

## Anticipating Advent Lichfield Diocese Visit to Nordkirche 2017

**Just back from Northern Germany:** a group of 11 from Lichfield Diocese had a wonderful visit to Rostock, in the Nordkirche, participating in the annual Anticipating Advent experience.



Here are some reflections from group members:

*"I think it's really important that we link with people who are both similar but also a bit different from us. We learn so much from one another. It's been really good to experience worship in different styles, to renew friendships and to share food together. By the way there's no need to be able to speak German - though it can help!"* Chrissi Thompson Young People's Worker At St Peters Forsbrook.

*"These link visits matter so much because they open up our views of our churches and our countries. They remind us, as we actually meet together and make connections, that we are one in Christ wherever we are in the whole world. From my perspective in the Nordkirche I feel we have so much in common and face so many of the same challenges. We are enriched by this sharing of experiences and being able to ask questions together."* Anne Lange Global Partnerships and Ecumenical Relationships, Rostock.

*"I am lucky enough to work alongside Terry Bloor who coordinates our link with the Lutheran Church in Northern Germany. I can see now, having made my first visit to the Nordkirche why he is so passionate about it. I've been struck by both the similarities and the differences. It's helped to broaden my appreciation of my church tradition and to really delve deeper into my Anglican identity. This partnership has suddenly become so much more important in Post Brexit Britain."* Rev Patrick Griffin Curate at St Marks Basford



*“I’ve been struck by the most generous hospitality we have received from our German hosts. The sharing in friendship together has been such a gift. As I continue my own training for ordination I feel so thankful for these experiences which provide a new perspective and help to look outwards rather than inwards.”* Diana Barnett Severn Loop Churches

*“A visit to the soup kitchen near Rostock was particularly interesting. Barbara the coordinator emphasised that no one is turned away from this church linked project which provided good quality food to any who want it. It’s been good to re-connect with the work being done with Asylum Seekers and Refugees. The church here can actually act as a place of Sanctuary for Asylum Seekers. St Peters Church in Schwerin where Jens-Peter Drewes is now Pastor, is actually providing Sanctuary for 15 Asylum Seekers who would otherwise be deported.”* Rev Sally Smith St Mark’s Church, Shelton