

Becket News



Issue 81/November 2022

**The Anglican Church of
St Thomas à Becket**

Zeughausmarkt 22, 20459 Hamburg
www.anglican-church-hamburg.de

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Cover photo: Press Association

**Our church receives no income from Kirchensteuer (church tax) and is entirely dependent on donations.
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Hamburger Sparkasse,
BLZ 200 505 50, Konto-Nr. 1280146422
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IBAN: DE46 2005 0550 1280 1464 22**

From the Chaplain

‘Die Englische Kirche’ and the English Queen

Church buildings, like our building in Zeughausmarkt, are a visible focus of the love of Christ working right here among us, in our time and place. At the same time, they represent for us the stability of an unbroken tradition of worship and community that dates back over centuries – rooted in the past, growing into the future.

An open church door offers a place to be safe (in keeping with the ancient idea of ‘Sanctuary’), to bring the joys and sadnesses and burning questions of life, and to tap into the power and the presence of the Spirit. And almost anyone coming into a church building senses this,

whatever their personal belief. This is why churches have what we call in England a ‘civic’ function: a role in relation to everyone in their geographical proximity, not just the regular worshipping congregation.

With the death of her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on 8 September, ‘Die Englische Kirche’ opened her doors in just this capacity, so that all-comers could enter the sacred space and mourn her loss, in their own personal way. A condolence book enabled people to distil some of their mixed sense of grief and gratitude into words. Others brought flowers and photographs. Many offered a silent prayer and



Photo: Joachim Mewes

spent time with their own thoughts as they sat in a pew for a while, and reviewed the decades. And for those who wished, there was the opportunity for conversation and the sharing of said thoughts and memories; even a cup of tea or coffee.

Service of thanksgiving

Then on the afternoon of Sunday, 9 October we held a service of Thanksgiving and Commemoration for her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II – with full robed choir, organ, and specially chosen music, including a new setting of ‘Lighten our Darkness’ (words from the Book of Common Prayer) by Director of Music, Yotin Tiewtrakul.

In keeping with the breadth and depth of relationship that exists between the wider Hamburg and the UK, representatives of British societies and commercial enterprises here in the city were invited. And short tributes were given on behalf of the Hamburg Senate, the British Honorary Consulate, and the Anglo-German Club. Our own Judith Holst related some of her personal memories too, of camping out overnight on the pavement in the Mall to be part of the Queen’s Coronation in 1953, and of the Queen’s sacrosanct and annual Christmas messages to her subjects, during each year of her reign.

Her late sovereign Majesty was monarch for over 70 years. To give her her full title: ‘Elizabeth the second, by the grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of her other realms and Territories Queen, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith’. That means she was not only monarch of the many physical territories, but Supreme Governor of the Church of England too, and wherever in the world the associated church buildings might be located.

Leading by example

The English Queen herself was Supreme Governor of our own ‘Englische Kirche’ here in Hamburg. And we will miss her wise, understated, constant and unifying presence. Elizabeth led too by example: she was a woman of strong personal faith, lifelong. She spoke often of how the teachings of Christ gave her the framework of personal accountability within which she tried to lead every single day of her life. And of the comfort and support she knew and received from God, in both joy and distress. As the anointed monarch, she truly lived out her sacred trust to her people and her church, all across the world.

Revd Jules A. Barnes

When Judith camped out on the Mall

As a little girl my earliest royal memories are of standing up at the end of a concert or a visit to a pantomime or the cinema, and everyone loudly singing ‘God save the King’ for George VI. Very few people in Britain had television then and so we had to go to the cinema to watch the Pathé newsreels, which were usually shown before the main film. Later in April 1947, I remember listening with my parents to Princess Elizabeth’s 21st birthday message on the radio, when she committed her life – ‘be it long or short’ – to the service of the nation. And in November that year there were beautiful photos in all

the newspapers, and also a newsreel in the cinema, of the Princess’s romantic and, for post-war Britain, truly fairy-tale wedding to Prince Philip in Westminster Abbey.

My own special royal memory, though, is of the Queen’s coronation in June 1953. We were given a week’s holiday from our boarding school in Scotland, and a school friend, Fiona, and I made plans to go up to London to watch the coronation procession – with her younger cousin and her 23-year-old sister-in-law as our chaperone. The Mall seemed the best place because we’d see the Queen twice – on her way to the Abbey and then afterwards on the way back to Buckingham Palace. Any official tickets were expensive and so, with a bit of persuasion necessary for our parents’ agreement, we decided to camp out on the Mall.

The coronation was on a Tuesday, and so about 7 o’clock on the Monday evening we found front-row space near Clarence House for the four of us, plus all our paraphernalia – rugs, waterproofs, food and drink – and we were there till 7.30 Tuesday evening!

It’s the only time I’ve ever slept out on a pavement, but the whole 24 hours were the most amazing



Photo: Press Association

experience – seeing everything ‘in real life’ – 3D – and not just hearing it as reported news, the crowds around us becoming our coronation community, talking to strangers, to people who’d come from all parts of the world. Next to us was a group from Sweden; during the procession one of the men lifted Fiona’s young cousin up so that she had a better view. And four young women from Hackney behind us put their hair into curlers overnight so that they would look their best for the Queen.

At about 2 a.m., Fiona and I walked down to the Palace. Most people there were asleep, but as we went back towards Clarence House we suddenly heard this tremendous

roar of noise with cheering and shouting in huge waves coming through the crowds from Trafalgar Square towards us down the Mall. It was the news that Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tensing, members of the British expedition led by John Hunt, had become the first men ever to reach the summit of Mt Everest, a historic moment for the world and a coronation gift for the Queen.

Lining the route

Early in the morning, soldiers, sailors and airmen came to stand in front of us, lining the whole route. There were announcements and music over the tannoy system and gradually movement up the Mall – mounted police, a few cars and horse-drawn carriages with

We will remember them



Photo: Monica Schofield

Following the Service of Remembrance on 13 November, wreaths were laid at the Commonwealth War Graves in Ohlsdorf Cemetery on behalf of the UK Armed Forces, the Anglican Church, the Royal British Legion and the Honorary Consulate.

important international guests and politicians, then the Irish State Coach with the Queen Mother and Princess Margaret, and finally, mid-morning, the Gold State Coach, drawn by eight splendid horses, drove slowly past, carrying the Queen and Prince Philip on their way to Westminster Abbey for the Coronation Service.

Spectacular procession

After the service the procession back to the Palace was even more spectacular. It took about an hour to pass any one place, with 29,000 service personnel marching and on horseback, from Britain and all over the Commonwealth, including the various regimental bands, the Canadian Mounted Police, and the whole Household Brigade. After the marching troops came the horse-drawn carriages with rulers of British protectorates, including one with the wonderfully ample figure of Queen Salote of Tonga, resplendent in her open carriage and completely oblivious to the rain, and with the tiny Malayan Sultan sitting shivering under his umbrella opposite her. Then came the carriages with leaders of the Commonwealth, members of foreign royal families, and other members of the British royal family, followed by the Irish State Coach

with the Queen Mother and Princess Margaret, and finally, escorted by the Yeomen of the Guard on foot and by the Household Cavalry, came the Queen with Prince Philip in the Gold State Coach, wearing the Imperial State Crown and holding the sceptre and orb. The atmosphere was fantastic, with the crowds cheering and frantically waving union flags, the sounds of marching boots and horses' hooves, and the music from the bands.

At the end of the procession we were completely caught up in the rush down the Mall towards the Palace. Luckily we could keep together and ended up just to the left of the Victoria Monument with a wonderful view, when a little later HM Queen Elizabeth II, in all her coronation regalia, and the whole Royal Family appeared on the balcony for the flypast, and again several times afterwards, in response to our shouts of 'We want the Queen' – and even four-year-old Prince Charles and two-year-old Princess Anne kept waving to the cheering crowds.

Family memories

Other royal memories are sometimes threaded through our own family memories, almost in a parallel family timeline: the public holidays and street parties given

for special royal occasions, and the mugs, commemorative coins or other souvenirs we were given as children or perhaps have given to our children and grandchildren for royal jubilees and weddings.

One royal memory for some of the STB congregation is from November 1987 when the Queen's son, Prince Charles, now King Charles, came to Hamburg with Princess Diana and visited our church – see the brass plaque on the right of the north door. All the Sunday school children met the royal couple inside, and showed them the banner of Noah's Ark that was being made, while the rest of us shook hands and talked to them outside, Prince Charles walking around one side of the church steps and Princess Diana on the other.

Three o'clock sacrosanct

In later life, my strongest adult royal memory is of the Queen's annual Christmas message. At first she spoke on the radio as her father George VI had done, but from 1957 onwards, following encouragement from Prince Philip, the messages were always televised. Three o'clock on Christmas Day was sacrosanct, as in millions of other homes, and if one couldn't see it on the day, one tried to see it or at least hear it later. Over the years I felt

the messages became much more personal, making us aware of what had been important to her that particular year. They were always messages of love, tolerance, hope and reassurance, and they reflected the Queen's deep Christian faith.

A constant presence

She was a constant presence in our lives; in Britain she's on our stamps, our bank notes, our coins, our pillar boxes. To quote the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, 'The death of HM Queen Elizabeth II was a shock to our sense of permanence ... Hers was a long and steadfast reign – not just for the United Kingdom, but for the whole world.'

The prayer in the National Anthem for the Queen's long life was answered. From fairy-tale princess she became the nation's grandmother and matriarch. We celebrate and give thanks for her life, and we mourn her loss as we would a beloved member of our own family. Once again now in my lifetime, as we did for King George VI, we sing God Save the King, but now for King Charles III. It can't be equal in length to his mother's, but we pray sincerely for a long and blessed reign.

Judith Holst

Our church premiere at British Flair

For the first time ever St Thomas à Becket Church had a tent at British Flair from 26 to 28 August this year. British Flair is a traditional British culture and country fair event, held annually at the Hamburger Polo Club in Klein Flottbek. It is organised by das AgenturHaus and supported by Friends of Britain e.V. who select and support a local charity, this year Ankerland e.V. in aid of traumatised children.

Our idea was to make people aware of our Church, especially in connection with the 70th anniversary of HM The Queen, not only as Sovereign, but also as Supreme Governor of the Church of England. Little did we know that we would have to mourn her passing a few days later.

I would like to use this opportunity to thank the following members of our congregation for their help and support during the

weekend: Wendy Sprock, Susanne Hergoss, Irene Windsor, Bernard Danson, Valerie Müller, Peter Alexander, Matilda Hammond, Eileen Liebender, Joshua Ezike, Christian Nweze, Angelika Boysen, Katja Clajus, Lorna Yazdani, Ellen Thomas, Brenda Buhmann-Gore, Ulrike Lemke and, of course, Revd Jules A. Barnes. We sold greeting cards (prepared by Judith Holst and her team), cherry pip pillows (prepared by Katherine Rexhausen), gave away lots of brochures and information about our church, and basically waved the flag for St Thomas à Becket by making people aware that we exist. And I think we have achieved our mission, as we already had quite a few first-time attenders since that weekend.

So once again, a big thank you to you all!

Norbert Schoen
STB British Flair Coordinator



A rainy morning in the library

You'd expect to find books in a library. But who knew that the Staats-und-Universitäts Bibliothek Hamburg also has one of the very best panoramic views of the city to offer? We discovered this first hand on Saturday, 24 September, when a group of us from church were treated to a private tour by the Director, Professor Doctor Robert Zepf. He took us up to the 17th floor of the stacks (book storage) building and onto the extensive roof terrace, where we all enjoyed the spectacular vista.

We met Robert in the foyer, having come inside from a drizzly, grey

morning. He started by explaining the history of the various buildings that had housed the library since its inception. The present structure in Von-Melle-Park has an older and a newer building; the latter sixties in style. He took us around the reception and public areas and showed us how every book is electronically marked. In the 'circulation area' he showed us how borrowed items are simply placed on a shelf, and the system notes that it has been returned.

Membership of the library is on offer to all, and the building is open 24/7 (even during Covid it only



Photos: Birte Fischer

closed for a couple of weeks). The vast majority of the existing books have been digitised, and most new acquisitions are now electronic too. Almost without exception the ordering-up of books and other documents is transacted via mobile phone (their goal is for anything ordered by 06.00 to be ready for you to collect by 09.00 the same day). That said, a hard copy of all publications about Hamburg or published here is always added to the shelves, so there are still plenty of physical books in evidence.

The library is often given books, too. Usually, these are of course gifted freely, but during the Nazi era the then Director of the Bibliothek cooperated fully with the regime. He acquired many volumes through the Gestapo, including valuable libraries owned by discerning Jewish citizens. These were seized without permission from the owners, or sold under duress. One of the important and ongoing projects of the library today is its work to try and identify the owners of such items. Usually these are the relatives of those from whom they were taken in the last century, and the process of returning them is often emotional. The books are both a physical link with the suffering of their predecessors and a symbol of apology and reconciliation.



After a break for tea, coffee, chocolate digestives and a chat, we were ushered into the manuscript reading room. Here we were to see some original documents from the archive, relating specifically to the history of the church and the English in Hamburg. We had already seen some bound volumes of Hamburg newspapers and magazines featuring the same genre of content, and majoring on reporting of visits of Queen Elizabeth and other members of the British royal family to Germany. These we could handle freely: now, we were into 'white-glove' territory, as we were given privileged access to historic documents.

First of all an engraving of the original 'Englische Kirche' building here in Hamburg, dating from the early 17th century (you



will have seen a copy hanging in Zeughausmarkt). A historic map of the city of Hamburg, with small pictographs of the same 'Englische Kirche' building: with 'flaps' too – rather like some children's books today. At first sight the map shows the city street before the great fire of 1842, lift the flap, and underneath is the cartographer's representation of the same area, but with the buildings that had stood there prior to the blaze. What else? More documents relating to the English community in Hamburg in past centuries (it seems we had a merry time, and were well known for singing and dancing): a musical score, a picture of a theatre, and translations into German of the British society magazine the *Tatler*, and the *Spectator*! A letter too from a German Lutheran who was so entranced by the 'Englische Kirche' and its ecclesiology that he changed denomination and became an Anglican (not without criticism). Lastly, a beautifully bound and highly illuminated

Christian volume originating from the Ethiopian Church, and full of images and meditations based around the Archangels Gabriel and Michael.

It was truly wonderful to experience these unique items at close quarters. Huge thanks are due to Robert, and his colleagues, for researching and compiling this collection, especially for our benefit.

After two hours, and a hugely informative and enjoyable time, we all emerged back into the world outside – and it had even stopped raining. Our group numbered 12 persons, and spanned an age range from 6 to 80 plus. We rounded off our morning by strolling down the road to enjoy an informal lunch together. Note: This library visit was the first in the occasional series 'Seven whole days', which features Christians in their workplace. If you would like to invite us to your place of work, please do!

Jules A. Barnes

Heating is not to be taken for granted

I write this a year into agreeing to take on the task of managing the project to replace the heating system. It has been a steep learning curve for a robotics engineer to learn about heating systems (my thermodynamics courses were a long time ago), but I am grateful for the opportunity to get stuck into a topic that is now very much in vogue. We are all learning that heating is not something to be taken for granted.

When the project began a year ago, the immediate challenge was to find the right people with specific expertise on church buildings to advise us. We had to raise the funds to commission option studies from consulting engineers. We decided on three. The outcome of these studies was to give us an orientation in what would be appropriate to install from an economic and ecological point

of view as well as a preliminary estimation of the cost.

In the midst of this process, the President of Russia decided to invade Ukraine, unleashing unforeseen consequences on the energy market and driving up costs of materials as well as everything else. As it turns out, the demise of our gas boiler has actually shielded us from the increase in gas prices and we are contributing to energy saving. There are many churches deliberating on whether it is responsible to turn the heating on. We are at least spared this discussion.

The studies were delivered in the first half of 2022. There has emerged a consensus around the option for the energy supply, but we are much less conclusive on the best choice of heat distribution system. (The current system of radiators needs replacing too.) *contd overleaf*



Photo: Monica Schofield

...continuation

Over the summer, we started to look at the cost estimates and made some tentative approaches to potential donors. In mid-October the expert advisors – Herr Baumann from the consulting engineers Niehlsen-Baumann, the architect Alk Friedrichsen, who has advised us on many occasions over the years, Philip Holst our technical advisor and I – finally managed to come together to discuss the technical options and how to move forward.

In short, we have a lot of good-quality information, and an excellent team of advisors really dedicated to finding the right solution, but coming to a recommendation

requires us to delve deeper into the options. There isn't a quick fix. This project will take time. In the meantime, the kind offer of the Michel to once again provide us with winter quarters is a way to contribute to energy saving in the bigger scheme of things.

A big thank you to all who have contributed advice and not least money to the funding of the option studies. Donations are still welcome. The crowd funding site www.betterplace.org/p101234 remains open to receive donations for the next tranche of money required.

Monica Schofield
STB Heating Project Manager

STB 20-euro Challenge raises €3,000

At the end of October we celebrated our second 'Harvest' festival of the month: a metaphorical one this time. Not of ripe and colourful fruits and vegetables but of the harvests that 30 members of the church had managed to grow, and 'reap'; from the creative use of €20.



Based on the well-known Parable of the Talents in the Bible, each person had been given €20 as seed money at the start of the summer, and then had three months to go away and make this gift blossom and be fruitful. And it worked, with seed money brought back from young and old alike, along with each individual's harvest, ranging from a few euros to, in one case, almost six hundred.

Ingenuity was the name of the game: some bought sweets wholesale and then sold them retail amongst all

their colleagues at work; two grafters undertook to carry out domestic cleaning jobs for friends and family. One member of church ran English conversation lessons in her home and then asked for donations from those who came along. (A great idea, and the group still continues to meet, which is another added bonus.) Others made jewellery or used their different dextrous 'talents' to make decorative items or fulfil commissions. In this Queen's 70th Jubilee year, we also made copies of the beautiful book 'Our Faithful Queen' available at most of our church events over the summer, and at our service of Thanksgiving for her late Majesty, held in early October.

It was altogether a great and creative response to a new fund-raising idea, and with just an indicative selection of the enterprise shown mentioned here. The combined monetary value of the Challenge's 'Harvest Home' is over €3,000, and this will make a significant and positive contribution to our financial position. As we know, keeping an entirely self-funded church going is always both an act of faith and a call to give of our time and energy to keep things afloat when opportunities like this arise. Thank you, to each and every one of you who took part.

Jules A. Barnes

A good season for the Wanderers

Covid and a number of other chitches and ailments has made it hard of late to always manage a regular monthly walk with the Church Wanderers, but this summer and autumn season has seen the group out and about a fair deal.

Matilda started us off in May with a walk through the lovely woodlands of Niendorfer Gehege in the north of Hamburg. Then in July, Stuart led his ever-popular walk along the Baltic coast from Timmendorfer Strand to Travemünde. After starting out along the coastal route, the Wanderers stopped at the picturesque fishing port of Niendorf, continuing along the cliff path for coffee and cake atop the Brodtener Ufer, and then into Travemünde with its seaside shops and cafés, before taking the train back to Hamburg.



Photo: Monica Schofield

Our next outing was in September, when a few of us headed to Fischbeker Heide near Harburg, south of the Elbe, where we were fortunate to catch the heather at its best.

We climbed the sandy, heather-clad slopes into the forests of the Harburger Berge, passing the Moisburger Stein, a boundary stone from 1754 marking the limit of the Duchy of Brunswick-Lüneburg's state forest, then ruled by King George II in his capacity as Elector of Hanover.

After sheltering from a sudden cloudburst under a welcome carport in Alvesen, we finished our walk at the Gasthaus zum Kiekeberg with its glorious views towards



Photo: Monica Schofield

Hamburg, catching it on one of its final opening days before it closed permanently.

Our final walk of the year was in November when, on an unseasonably warm day, we met at the hospital in Boberg before descending through the woods to the dunes, herb-rich grassland, heathland, lakes and trees of the Boberger Niederung. Our lunch spot gave us a final opportunity to sunbathe on the beach, complete with sandcastle courtesy of Revd Jules.

The Church Wanderers aim to meet once a month for a walk of up to 10 km. Anyone able to keep up a moderate pace for a few hours is very welcome to join. We have lots of breaks for refreshments and to enjoy the views. Our next walk is likely to be in January. If you'd like to know about walks in advance, please ask Jo Dawes to add you to the list – see back page for contact details.

Jo Dawes



Photo: Ulrike Lemke

Time to buy your Christmas cards

We have been producing Christmas cards by recycling used cards in aid of the historic English Church of St Thomas à Becket for over 30 years. Motifs range from religious and nativity scenes, winter landscapes, robins, Christmas scenes, animals, humorous, and other festive themes such as wreaths, flowers candles, etc. The double cards, complete with envelopes, are 148 x 110 mm and have a Christmas and New Year greeting in English and German.

Cards will be on sale after the Sunday services from 20 November until 18 December 2022 as well at various events this year, giving you the opportunity to choose your motifs personally. Events include our Church Bazaar on 19 November



Photo: Monica Schofield

from 11.00 to 17.00 and the Victorian Christmas Market on 26 and 27 November at the Baseler Hof Sale from 11.00 to 18.00.

After the success of the past two years' online sales of these popular cards, we are repeating the online ordering option this year alongside physical sales. Cards can be ordered using the order form on the church website – click on the 'Xmas card orders' panel – or by telephoning Judith Holst. A pack of 10 cards with envelopes costs €14.

Carols and Cakes:

A sing-along of your favourite Christmas Carols

SUNDAY 4th DECEMBER, 16.00

at STB Anglican Church
Zeughausmarkt 22

WITH STB CHOIR
CHRISTMAS TREE
AND AN
**INTERVAL FOR
TEA & CAKES**



ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS AT STB

NOVEMBER

Sat 26, 19.00 Advent Carol Service, the Anglican Consort, Hauptkirche St. Trinitatis

DECEMBER

Sun 4, 16.00 Carols and Cakes – NEW

Sun 18, 10.30 Family Service with Nativity Play

Sun 18, 18.00 Nine Lessons & Carols

Sat 24, 23.30 Midnight Mass for Christmas Eve

Sun 25, 10.30 Christmas Day Communion

JANUARY

Sun 8, 10.30 Epiphany Eucharist, Hauptkirche St. Michaelis

For more details, please see the website.

STB Anglican Consort Advent Carols*

* VENUE: ST TRINITATIS HAUPTKIRCHE
KIRCHENSTRASSE 40, 22767 HAMBURG

Saturday 26th November, 19.00

Free entrance but a retiring collection will be taken

Contemporary and traditional music in beautiful settings.
A treat for the Advent season, especially for music-lovers.

Please note that this service will take place
in St. Trinitatis Hauptkirche, Altona, this year.



 **DIOCESE
IN EUROPE**



Who's Who at our Church

Clergy

Chaplain: Revd Jules A. Barnes

Telephone

(040) 439 2334

Email

chaplain@anglican-church-hamburg.de

PTO: Revd Majja Priess

Church Council

Christian Nweze, Churchwarden

0177 773 6454

churchwardens@anglican-church-hamburg.de

Irene Windsor, Churchwarden

(040) 328 494 74

churchwardens@anglican-church-hamburg.de

Peter Alexander, Minute Secretary

(040) 475 015

peter.alexander@tts-team.com

Norbert Schoen, Vice-Chair

(040) 2983 4263

norbertwschoen@web.de

Heiner Quast, Treasurer (co-opted)

0170 121 2046

treasurerstb@web.de

Jo Dawes, Communication

(04862) 201 6870

dawes@dawescom.de

Joshua Ezika

-

joshykime@gmail.com

Jonas Karlsson

-

jonas_quenya@hotmail.com

John Alex Pamu

0151 4542 8056

pjohnalex@gmail.com

Madeleine Resühr

0177 773 6454

mad.res@t-online.de

Emmanuel Saarkodie

(040) 2199 2730

-

Monica Schofield, Treasury Liaison

(040) 5305 2889

web@stbecket.de

Wendy Sprock

0173 206 1521

wendysprock@t-online.de

Council of Anglican and Episcopal Churches in Germany – Delegates

Susanne Hergoss

0176 2152 3516

S.Hergoss@gmx.net

Andrea Grantz

0176 4194 6235

andrea_grantz@web.de

For other ministries please see following page

**For the latest on how Covid-19 and our heating problems
are affecting services and events, please see Facebook:
stbhamburg or our website:
www.anglican-church-hamburg.de**

Who's Who at our Church

For clergy and council members please see previous page

Other Ministries		Tel	Email
Director of Music	Yotin Tiewtrakul	0176 7236 4865	music@anglican-church-hamburg.de
Buildings Working Group	Birte Fischer	(040) 2105 7391	fischer_birte@web.de
Safeguarding Officers	Madeleine Herring Norbert Schoen	(040) 279 6514 (040) 2983 4263	safeguarding@anglican-church-hamburg.de
Electoral Roll	Norbert Schoen	(040) 2983 4263	norbertwschoen@web.de
ER Assistant, Gift Envelopes	Emmanuel Saarkodie	(040) 2199 2730	-
Publicity and e-presence	Dorothee Möller		communications@anglican-church-hamburg.de
Junior Church	Nissi Paul Miriam Hinz Wendy Sprock	0160 9103 9354 0173 206 1521	juniorchurch@anglican-church-hamburg.de
Becket Mix	Madeleine Herring Emma Richter		madeleineherring@t-online.de therichters@gmx.de
Young Adults	Fiona David	0151 7545 0114	fionadavid22@gmail.com
LCF	Renu Roy	(04103) 16 584	renujroy@gmail.com
Little Church Life Group	Valerie Müller	0171 501 6089	valbo@hotmail.de
Church Wanderers	Jo Dawes	(04862) 201 6870	dawes@dawescom.de
Recycled Cards	Judith Holst	(040) 880 0727	judithholst31@gmail.com
Fundraising	Wendy Sprock	0173 206 1521	fundraising@anglican-church-hamburg.de

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Please email contributions to: becketnews@dawescom.de

Please email communication@anglican-church-hamburg.de if you would like to receive *Becket News* and further news updates from the church.