

Parish Visit to Germany 2008



I have never been to Germany before and whenever we go away we stay in hotels, rented accommodation or with relatives, so staying with complete strangers was a new experience! I was a little apprehensive as apart from staying with someone I had never met in a country I had never visited I can not speak a word of German and was responsible for two teenage girls!

We started off on a rainy Friday and after a couple of laps round terminal five in the car we found departures. No problems through security and a group of us settled down on chairs waiting to be called to board the plane. Clare and I decided to find a bar and had just settled down with drinks when we got a phone call to say the plane was boarding. There was a mad dash to the gate and we arrived in time to walk straight through the gates as our seats were called first.

Neil had taken advantage of a baptism contact and had managed to get upgraded to Club Class, deserting his congregation and leaving us to fight over the shrink wrapped “nibbles” whilst he enjoyed the hot meal and ice cold drinks in a roomy seat! Marion kept him company!



As we sat on our cramped seats I received a phone call from Clare. She had managed to get through two passport checks with Sam using Julie’s passport! It was finally discovered as they tried to get on the plane and they were refused boarding! Clare and Sam had to wave goodbye to our plane whilst they waited to see if there was any chance of catching the last flight to Düsseldorf on a bank holiday weekend.

And they still had to get Sam’s passport!!

We arrived in Germany and our hosts were there to meet us. I need not have worried as they were all wonderful! We were taken by car to the Gerschede church and Rainer pointed out the sights on the way including the very dodgy caravans parked on the grass verge of the main road which he said was home to the local prostitutes!!! (This was nowhere near the area we were staying I hasten to add!).

The church was lovely and we were greeted by rows of beautiful dishes of food and glasses of wine or lager and soon our tummies were full!

Saturday arrived sunny and bright and we went by train to the city and had a wonderful guide who took us around and pointed out all the places of interest in excellent English so I could understand him! Clare joined us as they managed to get the last flight from Heathrow (also upgraded to the comfy seats, hot food and ice cold drinks) whilst Sam joined the girls on an alternative (teenage friendly) excursion.

Lunch was very welcome after our long walk around the town and we then had a boat trip to enjoy around the lake in the sunshine. The day finished with music and a barbeque back at the church, a brilliant end to the day!

Sunday we had a bi-lingual church service which worked very well and then in the afternoon we rehearsed and performed the concert. Malcolm and I finally mastered the Lambeth Walk dance after months of unsuccessful practicing and it was a good laugh!!



Sunday Morning and Die Kinderchor



That evening we were taken to a brewery which had a great buffet dinner. The food and beer supply seemed never ending!

Monday came all too soon and after breakfast with Rainer and Mechtild we met back at the church to be taken to Dusseldorf airport. The plane was delayed because of bad Bank Holiday Monday weather in England and we finally set off 1 hour late. It was slightly bumpy on the journey and we did a couple of loops around Maidstone (which their map rather worryingly had sited on the Isle of Sheppey!) before safely arriving back at Heathrow.

It was a brilliant action packed weekend and I thoroughly recommend it to all ages! (even the concert!!)

Jill Marsh