

Becket News

Issue 85/April 2025

The Anglican Church of
St Thomas à Becket

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

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Cover photo: Jo Dawes

**For details of services and events, please see our website
or Facebook page**

Website: www.anglican-church-hamburg.de

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/stbhamburg/>

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Join us for Holy Week and Easter at STB

Greetings in the Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ from me – (Canon) Colin Williams. It's my joy and privilege to serve as your locum chaplain for the next two months – from Palm Sunday, 13 April, until Pentecost, 8 June.

I'm not totally a stranger to STB. I visited several times during my time as Archdeacon of Germany and Northern Europe. I even stayed overnight in the chaplaincy flat in 2019. I'm really looking forward to renewing my acquaintance with STB and its people.

Please feel free to work me hard while I'm with you. I will of course be responsible for leading Sunday worship. Alongside that, I will be available to spend time, and pray with, any from the church family who are sick, anxious, bereaved, going through a difficult time – as well as any who want to talk with me about their faith journey. I have a Deutschlandticket so I can easily use public transport to get out to see people. And I am also willing in May to be available for any who would like to take part in any shared study which would help us explore our faith together. I stand ready for that. I'll wait to hear from everyone what would work best for the people of STB.



My first days with you are an exciting time. From Palm Sunday to Easter Day we shall walk together along the Way of the Cross. Then we'll rejoice together at new and risen life bursting from an empty tomb. You can find the programme of worship for Holy Week and Easter on page 5. Holy Week is the week in the Church's year in which our worship together as a Christian family stands right at the front and centre of our common life. I invite all who can to join us for as much as you can of all that is on offer here during Holy Week and Easter. I promise that you won't regret it!

Thank you again for entrusting the life of STB to me over the next two months. I shall do my best not to let you down. Please pray for me as I shall pray for you.

Colin Williams

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Magnificat – empowering women

‘I raise my voice – not so that I can shout, but that those without a voice can be heard,’ said Malala Yousafzai, in her 2013 speech at the United Nations.

Maya Angelou spoke in the same vein in an interview with the *New York Times* in 2007, ‘Each time a woman stands up for herself... she stands up for all women.’

Magnificat – A Women’s Empowerment Group – has been created with its base at the Anglican Church in Hamburg. Its focus is to bring women together to share knowledge, skills, and wisdom based on lived experiences. It is about raising each other, as women, to become the best version of ourselves through a joint

and personal journey of self-discovery and self-awareness. It is about embracing who we are, as women, with all our strengths, struggles and imperfections, and using all the sparkling uniqueness within each one of us to create a life that is full of contentment and vitality.

During each meeting we will have a main topic of discussion, e.g. being a woman in the 21st century; stepping out of your comfort zone; becoming vocal; dealing with loneliness; living in a digital world; improving communication within the family, etc.

Important quality ingredients for these sessions are that they are dynamic, and full of love and



Photo: Norbert Schoen

laughter. You will leave each meeting with renewed energy and food for thought.

Meetings will take place every fourth Friday of the month and they will be held at different locations.

Everyone is encouraged to bring light refreshments/finger food to share with each other while we transform ourselves into a different world.

Our first meeting of the Magnificat Group took place on Friday, 28 March at 18.30, and here is a brief synopsis of what happened:

It was a fantastic evening. There were 12 of us. The minute the first three ladies walked in, the room was filled with joy and laughter. The laughter grew louder and contagious the more people walked in.

Throughout the evening, there was not only laughter, there was also deep, authentic sharing – of happy stories and sad stories... Stories that gave the listeners, like myself, hope and inspiration. The synergy created was far better than we all imagined. The Holy Spirit was in our midst.

Ladies, ladies, ladies – all those who attended the first Friday meet-up, the only thing I can say is thank you, thank you and thank you for doing your part in making an enriched evening for one another.

The next meet-up will take place on Friday, 25 April at 18.30 pm in the west room of the church building. Don't miss out!

I look forward to seeing more of you there.

Nolene Sheppard, Magnificat Group Leader and Coordinator

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER AT ST THOMAS À BECKET

SUNDAY 13 April

10.30 Palm Sunday; Liturgy of the Palms & Liturgy of the Passion; President & preacher: Revd Canon Colin Williams

MONDAY 14 April

18.00 Stations of the Cross

TUESDAY 15 April

20.00 Stations of the Cross

THURSDAY 17 April

19.00 Maundy Thursday; President & preacher: Revd Canon Colin Williams

FRIDAY 18 April

13.30 Good Friday; President & preacher: Revd Canon Colin Williams

SATURDAY 19 April

20.30 Easter Vigil

SUNDAY 20 April

10.30 Easter Day; President & preacher: Revd Canon Colin Williams

Are you being called to help?

In the 20 plus years I have attended St Thomas à Becket there is one constant that springs to mind: Junior Church (JC). As a young Mum, I entrusted my children to JC throughout their primary school years, eventually becoming a JC leader myself too. I made up new words to popular songs, and often used imagery to teach a simple message about Christian faith and how to live it.

When Confirmation rolled around for my children, I was reassured that they had a solid foundation to begin Confirmation classes, through the years of familiarity with worship, the people of the Chaplaincy and their roles, and the general values we uphold as Christians: it wasn't a giant leap. JC provided that Christian foundation and I am forever grateful that my children know their way around church because of JC.

It's not just my personal experience; the statistics bear me out. Of the current Becket Mix youth group, 80% were regular attenders of JC. There's a continuity of spiritual care starting from childhood to adulthood. We have a system in place and we know it works. We have delegates for Confirmation every year – in no small way due to JC.

St Thomas à Becket needs JC and right now, JC needs our support. The head of JC is in her home country temporarily, so we have only two leaders. Two leaders are necessary for safeguarding reasons. This means that neither leader gets a break, or much spiritual nourishment. They come to church and never hear a sermon, or the Gospel, or are offered the Peace, or hear a choir anthem. We are not taking care of the people who are taking care of what I might offer is one of the most important ministries in our church – certainly the one that represents our future.

Let's hear from one of the Leaders of JC, Miriam.

Junior church is a very important ministry. We feel the need to share God's word and, above all, God's love with the children. We hope that the children get to know Jesus and experience that he is their friend and loves them.

We do JC in a child-friendly way, a way that the children enjoy. And we also want to show them how much they are loved in this church and how valuable they are for us all.

First, we ask the children how they feel and whether there is anything they would like to talk about.

Sometimes we start with a little game to lighten things up. Then we

start with telling the kids the Bible story, the Gospel and citing examples from everyday life and our own experience that say something to the children and that they can use to imagine what the Gospel says. Finally, we play a little game, and pray.

We need Junior Church helpers. One would not need to prepare lessons, as we have leaders to do that. A helper's role is

- to be at church promptly at 10.30am when rostered to help
- sit at the back of the church and help welcome the children
- after the Gloria guiding the children upstairs to the (warm) JC room
- marking the attendance sheet
- helping the leader if necessary deliver the message of the day
- at around Communion, bring the children back down to the main church and help them to the altar for a blessing.
- return to the back of the church with any children who have not gone to sit with their parents
- tidy up the back pew.

You don't need to attend every week – once a month would really help. With regards to safeguarding there would be one form to complete, a police record check and one

online course. Nolene our Safeguarding Officer can guide you through this. You do not need to have previous experience with children, nor do you need to be a specific gender. If you think you could help and have a heart for children, please contact me after church.

Madeleine Herring

Podcast junkie

As you may know, your editor is mildly addicted to podcasts.

These are my latest church-related recommendations. both from the BBC:

Intrigue: Word of God, a 10-part gripping investigation of how at least 3,500 faked and stolen artefacts found their way into the Museum of the Bible collection in Washington DC. The makers call it 'a story about what happens when religious certainty meets the dangerous world of ancient treasures'.

Newscast: The Justin Welby Interview – Laura Kuenssberg interviews the former Archbishop of Canterbury, who resigned in November in the wake of the John Smyth abuse scandal. Search for the full 40-minute version.

BBC podcasts can be found on the BBC app and other platforms. You may need to follow Newscast to find the full Welby interview.

Changing the guard at Becket Mix

Who could have ever thought we'd survive Brexit? Or without Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II? Indeed many good things come to an end. And so it is with Emma and Madeleine as Becket Mix leaders.

We want to let you in on a secret. This has been the nicest 'job' we have undertaken at Church. The Mixers are delightful. That's not to say that running Becket Mix hasn't involved work: there have been events to organise, scripts to practise, bowling tournaments to man-

age and homemade pizza to eat!

After eight years, Emma and I have decided to hand over to younger leaders with fresh ideas.

We want to introduce you to Leslie-Joy Foster and Nicolette Brillinger as new Becket Mix leaders.

'My name is Leslie-Joy Foster. Some of you may remember me from last year when I helped with the bazaar like you.

'I saw the precious gift of life on 16 March 1980. My roots lie in Ghana and I was born in the beautiful north of Hamburg.





Leslie-Joy Foster

‘A few years ago, I successfully completed a technical college for social pedagogy. I also completed an apprenticeship as a retail saleswoman. As life was very kind to me, I spent a few years as an au pair and nanny in the USA. It was a great time. After five years in the USA, I found my way back to Hamburg.

‘And I’m looking forward to new experiences.’

Leslie-Joy was confirmed last year, and already helped at the Bazaar Café last year. Similarly, Nicolette has been an active participant at the Bazaar, last year helping to run the tombola:

‘I was born in Warwickshire in 1972, to a Roman Catholic mother from Düsseldorf and a Church of

England father from Kenilworth. Growing up with a tolerant view of religion, I always appreciated the unity between different faiths. I attended school and university in England, developing a deep love for the countryside and a desire to live away from the city.

‘After spending a year in Hamburg during university, I returned following my graduation in 1996 and made it my home. As the German saying goes, ‘Der Mensch denkt, Gott lenkt’. I married in 2003, and my husband and I are blessed with two daughters, born in 2008 and 2010.



Nicolette Brillinger and daughters

‘Since my time in Hamburg, St Thomas à Becket has been a special place. It has provided comfort during difficult times and has always been a welcoming, open space for reflection. The Becket Mix Youth Group is particularly important to me, as it brings young people together and supports their faith journeys. I am excited to take on a new role within the group and to contribute to the church’s loving and supportive community. A huge thank you to Madeleine and Emma for all you have done to make this group such an important part of our church life.’

Emma summarises our ambivalence at passing over the reins:

‘It has been an absolute pleasure for me to co-run the Becket Mix Youth Group with Madeleine for the last seven years.

‘What started as regular meet-ups in Father Leslie’s kitchen whilst our own children had their confirmation classes ended up in his suggestion that we start up, and run, our church youth group.

‘It has been wonderful to see what was then a fairly young group regularly attend social events, and offer service to the church and to our community over the last few years.

‘A personal highlight for me will always be Father Leslie inviting



the whole group into his kitchen (somewhat of a tight squeeze) where he taught us all to make a delicious curry – an experience none of us will likely forget.

‘This lovely group of young people have reliably come to church for Becket Mix commitments, notably to read the Palm Sunday Passion Gospel play, help junior church by narrating the nativity and latterly enthusiastically running the church bazaar cafe, to name a few examples. Always with a smile and when needed a sense of humour.

‘I am delighted Nicolette and Leslie-Joy have agreed to take over the running of the group. It moves into safe hands and I am sure you will support them in their new roles.

‘A big thank you to you all for being a part of the youth group. I hope that the group continues to grow and thrive and that it remains a source of Christian fellowship for the teenagers in our congregation.’

*Madeleine Herring &
Emma Richter*

About our racism and diversity group

We would like to introduce our Healing Racism and Celebrating Diversity Group which currently consists of five church members. The group was formed in 2020 after the protests following the murder of George Floyd in the USA.

We try to meet regularly, but this is not always possible due to work and other obligations. However we communicate frequently in a

WhatsApp group, drawing attention to current events or personal concerns.

The theme of our last meeting was the indigenous people of Australia and their history.

At our annual church bazaar in November 2024, we introduced our group together with books, films, leaflets and information on racial injustice, apartheid and advice centres in Hamburg for people who experience racial discrimination.

We have many ideas and themes for further meetings in the future.

To learn more, please email Madeleine Herring at healingracism@anglican-church-hamburg.de



Valerie Müller

We need lots more used Christmas cards

This past year we have had two very pleasant surprises in connection with the STB recycled cards project. The first was that more younger people bought Christmas cards – they were interested in the buzz word ‘recycled’. The second surprise was that a few more cards were actually sold than in 2023, in spite of rising postage costs and more email cards and letters being sent, and so after deducting

€1,160.04 for expenses (printing, envelopes, glue and postage), the ‘interim’ net profit for the church cards came to €5,406.97 compared to €5,152.13 in 2023.

I use the word interim as the former British Honorary Consul, Claus Budelmann, and his wife Anne have once again very kindly made a donation, bringing the final net profit raised on behalf of the church through the sale of



Christmas and greetings cards for 2024 up to a grand total of 6,500 Euros. We are extremely grateful to them both, not only for their generous financial help over so many years, but also for their continuing interest in the project, and for all their encouragement.

For the benefit of new members of the congregation, we started to recycle used greetings cards in aid of ‘The Historic English Church of St Thomas à Becket, Hamburg’ in 1986/87. That year we sold just 300 cards with a net profit of DM145. Nowadays between 4,500 and 5,000 are made and sold annually – mostly with a Christmas greeting in English and German during the autumn, but also some

blank cards for other occasions throughout the year.

And now very sincere thanks to the many volunteers connected with the project – and particularly to those who are not members of the STB congregation, but are ‘kind friends’ of the historic English Church in Hamburg.

In the first instance, thank you to the super reliable hardworking team who actually make the cards: Debbie Faddul, Sarah Meister, Arwen Pearson, Linda Rainer, Mary Sanderson, Gabriella Schabbel-Mader, Cathrin Schierholz, Ellen Thomas, Lorna Yazdani and Ellen Ziesmann – collecting, sorting, chopping, sticking large and small amounts, sometimes already for decades, but always very precisely and carefully, and with great attention to detail.

Secondly, thank you to everyone selling the cards: Brenda Buhmann-Gore, Sarah Hall, Jane Harding, Alison Jacob, Ulrike Lemke, Lydia Struck, Alison Fry, Pam Hanus, Carol Kloevekorn, Margot Lord, Elke Norden, Katrin Schnetzer and Bettina Wex – at Gut Basthorst (British Flair, September), at the annual church bazaar, Weihnachtsmarkt Mellingburger Schleuse, the Victorian Christmas Market, the Friends of Britain event

at the Anglo-German Club, STB's carol services, at the Arts Society lectures, and at other events within Hamburg's English-speaking societies and community, as well as privately amongst their friends, families and colleagues. This has enabled us to reach out to a far wider public than would otherwise have been possible.

And thirdly, thank you to all who collected used cards for us to recycle and gave or sent them to us from within Hamburg, from other parts of Germany, from Britain – and Pat and Dennis Baker (former parishioners) have once again even sent some from Canada.

'After the bazaar is before the next bazaar', and the card team

has already started its work. The blank cards have been ordered from the printers, there's a basket for used cards at the back of the church, packages of used cards are arriving by post, and some have recently been brought back from Great Britain. We also have plans for making and selling more flower cards during the year for birthdays and other occasions (without a printed greeting). However, as I mentioned last year, if we are going to be able to offer the same variety of popular motifs, we definitely need many more used Christmas cards. **This is therefore an urgent appeal to everyone to ask family, friends, neighbours and colleagues for their used Christmas cards.**

Thank you again to everyone who has supported the 2024 STB card project by making, advertising, selling, encouraging, and of course by buying and sending the cards. Looking ahead, we realise that increasingly fewer cards will probably be sold in the future, but for the time being it still does seem worthwhile continuing with the project, not only for financial reasons, but also because it is an excellent way of publicising our 'Historic English Church of St Thomas à Becket'.

Judith Holst



Photo: Wendy Sprock

The people behind the plaques

Madeleine Resühr explores the stories behind the memorials in our church – this time Revd Charles Frederick Stroehlin Weidemann and his wife, Mary Cecil Weidemann



The memorial tablet to Revd Charles Frederick Stroehlin Weidemann is mottled pink marble, making it difficult to read the gold lettering. The inscription is:

IN MEMORY OF THE
REV. C.F.S. WEIDEMANN M.A.
FOR NEARLY 42 YEARS CHAPLAIN
TO THE BRITISH COMMUNITY
IN HAMBURG
THIS TABLET IS PLACED BY
HIS CONGREGATION
AS A LASTING RECORD OF
THEIR ESTEEM AND REGRET

BORN 20th MAY 1817
DIED 13th JUNE
1893

Charles Frederick Stroehlin Weidemann was born on 20 May 1817 at the Moravian Settlement in Wrexham, Wales. The family soon moved to nearby Fairfield, Manchester, where there was also a Moravian Settlement. The Weidemann family were originally from Strasbourg, members of the Unitas Fratrum or Herrnhuter Brüdergemeinde (Moravian Church), who had migrated to England in the early 18th century. Many Moravians eventually became Anglicans once they had settled in the UK.

Charles was the son of Revd George Stroehlin Weidemann (1792–1856), who was the incumbent of Kingswood, Gloucestershire from 1841–1856, and Elizabeth, née Lever. George and Elizabeth had two sons, Charles and his elder brother, George, born in 1816, who was also an Anglican priest and Professor at Bishop's College, Calcutta. Sadly George drowned in Calcutta, still a young man, on 3 April 1852, leaving his wife, Emma Frances, née Abbot, whom he had married in that Indian city, and four small children.

No Chaplain has served the English Church in Hamburg longer than Charles Frederick Weidemann, a record-breaking 40 years. In October 1843, Charles married Mary Cecil Vardy, who was born in Marylebone, London on 10 May 1822. She was the daughter of William Henry Vardy, Director of the Boston, Louth and Great Grimsby Direct Railway and his wife Mary Jane, née Twyford. The couple had seven children – Mary went home to Huddersfield in Yorkshire for the births of the first five; only the

last two, Charles Henry (1854) and Ella (1861), were born in Hamburg.

The couple's first child was a son, Edward Roederer, born on 17 August 1844 in Huddersfield. He later lived in Gloucestershire, but drowned after going missing from the ship *Calpe* in the Bay of Biscay aged just 24.

The first daughter was Margaret Cecil, born on 11 November 1845, also in Huddersfield. Margaret moved to London where she worked as a German teacher and never married. She died on 9 September 1933.

Eighteen months later, her sister, Madeline, was born (21.5.1847) in Huddersfield. Madeline married her American husband, Warren Andrew Locke, in Hamburg on 10 October 1878 and moved with him to Cambridge, Massachusetts. They had at least five children, possibly eight. Madeline became an American citizen and died on 5 August 1928 in the USA.

A second son followed in 1849 – Frederick Charles. He was born in Wakefield, Yorkshire, and emigrated as a young man to Australia, where he married Jessie Halley in 1888 in Victoria. He died in Balwyn, Victoria in 1917. They had seven children. *cont. overleaf*



Charles Frederick Stroehlin Weidemann

In 1850 the next daughter, Gertrude Mary, was born, also in Wakefield. Records show that she was the only one of the Weidemann children, who had all grown up in Hamburg, to have a German spouse. Gertrude married Paul Otto Johannes Marth, who was a good 20 years her junior (if the records are correct) on 4 April



Charles Henry Weidemann

1903 in London. She died in 1938 in Kent, England. They had no children.

Charles Henry, who later changed his surname to his mother's maiden name, Vardy, was born in Hamburg in 1854, became a bank clerk in London and died in Richmond, Surrey on 20 May 1922.



Ella Busbridge, née Weidemann

On 5 September 1885 he had married Katherine Ring Downes with whom he had at least six children. Katherine died in Kent in 1948, aged 91.

The last of the Weidemann siblings, Ella, was born in Hamburg on 25 July 1861. Ella also moved to England and married Frederick George Busbridge in Kent on 17 May 1885. Ella and Frederick had seven daughters and two sons. Frederick died in 1941, Ella two years later in London on 14 December 1943.

*Text and photographs:
Madeleine Resuehr*

Memorial to Mary Cecil Weidemann

The font in the church today is a replica of the one donated to the church after Mary's death on 13 February 1885.

The original font had been removed and hidden during World War II, but it suffered considerable damage and could not be repaired when the church was restored after the war. Therefore a simple font was made to replace it. However, in 1963, the original bowl was found in an allotment in Hamburg-Hohe-luft, where it had been serving as a bird-bath for many years.

It was understandably in a very poor state and could not be used in the church any more. Fortunately a new font could now be made, based on the original design, including the memorial inscription to Mary Weidemann.

M.R.



Photo: Madeleine Resuehr

TO THE GLORY OF GOD
AND IN MEMORY OF MARY CECIL
WEIDEMANN WIFE OF THE
CHAPLAIN OF THIS CHURCH THIS
FONT IS PLACED BY HER FRIENDS
IN HAMBURG IN TOKEN OF THEIR
LOVE AND SORROW



Photos: Jo Dawes

Love is a choice

Katja Clajus's poem below was inspired by phrases from sermons by former chaplains Revd Jules Barnes and Revd Matthew Jones. It was originally intended as lyrics for a song.

Refrain:

Love is a choice, it's not a feeling
Being in love is not the same
Love is a choice, it's not a feeling
It's not the picture
It should be the frame

Remember our Lord once said
That we shall love each other
As he still loves us all
You just don't like your neighbour?
Well, love him first, no bother
Perhaps the like will follow
It is your very own call

Refrain:

Love is a choice, it's not a feeling
Being in love is not the same
Love is a choice, it's not a feeling
It's not the picture
It should be the frame

Remember our Lord once said
That love is our salvation

To choose love is to live
Grant him the right to take you
And help you through temptation
Because without his guidance
You always will be adrift

Bridge:

Choose love, choose the truth
Stay true to our Lord
Keep walking the distance
Your trust is your sword
Stay patient and humble
And also alert
The Spirit will guide you
Have faith in God's word

Refrain:

Love is a choice, it's not a feeling
Being in love is not the same
Love is the choice, the only true
meaning
Because it's your life
And not just a game



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Angeline Wilson

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Publicity and e-presence	Dorothee Möller	0179 764 1132	communications@anglican-church-hamburg.de
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Magnificat – Women's Empowerment Group	Nolene Sheppard	0151 1862 1213	magnificat@anglican-church-hamburg.de

For details of services and events, please see our website or Facebook page

Website: www.anglican-church-hamburg.de

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/stbhamburg/>

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

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