

**Ecumenical Eucharist for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity –  
Christ Church Lausanne, Switzerland.  
Sunday 20 January 2019**



From left to right: Angela Fall, Reader, Christ Church; Revd Sarah Böhm, Old Catholics; Pasteur Patrick Maeder, Adventist Church; Revd Christine Bloomfield, chaplain Christ Church and Old Catholics; Père Vincent Roos, Roman Catholic Church, Sacré Coeur; Pasteur Jean Marie Thévoz, Protestant Reformed Church (EERV), St. Jean.



Crucifer Vahé Jebejian, with the map of the world above.

No one knew how many people would show up from the seven church communities 'sous gare', the southern part of Lausanne along the lake. As it turned out the church filled up surprisingly, and as it did, I overheard 'guests', our neighbours, impressed both by the size and the beauty of the building. One sitting just behind me actually compared it to Lausanne's splendid cathedral, the most beautiful early Gothic building in Switzerland. For once perfect strangers talked to each other.

My pew-neighbours were slightly lost in the Anglican service despite the carefully-prepared service booklet, in both French and English. I pointed, turned over pages and sang as loudly as I could to help keep them in the loop. It worked. The two ladies of a certain age who, I discovered later, were from Sacré-Coeur, the close-by Roman Catholic church, were enthusiastic participants all the way - including the refreshments at the end.

As the service proceeded and people became familiar with the service booklet, participation became more natural and bilingual. Decibels rose and the cacophony of prayers said simultaneously in two or more languages seemed absolutely right. The coming together of the two halves of the world, on a pulley system (see photo), following our forgiveness of sins, provoked a joyous outbreak of laughter and applause. Later we all committed to an action of 'justice and peace' and left with someone else's words. The children's beautiful presentation illustrating these themes was an integral part of the worship.

But the high point, at least for me, was the joint celebration of the Eucharist by the priests and pastors of all the sous-gare churches, together at the altar, and then their movement to below the chancel for communion wafers, wine, or blessings, in a brilliant choreography organised by our own priest. The result was both efficient and very moving.

Very much in the spirit of Ecumenism at its best.

Also read the sermon given by Pasteur Jean Marie Thévoz, Protestant Reformed Church (EERV), St. Jean:

<http://clamans.hautetfort.com/archive/2019/01/24/celebration-oecumenique-l-amour-ne-s-epuise-pas-6122832.html>