one of the highest rates of annual sunshine hours in Germany, causing the area often to be referred to as the Tuscany of Germany. It is part of the Dreiländereck (the three-country border area) between Germany, France and Switzerland.

Freiburg University is the city's largest employer, followed by various other educational and research institutions, as well as numerous small businesses and service providers. The lovely Gothic Minster is the seat of the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Freiburg.

Freiburg is renowned throughout Germany, and indeed internationally, as a key Green City.

*Environmental policy, solar technology, sustainability and climate protection have become the drivers of economic and political growth along with urban development. A policy which the citizens of Freiburg strongly identify with. All of these factors combine to make Freiburg and its surrounding area an exceptionally attractive place to live, work, and spend leisure time.

*From www.freiburg.de/greencity

Freiburg





The Farmers Market on the main town square

Beautiful surrounds



Freiburg's famous "Bächle" (street canals)

Our beautiful "Old Town"



Our Congregation

One would expect that, as an English-speaking congregation, most of our members would be native English speakers. In fact, that is not the case! Our congregation represents approx. 25 different nationalities from all over the world. For many of our members English is not their first language.

Our community is a mix of expats, people from international marriages, refugees, students, doctorate and post-doctorate students, university professors, those interested in the English language, those simply curious, and those whose hearts have been touched by our style of worship and our friendly, welcoming community.

Many members of our congregation, particularly if they are linked to the university, or are refugees, stay in Freiburg for only a few months or years before moving on. If the international background is the “flavour” of our church, then the constant influx of new individuals and families is the “spice” that makes our church family particularly interesting and challenging. We rise to this challenge and feel honoured and privileged to welcome such a rich diversity of people wanting to worship with us.

Our Sunday worship services average 60 - 70 attendees of whom approx. a fifth are under 16 years of age and come from a wide range of denominations.



Almut Schulz



Nick Ghinn,
Treasurer



Tini Horning



Judith Moratscheck,
Church Warden



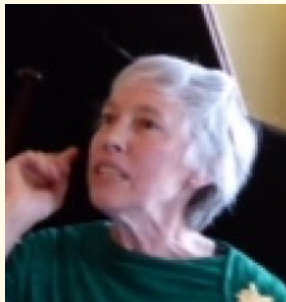
Martyn Rittman



Lauren Warnatz,
Secretary



Margaret Bredow



Helen Rose Wilson



Solveyg Fischer



Keith Campbell,
Treasurer



Iris Gertschar,
Church Warden

Our Church Council

Church building

The building is close to the centre of Freiburg and easily reachable by public transport or car. We share the building, which was extensively renovated in 2014, with our hosts, the Protestant Petrus Church as well as the local kindergarten and social welfare offices.

The section of the building that we use is spacious, light and modern with two meeting rooms, ample storage space and a well equipped, spacious kitchen. The raised sanctuary has a beautiful window as its centrepiece and the whole worship area is light and airy with large soundproofed windows. There is air conditioning and a new microphone system has just been installed.



Services

We used to meet each Sunday at 11:30. Following the service there was tea, coffee, biscuits and time to catch up with old and new friends.

Our monthly pattern was as follows:

1st Sunday - All Age Worship

2nd Sunday - Holy Communion

3rd Sunday - Morning Worship

4th Sunday - Holy Communion

5th Sunday - Morning Worship



During Corona times we still meet at 11:30, but only for a 30 min. service - and sadly no coffee time. Due to social distancing now only 28 people may attend the services.

Worship

Our style of worship includes evangelical, traditional and non-traditional elements. Whilst following the structures of “Common Worship” we try to reflect the variety of liturgical and theological traditions where possible and suitable. This is reflected in the choice of music, hymns and songs or by including different liturgical elements.

We have had positive and uplifting experiences with innovative services. For example during an African weekend held a few years ago, we enjoyed a lively service with African music , dance and colourful African clothes. We were also the recipients of moving testimonies.

At the Celtic Services which we celebrated once a month over a limited period of time, we had the opportunity to express our thoughts and ideas on community related topics and were able to exchange ideas, experiences, thoughts, opinions and testimonies. Hearts and minds were opened up, we got to know each other more intimately, and our faith was nurtured and challenged.

Families are warmly welcomed in the ACF. Crèche and children’s church are both offered, depending on the need. Children’s ministry is provided each Sunday. In Corona times we offer outdoor activities.

Music



Our services often begin with the Prayer of Preparation, which culminates in the words “that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.”

The ACF is a church

- where music is valued as one of the ways to “worthily magnify your holy name”;
- where congregational singing in a wide range of styles is an important element of our Sunday services,
- where many instrumentalists and vocalists are willing to take the time to prepare both the accompaniments to congregational singing and to play inspiring preludes and postludes,
- where the singing group practices regularly so that it can both support our congregational singing and occasionally sing specific choral works, as at the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols.

There are now so many musicians involved at ACF that we are usually able to provide music specific to the services marking the Festivals of the Church Year, as well as on other occasions such as weddings, confirmation and services with our ecumenical friends.

Now - in the somewhat strange atmosphere that is part of services under Covid 19 restrictions - the songs that are sung by individual singers bring beauty and encouragement to the congregation.

The diversity of backgrounds in our congregation is reflected in the variety of musical styles included in our services: hymns (traditional and modern) and worship songs from Anglican, Roman Catholic, Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist and other denominations, sacropop, gospel, spiritual, Taizé, Iona, Baroque, Classical, Romantic. Drawing on these resources, music helps us to join together in expressing joyful praise and gratitude to God, but also reflective confession and repentance, helping to overcome barriers more easily than with language alone. During the course of last year we gradually introduced sung liturgy in our services to remind us of the cloud of witnesses we are a part of and (as with all music) to lay foundations that we can draw on also at times when words may fail. We hope that this inner resource can continue to grow.

Children and Families / Children's Church

The ACF aims to encourage, nurture and support families with children. We strive to provide even the youngest worshippers with a positive church experience. Each Sunday there are between ten to twenty 0-16 year olds. Once a month we celebrate an All Age Service, where all generations worship together.

On all other Sundays we offer Children's Church for children aged 3 to 10 during the main part of the Sunday Service. Babies and Toddlers are invited to worship with their parents in the sanctuary, or take part in Children's Church, accompanied by an adult. We are aware the faith formation happens in many different ways, of which Children's Church is an important part. Here we help our children to explore their own faith and discover answers to the big questions in life. Children's Church lessons are inspired by the Godly play concept of retelling biblical stories in simple words and actions to give the children the opportunity to think, imagine and dream what God is calling them to be. Children of all ages and backgrounds can enter into the story at their individual level. We much appreciate the work of the Children's Church team who make it possible to offer this ministry.

Youth and Young Adults

Last year several young members of ACF received confirmation. The young confirmands were able to join in a weekend retreat of teaching and spiritual experiences leading up to confirmation.

Confirmation is a new stage in our journey of faith. These young people are continuing to explore and celebrate their faith using resources to help them encounter, engage, and experience faith in creative ways.

Pre-Corona we met every first and third Sunday of the month, and had grown to a group of 13 young people.

Young adults at ACF are mainly undergraduates or postgraduates from the university, young professionals and parents of small children. Students often pass through, so the number is quite fluid. We are happy to be a resting place on the way where they can have sustaining encounters. We feel that our work with young adults is capable of development and want to work on that.

Fellowship and Small Groups

An important part of our community life are a number of small groups that meet during the week in the church or at people's homes. These include:

Roots and Shoots Bible Study: Meets regularly to explore faith, understand the Bible and put faith into action.

Home Groups: There are three groups spread around Freiburg that meet to study and discuss Bible passages and explore how these relate to us personally in our day to day lives.

Women's Bible Study Group: Women of all ages meet during the day to study, pray and talk with one another.

Women's Prayer Group: Through prayer women seek a deeper relationship with God as well as a stronger sense of supporting and caring for one another. This group meets in the evening.

Women's Breakfast: Women of all ages enjoy a lovely organic breakfast, each other's company and inspiring speakers from within or outside of the community.



Men's Breakfast: Men meet on the first Saturday of the month for a rustic breakfast and casual discussion of prepared topics.

Men's Prayer Group - This group is made up of men who have a heart for praying together – be it thanksgiving for God's gifts, or interceding for the needs of the world, for people in their own lives and each other.

The Wise Ones - A gathering of those church members who are “no longer working”. It meets roughly every month to share lively discussion over coffee or tea. Often there is a topic or sometimes a speaker. Since for some, this is the only time they are able to come to church, they are happy to receive communion from the minister.

Singing group: We have a small singing group, open to anyone who enjoys singing. They are a great asset in helping introduce and teach new songs to our community. Their performances also enrich special services.

German/English Conversation Group - meets regularly and succeeds in boosting the confidence of non-German speakers in their command of the German language in a relaxed atmosphere. It has also proved popular and helpful for those seeking to improve their skills in English in conversation.



Covid 19 restrictions have resulted in many activities coming to a standstill. Some groups have been very inventive and developed new means of contacting each other and sharing life experiences, wisdom and faith. Our "Wednesday Meditation Newsletter" is an encouraging new example of living faith together. It provides spiritual impulses, news on events as well as new developments and updates on our vacancy period.

Prayer and Care

Prayer is an important part of our church life and is an area which we are seeking to expand and intensify. We have a strong team of intercessors who write their own intercessory prayers each week for the services. If so wished we forward prayer requests to the different prayer groups, who then confidentially pray for their needs.

During services of Holy Communion, prayer is offered by a small team during the distribution of communion.

Pastoral care needs are often addressed directly to the minister, but care and support often work through the networks of house groups or other small groups that form part of the ACF. As our community is spread across Freiburg and beyond there is always a worry that we are not aware of all the needs. We have explored various avenues such as quarterly telephone ring-a-rounds and emails, but need to explore this area of church life more thoroughly.

Special Events

Weekend Away: Families, singles, young and old gather at a retreat centre in Alsace for a weekend of fellowship. Guest speakers guide us through a series of talks and discussions, providing much food for thought. A children's programme with lots of creative work and outdoor activities is offered too.



There is, of course, plenty of time to chat with one another with lots of fun and games for all to enjoy. The weekend is rounded off with a bonfire party with grilled marshmallows and other treats.

Epiphany Party: A fun afternoon for young and old around the Epiphany Service. A great opportunity to catch up with people, get to know new faces and enjoy tasty food. There are usually games for big and small and the excitement of finding the hidden king in what has become our traditional French Epiphany cake.

Summer Barbeque: Once a year we gather to have a fun afternoon where everyone contributes to make this a memorable occasion for young and old. For the children there is a wide range of activities on offer while adults can sit and chat and enjoy the fake Pimms, beer, and delicious food.

Outreach



Cultural events: These have included: an African weekend, a Latin-American-African evening and a Korean cultural evening. These were great opportunities for bridge building, meeting guests and members of the other two communities who all worshipped in the church building. They were tremendous fun and great occasions to invite friends and relatives to experience an expression of our living faith.

Freunde von der Straße: (Feeding the needy) - an annual event where we, together with other churches in Freiburg, offer lunch and coffee to the homeless, the physically challenged, the needy, the lonely and those struggling in life.

New Members Evening: Our welcome team regularly welcomes newcomers to our church, introduces them to others, invites them to events and generally helps them find their feet in what is for them a new church.



Mission - Living Links

We currently support the following groups and organisations:

Freiburger Tafel: An organisation that provides affordable food for the poor and needy people in Freiburg

Freunde von der Straße: We join together once a year with the Methodist and Old Catholic churches in Freiburg to serve the homeless lunch as well as coffee and cakes

The Salvation Army: We donate offerings from the ACF Harvest Festival Service

APERSEC: A project in Burkina Faso initiated by an enthusiastic Ghanaian nurse, trained and educated in Freiburg to improve hygiene and medical care amongst the poorest of the poor and train them to help each other

Two missionaries from YWAM in the United States and the Ukraine.



Working With Other Churches

As our congregation has grown and diversified, so have our opportunities to interact with Christians from other churches in Freiburg. Well established by now are various annual events with members of inner-city churches, in which we not only worship God, learn from each other and serve the community together, but also create and nurture friendships with members of other denominations.

CAECG: The ACF is also a member of the Council of Anglican and Episcopal Churches in Germany (CAECG), a joint working group between churches in Germany belonging to the Anglican Communion. CAECG meets twice a year in spring and autumn. These occasions are very important for the clergy, as most of them are quite isolated from their colleagues. It is a unique opportunity to gather with other parish representatives, share news and exchange ideas.



Old Catholics: Valued friends with the special relationship of being in full communion. We usually celebrate two joint services of Holy Communion which are held in both English and German. In 2019 children from both congregations attended a music camp, which led to joint performances of a musical about the Good Samaritan in Sunday services of both congregations. Very helpful for the ministers of both churches is that the communities continually help each other out in case of illness or, as is currently the case, during a vacancy.

Anglican Church in Basel (ACB) We have a long-standing friendship with the ACB. They have faithfully supported us financially, spiritually and practically over the years. Clergy meetings between the ACB and ACF are an important link for meeting and discussing theological, pastoral, personal and social issues. They are good occasions to exchange ideas and information, debate, discuss problems and simply enjoy fellowship. Both churches are currently in a state of vacancy and we are seeking to refresh and intensify these links between the two communities and between the ministry teams.

ACK (Arbeitsgemeinschaft Christlicher Kirchen und Gemeinden in Freiburg): It holds meetings on a regular basis and offers an interesting and colourful program throughout the year including several ecumenical services. ACF is an active member of the ACK.

Guildford Committee: An ecumenical group from Freiburg's twin city, Guildford in England, travels to Freiburg every four years with return visits by a similar group from Freiburg in between. The groups worship, study and simply enjoy time together in Christian Fellowship. Last year we celebrated the 40th anniversary of this friendship.

World Day of Prayer: Together with women from the Baptist Community and (mainly) women from several Protestant and Catholic communities we prepare and celebrate the annual service that unites women from all over the world.

ICCC: Until some months ago we were part of the Intercultural Church Centre that included the three communities worshipping in our church building: the Petrus Paulus Community, The Royal Family Baptist Church and the Anglican Church Freiburg. This was an ecumenical project of the Evangelische Landeskirche Baden that ended in July 2020. We hope we can

continue our cooperation within a different framework once both remaining communities, the Petrus community and the ACF have put the times of interregnum behind them.



Church Finances

The ACF is supported solely by voluntary contributions. These come in the form of planned giving, weekly collections and various contributions. In recent years our inflows totalled approx. 75.000€ and outflows were about 88.000€. We have been blessed by the fact that the Diocese of Europe, the ICS and the Anglican Church in Basel have generously supported us when we took on a full-time minister in 2001.

The support we received from the ICS and the Diocese ceased a few years ago, but Basel has faithfully committed to provide us with financial support up until the end of 2021. Our challenge is to raise more income through attracting new members, donations, and fundraising to guarantee our future Chaplain an adequate stipend and an independent future for our community.

We realise this is a challenge, but after praying and discussing this together, we firmly believe this is possible and that this is what God is calling us to do.

The ACF's development was generously supported from 2001 by grants from the Anglican Church in Basel, the Diocese of Europe and the Intercontinental Church Society (ICS). We are also extremely grateful for the financial support we receive from our friends in the Anglican Communities in Histon and Impington. Our sister church in Basel will continue their support until the end of 2021. We feel richly blessed for the love, support and encouragement we have received on our path to financial independence and as we continue to strive to attain this goal.



Moving Forward

'Building a community of grace' is our mission statement. This statement is made up of many commitments which you can see in full on our website. We are currently exploring what God's calling means for our community here and now. In what way can we serve the English-speaking community in our region and be(come) inspiring witnesses and co-workers of God's kingdom to everyone around us?

The groundwork for this is being done by a work group that is looking more closely at our vision for the ACF, and is including the congregation in the discernment process. Our new minister will moderate and lead us in this exciting and challenging quest and help us to find God's leading pillar of cloud amidst the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

We are also exploring how we can improve our currently limited financial resources and how we can use our rich cultural diversity to unite all members of our community and grow in numbers and faith.

Our New Chaplain

We are looking for a bold leader for our congregation of diverse cultural and denominational backgrounds. A chaplain who is able to serve people of all ages in creative ways and work with different forms and styles of worship and liturgy.

Our congregation is welcoming, diverse, openhearted and hospitable. We aspire to revitalise and grow, in terms of numbers, discipleship and finances, as well as to improve pastoral care in our geographically dispersed community.

Our new chaplain should lead us in developing a new vision and enable change as appropriate. They must be able to reconcile diverse opinions and be assertive when necessary.

Managing interpersonal relations, encouraging and developing people's gifts, and promoting ecumenical ties are further important skills. The person we are looking for should be prayerful, an inspiring teacher and effective communicator, and a good listener.