



Association Cultuelle de L'Église Anglicane
du Pas-de-Calais
CHAPLAINCY NEWSLETTER
July/August 2021
Fellowship, Hope and Love No. 102 (104)



Rev. John Dudley Dowell Porter (1933-2021)

With great sadness among all who knew him in our Chaplaincy, we have to announce that the Rev John Porter passed away peacefully on 10th June at his home in England. We offer our deepest sympathy to his wife, Jean, and family.

John had been a loyal supporter of our Chaplaincy for many years; a popular parish priest; and a devoted husband, father and grandfather. He had just celebrated his 88th birthday, as well as the wonderful news of the birth of his first great-grandchild.

John had already had a varied career before coming to live here the Pas-de-Calais in 2004. He was educated at the King's School Canterbury, where he was actively involved with the Cathedral. He then completed National Service in the Royal Air Force. He recorded in a letter to the School Magazine in 1958 that he had been accepted for aircrew training as a navigator and had been selected for commissioning.

He then went up to St Edmund Hall in Oxford to read Law, before being called to the Ministry. He trained at Queen' College, Birmingham, and was ordained to the priesthood in 1959. He served as a curate in several Parishes in the West Midlands and was for four years an Royal Air Force Chaplain at RAF Cosford.

Whilst a fellow-curate at St Mark's in Smethwick, he became a close friend of Rev Reg Humphriss – well-known to many of us and a much-loved figure in the life of the Pas-de-Calais Chaplaincy. Reg, who for many years had a home in Montreuil-sur-Mer, had officiated at the marriage of John and Jean.

After his retirement in 2000, John and Jean moved in 2004 to live in their second home in the village of Framecourt, south of St Pol. John's approach to reaching out to the British over here was typically direct: wherever he saw British cars parked outside houses and cafés, he would engage their owners in conversation and tell them about the Chaplaincy.



Rev. John Porter administering communion in Hesdin

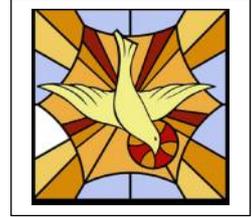
He was a tireless supporter of the Hesdin Congregation for many years, always ready to step in to ensure we were able regularly to celebrate the Eucharist. What always struck me most about John was his ability to relate so easily to so many people; his deep spirituality; his gentleness and his warmth. Unfortunately, John had not been in good health for some time, prompting the decision to leave his beloved France and return to England to be nearer his family in Staffordshire, where he spent his final years.

The Funeral Service took place on Thursday 24th June at St. John the Baptist, Keele. John and Jean's son, Damien, also a parish priest, assisted with the service. John has been buried at a church at which he had formerly served: St Mary and All Saints, Whitmore, Staffordshire. His family have asked that any donations may be given in memory of his local church or to the British Heart Foundation.

"I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die". [John 11:25-26] _____ [MS



Forthcoming services in the Chaplaincy:



MONASTERE DU CARMEL, RUE DU DENACRE, SAINT-MARTIN-BOULOGNE
ORATOIRE NOTRE DAME DE LA MISERICORDE, RUE GAILLARD, CALAIS
SALLE DE L'ARSENAL, RUE DE L'ARSENAL, HESDIN

July: The service pattern continues as before, with the first Sunday (4th) being a lay led service in all three Churches. On the third Sunday in July (18th) Rev. Sara MacVane will be leading a service at Hesdin for all three Churches*.

August: Lay led services in all Churches on the first Sunday (1st) and third Sunday (15th) On the fifth Sunday (29th) the Rev. Sara MacVane will be taking the service at Calais.

Morning services at the above venues are at 10h30

Zoom services on the 2nd and 4th Sundays at 10h30 (link below):

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81308857876?pwd=ektZUY9RcGZ6dTdxdjBSMWE5K3VOQT09>

The Compline services on Zoom each Wednesday at 21h00. Compline link below:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87872685714?pwd=U1FNVURPb2NWL2UxUXpkc09ZR2wydz09>

Chaplaincy 'prayer circle' for private and confidential prayers.

Requests or questions to: ourprayersr4u@mail.com

Chaplaincy News: A meeting held on Tuesday 29th June, with the new archdeacon the Rev. Peter Hooper, was very positive concerning the Chaplaincy's future. Further meetings, on Zoom, are planned in order to consult each congregation on their wants from whoever takes the position of our next priest. The archdeacon will be present at these meetings to answer any questions and they will probably take place in the early autumn.

*The collection to be taken at the service in Hesdin on Sunday 18th July will go direct to the British Heart Foundation, in memory of Rev. John Porter. Anyone who would like to contribute, but cannot be at this service can make a donation via their churchwarden before that date (possibly at a service on 4th July).

Count your steps...

The need to install a step counting app into my mobile phone never seemed necessary to persuade me to take a walk. That is until one morning recently when I discovered the thrill of knowing that I'd just accomplished 5,432 steps, eating up 231 calories in the process. It was heady stuff, or at least it was initially.

Then the insults started to arrive. Within a few days my much-admired steps app began reminding me what I had achieved and, more to the point, what I had not. I had set my daily target at 10,000 steps, having heard other enthusiasts mention that figure. Clearly, my step app thought otherwise, pointing out that even my first day of ultra-enthusiasm had only added up to just over 5000 paces.

There was worse to come. At the end of my seven days of stepping and counting, I thought the app would be impressed. Instead, this is what I got: "You did not reach your activity goal a single time last week. Do you want to set a new goal?" The sub-text was obvious. Maybe I should settle for something I might even achieve on the odd day I actually ventured outside. "It was raining yesterday," I mumbled. "And the day before that. This is Scotland after all."

... or count your blessings

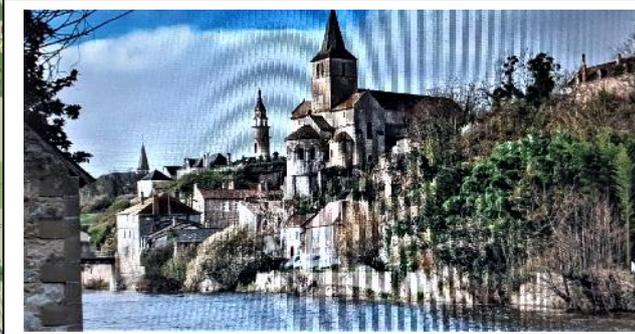
Towards the end of week two, however, things started to change. I'd woken in the middle of the night with the chorus 'Count your blessings' running through my head. 'And it will surprise you what the Lord has done'. It dawned on me that God has never sent me a message about not reaching goals or advising any lowering of ambition. On the contrary Job 31: 4 states: "Does not God see my ways and count all my steps?"

My steps app remains unimpressed, of course, but its daily reminder that I could be doing much better now brings a smile to my face and puts a spring in my step.

.....[Colin L



George Murray continues his journey of discovery through central France, now in the Haut-Limousin



Montmorillon



In my crabwise return pilgrimage to the North I am currently in the Haut-Limousin. The country is less spectacular than the Dordogne, but is greener and somehow familiar. Several times I have exclaimed spontaneously “This is pure Sussex!” and the hedgerows too are in English style. The main river is the Vienne, which gives its name to two départements. With its source in the Plateau de Millevaches, east of Limoges, already a great river it flows through that city then makes its way north to join the lower Loire. Of no less interest but of quite different character is the Gartempe, a tributary of the Creuse, which it joins at La Roche-Posay, 205 kms from its source. Forming a transition between the Massif Central and the Loire valley, it is a fascinating watercourse. New to me, it is rich in archaeological

sites, bridges ancient and modern, weirs, wind- and water-mills (at one stage more than 200), and also in flora and fauna – including an unusual variety of fish, and with many opportunities for swimming, diving and canoeing. Close to me is the Roc d'Enfer (Rock of Hades?), a rock-climbing site, with a charming waterside restaurant nearby.

Between Saulgé and Saint-Savin the Gartempe runs through the so-named ‘Valley of the Frescoes’, featuring numerous churches, chapels and châteaux decorated with mural

paintings, mostly completed between the 11th and 16th centuries. The churches at Saint-Germain, Jouhet, Saulgé and several other villages are worth visiting for this reason. Unfortunately the Eglise Notre-Dame at Montmorillon, the largest town on the route, is closed because the site is unstable following a landslide in 2015. This is a shame because the crypt of Saint-Catherine contains a series of highly coloured 12th century wall paintings depicting the legendary story of the young princess of Alexandria (no, I have not been able to get access).

In Montmorillon it is still possible, however, to visit the Octagon, once a funeral chapel and now housing an ossuary containing the remains of Christians perished along the centuries. The architecture was inspired by the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. Until the mid-19th century, paintings from the Middle Ages showing scenes from the Apocalypse were visible, and following recent restorations more traces of this 14th century work were uncovered.

Montmorillon, once reputed for paper-making, is known today as the city of writing, a smart piece of re-branding which has helped since 2000 to attract EU funding worth 6 million euros and to launch a literary festival. As expected the small town boasts more than a handful of charming bookshops with shelves bursting with new and second-hand volumes, enough to please any avid book-worm south of the left bank of



Saint-Savin

Paris. As far as the water is concerned, which for more than a century once served the paper-mill, it has been put to better use for making beer. But for some reason since the 19th century, the town has become well known for macarons (macaroons) – there is even a museum dedicated to the little cake and locally the town's inhabitants ...are of course known as: 'macarons'!

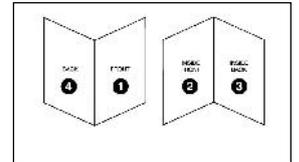
The pride of the Valley of the Frescoes though is the great Abbey of Saint-Savin-sur-Gartempe, just over the bridge from Saint-Germain. The first community of monks was installed in the 9th century by Benoît of Aquitaine at the request of Louis the Pious. This monastic life around the Abbey, dating from the 12th century, was to continue unbroken until the Revolution. The greatest Romanesque building in the Poitou region, it is remarkable for a series of frescoes painted on the walls and all-important spaces of the edifice. Most notable is a vast series of ceiling paintings at a height of 17 metres above the nave and covering over 700 square metres. They all date from the 11th and 12th centuries and are in amazingly good condition. The whole site is often called the Sistine Chapel of France.

The nave itself contains about fifty depictions of Old Testament episodes inspired by the Books of Genesis and Exodus; the crypt (not open to the public) shows the legendary story of the martyrdom of Saints Savin and Cyprien; the entrance illustrates the cycle of the Apocalypse, and the western tribune shows the Passion and Resurrection of Christ.

There have, not surprisingly, been numerous restoration works. The latest, between 2005 and 2008, was devoted to the paintings in the vault above the nave, viewing of which is now enhanced by a system of fibre-optic lighting. This extraordinary place is well worth a visit for its architecture and astonishingly well-preserved works of art, while the town of Saint-Savin itself is a most agreeable stop-over as I can testify.

We welcome all your articles for next month's edition. Please send your contributions to the editor:– malcolm.gale@dbmail.com - ☎03 21 31 83 57 Port: 06 99 09 60 44

Apart from downloading for easy reference, this newsletter is designed to be printed at A5 size - select the 'livret' or 'booklet' printing format on the print management page of Adobe PDF Reader, this turns it into a handy A5 size four-page leaflet – of course remember to pass the paper through your printer twice (i.e. both sides).



"The Chaplaincy in the Pas de Calais upholds the principles of Safeguarding and works diligently to make all aspects of the Chaplaincy a safer place".

A tea-time puzzle

On each side of each cube one of the above appears

Which design is on the side opposite



Macarons fromMontmorillon

Readers of this month's 'The Connexion' newspaper will find a full-page article on this famous French tea-time treat.