

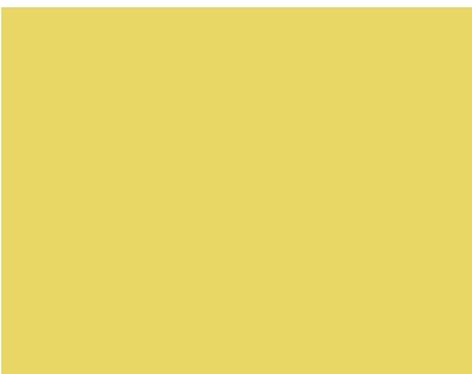


St Martin-in-the-Fields

# Review of the Year's Activities

2015/16

Trafalgar Square, London WC2N 4JJ



£3 suggested donation

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## Foreword by the Vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields



There was a fashion a century or more ago for pointing out inconsistencies in the gospels, in particular, or the Bible in general. One of the most fascinating inconsistencies is Jesus saying, on the one hand, 'Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters,' (Matthew 12:30), and on the other hand 'Whoever is not against you is for you' (Luke 9:50). Somehow the vibrant life of St Martin's strikes both notes.

On the one hand we are all things to all people. We try hard to give people what they want, whether that be customers or worshippers, visitors or regulars,

people of faith or people on life's journey. We try to remove barriers, enable access, dismantle prejudice, be a place of encounter, encourage people in their own questions without offering our own pat answers.

On the other hand we are unambiguously a Christian church, and we stand by some commitments that are in certain times and places unpopular: we believe God is made known in the destitute, we assume that God is renewing the church through the agency of those whom church and world have long excluded, we trust that in God the future is always bigger than the past, we refuse to divide the 'spiritual' from the worldly.

This remarkable document details how in grand and humble ways we have practised the incarnation of Jesus by seeking to make flesh God's word. It is made possible by generous volunteers and dedicated staff, willing enthusiasts and highly-skilled experts, things done for love and things completed out of goodness and kindness. We embody the diversity and apparent inconsistency of Jesus' contrasting words. In doing so, we imitate the glorious upside-down character of God.

*Revd Dr Sam Wells, Vicar*

## Introduction from the Churchwardens of St Martin-in-the-Fields

It is our pleasure to introduce the Annual Review of Activities for St Martin-in-the-Fields. As we were preparing this document it became apparent that there is much to give thanks to God for.

In this review we have sought to capture something of the flavour of all the activity which goes on across St Martin's week by week. Some of this activity is high-profile and some happens in the background - but all of it is vital to the life and growth of our church. This document is available both in hard copy and online, making it easier to update throughout the year. We have not managed to capture everything that goes on across our busy church in this review and the new website coming in 2017 will allow us to share even more of our activities.



In 2016 we have seen:

- The launch of a refreshed St Martin's Action Plan, which brings together and focuses the work of all of the organisations that make up the St Martin's community
- The decision by Colin Glover and Lady Diana Brittan (CEO and Chair of the Board of Directors at the Connection at St Martin's respectively) to step down after many years of service supporting and transforming the lives of homeless and vulnerable people

- New opportunities for the St Martin-in-the-Fields business. These have focused on developing events and room hire, improvements to the Café offering with our new Executive Head Chef, and the arrival of new directors with considerable external expertise, on the SMITFL Board
- The election of new members to our PCC (Peter Keegan, Craig Norman, Harold Alby, Will Charnley and Snow Ni). We record our thanks to those who have stepped down or completed their term of office (Ike Anya, Adenike Olefemi and Wilson Yu)
- The continued commitment, dedication, love and care of our clergy team
- The flourishing of Bread for the World services on Wednesday evenings - with a diverse, interesting range of speakers
- The ordination of Alastair McKay as priest and the selection of Andrew Bennison for ordination training.

This is all underpinned by a growing congregation and greater numbers on the electoral roll.

As churchwardens, we share the membership of the various groups and committees that make up St Martin's, but we also seek to work alongside and support the clergy team, paid staff, volunteers and the congregation. Among other groups, Gail is a trustee of The Connection and St Martin's Trust, and Adrian a director of St Martin-in-the-Fields Limited and an observer on the board of trustees of the St Martin's Charity.

It is our privilege to represent and serve you as Churchwardens and we pray that, in the year ahead, St Martin's continues to live out its purpose of being **At the heart. On the edge.** Thank you to everyone who makes up our flourishing, generous and welcoming community.

*Adrian Harris and Gail Elkington, Churchwardens*

## St Martin-in-the-Fields Limited



St Martin-in-the-Fields Limited (SMITFL) is at the heart of St Martin's and also enjoys a strong external reputation. In the last year, all at SMITFL continued to work hard in delivering the level of surplus that is necessary to support the ongoing activities of the wider St Martin's. As with every year there were operational, commercial and with the Brexit vote, 'political' challenges to overcome. All credit to the management team and staff for their positive attitude, creativity and energy in meeting all those challenges.

In real terms, the level of surplus we have generated has been increasing over recent years as additional costs have been absorbed, particularly those around paying nearer the London Living Wage. The likelihood is that costs will continue to rise, particularly those associated with the increasingly necessary maintenance and refurbishment of the site now that the Renewal Project is nine years behind us. SMITFL, together with all parts of the St Martin's family, will be working hard to meet these financial goals.

Operational highlights of the year include;

- Café in the Crypt: Development of a new, more varied menu including a delicious afternoon tea offer available in the redeveloped Apse
- Café in the Courtyard: Installation of a very attractive canopy to keep off the sun (and rain!)

- Shop: Selective development of the product range, strengthening of St Martin's branded product and the Fair Trade range. Development of the Christmas Shop and a new EPOS (electronic point of sale) system
- Music: Seventh annual chamber music competition in collaboration with Making Music
- Events: Looking at how occupancy levels can be increased so that the wonderful spaces we have to offer are better utilised
- Premises - the development of the new St Martin's Archive located at 5 St Martin's Place
- Partnerships: Developing commercial partnerships with other London parishes

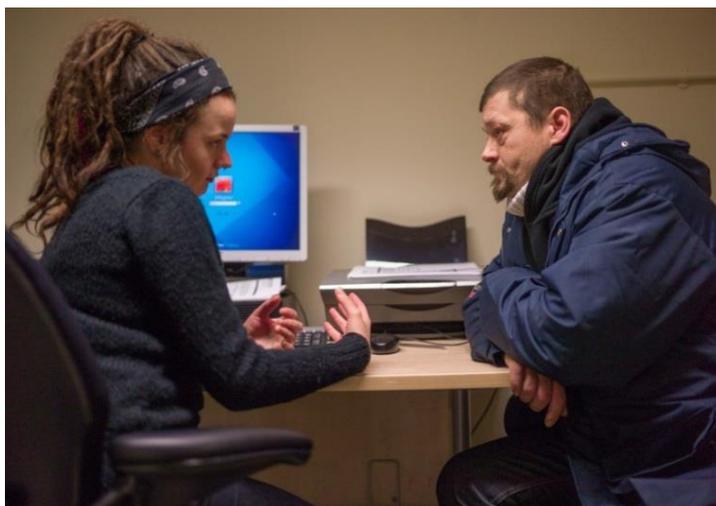
We were also involved in several high-profile external events including:

- The Bridge, a joint faith art exhibition opened by the Egyptian Ambassador to the UK
- Connection Art Exhibition
- The Stations - a reinterpretation of the stages of Jesus' own experience of suffering and persecution as seen through the lives and stories of the refugees
- The Microsoft World Wide annual conference held over three consecutive days in St Martin's Hall
- VCGC 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary broadcast live on BBC1 in the presence of HM Queen Elizabeth II

*Chris Burford, Chairman*

### **The Connection at St Martin-in-the-Fields**

This year at The Connection, we have been working hard to meet the needs of the continually growing number of clients we see each day. Many obstacles lie ahead in terms of reducing rough sleeping and because of this we have been adapting our services so that we can continue to help as many homeless clients as possible to move away from and stay off the streets. To address the needs of the increasing number of EU and non-EU migrants we are seeing, we have appointed a dedicated migration team of four who work specifically with this client group, helping them to resolve complicated immigration cases and ensuring they are able to access necessary services or are helped to return home.



In our Advice and Housing team, we have appointed a dedicated Private Rental Sector (PRS) Support Worker, who provides support for clients moving into the PRS and also clients living in our Building Prospects housing scheme. Many of our clients lack the basic IT skills needed to apply for jobs, make benefit claims and keep in touch with family and friends. To help them gain these much needed skills, we have introduced a new twice weekly group that runs in our Activities Room called Better Connected, which teaches them these basic skills. Our in-house volunteering scheme, Step Up, continues to be an important first step for clients needing work experience to get back into work. This year we have extended the placements available to include the Night Centre, Fundraising Team and retail placements in our Pop Up Shop and Step Up volunteers are now involved in all external staff recruitment.

Over the next year we will be working towards a number of goals which will enable us to continue to help the growing number of clients we are seeing each day. These include: becoming a Psychologically Informed Environment (PIE); working in partnership with other organisations to achieve our goals; helping more clients to gain access to the PRS and as Diana Brittan, our Chair for over eight years will be stepping down this year, we will be recruiting a new Chair.

*Colin Glover, Chief Executive*

## St Martin-in-the-Fields Charity

St Martin-in-the-Fields Charity aims to support homeless and vulnerably-housed people across the UK. We do this by our support of The Connection at St Martin's and by providing crisis grants through the Vicar's Relief Fund.

This year the Charity was able to increase its support to The Connection to £1.1m. This support focuses on;

- Maintaining Core Funding at no more than 25% of core costs
- Setting a four-year indicative budget to assist future planning
- Contributing to new services
- Working with the BBC Radio 4 Christmas Appeal with St Martin-in-the-Fields



This framework is assisting the two charities to work effectively together and strengthen their work to address homelessness.

The budget for the Vicar's Relief Fund is £1m this year. Since January 2016, 1,475 people have received grants awarded by the Vicar's Relief Fund. In 2015, 3,090 people were supported into accommodation or saved from the threat of eviction.

The Charity has benefited from a substantial award of £750k from the Oak Foundation. This grant has enabled us to increase the cash available in the Vicar's Relief Fund. Also, it has enabled us to launch the St Martin's Frontline Network. The St Martin's Frontline Network (SMFN) harnesses the ideas, energy and experience of those at the frontline working alongside homeless and vulnerably housed people to make a positive change in reducing homelessness in the UK. The Network was launched at the House of Lords earlier this year as depicted in the above photo. The first national conference was held in September when over 250 support workers from across the UK attended.

To support the development of SMFN, we have partnered with 14 homeless organisations drawn from across the UK to help us build the network. These organisations are hosting local events, providing case studies and on-the-ground reconnaissance to help enable frontline workers to be more effective in addressing homelessness.

2016 sees the 90<sup>th</sup> Christmas Appeal. Preparations are well underway - our theme is 'Together for 90 Years'. We have completed a short video outlining the story of the Appeal with Hugh Dennis - going back to the very first broadcasts on the BBC. We are also planning a Gala Dinner, supported by Sir Kenneth Branagh and Dame Judi Dench, a broadcast service with senior BBC staff and members of the Royal Family, and a special 90<sup>th</sup> edition of our Radio 4 broadcast, Making a Difference.

*Tim Bissett, Director*

## St Martin's Action Plan

The new St Martin's Action Plan (SMAP) was launched at the APCM in April. We were delighted that a significant number of projects were considered to have become sufficiently embedded in the day-to-day life of St Martin's to justify their graduation from the Action Plan. This made room for the inclusion of a number of exciting new initiatives, as well as the extension of certain of the existing projects. The current Action Plan consists of 13 projects grouped under three categories, namely:

### *Deepening and broadening our programmes*

- Developing a global web ministry exploring the full potential of broadcasting, webcasting, podcasting and social media
- Building on the success of the Sunday International Group by partnering with other churches and organisations to establish guest groups working alongside those with no recourse to public funding
- Improving air quality around St Martin's by engaging with local air-quality monitoring and improvement initiatives
- Embodying our commitment to access to work for all by providing experience and employment for disabled and/or formerly homeless people
- Offering administrative services (including estates management and human resources) to other organisations.

### *Incubating new projects*

- Developing a national network of thought leaders, practitioners and academics based on the 2,000 support workers involved in the Vicar's Relief Fund
- Developing a Heart-Edge Network among churches drawn to our configuration of charity, commerce, culture and congregation.

### *Becoming an exemplary organisation*

- Introducing Fair Trade lines to our retail and food service activity as appropriate to ethos, quality, price and customer demand
- Moving towards paying the London Living Wage as commercial performance and organisational costs allow
- Building our endowment towards our initial £4.5m threshold
- Working to become a best practice organisation in the area of disability and developing a broadened understanding of belonging and inclusion
- Taking active steps to renew congregational stewardship
- Streamlining our group and committee structure

The SMAP steering committee continues to hold monthly meetings at which three to four projects are reviewed with the aim of identifying whether further support is needed to help them to achieve their ends. The steering committee also provides regular updates to the PCC on project progress. Its membership is drawn from across St Martin's and currently consists of Sam Wells (clergy), Tim Bissett (Charity), Antonia Adams (SMITFL Board), Allyson Hargreaves (business), Adrian Harris (Churchwarden), Will Charnley (PCC) and Matthew Morrison (Culture/Choir).

*Matthew Morrison, Steering Committee*

## **Archers**



Archers is a group of the more senior members of the congregation. The group meets monthly. Each meeting starts with a Eucharistic celebration followed by a meal and a discussion, usually on a spiritually related topic. Annually the group celebrates Robert Burns night (with poetry, music and haggis), American Thanksgiving and a Christmas dinner at the Union Jack Club. The monthly gathering is usually attended by 30-40 people. The group facilitators are Ruth Hutchinson and Michael Moran. Revd Richard Carter is the group chaplain. New members are always welcome.

*Michael Moran*

## Archives



We maintain the record of St Martin's activities from 1890 to the present day. These include church services, activities such as social care, fellowship groups, educational courses and talks, publications, previous vicars, clergy, churchwardens, vergers, laity and other key people across the whole organisation. In addition, the archive is made up of 5,000 photographic prints in some 40 albums, as well as CDs, DVDs and other sound and visual media.

Over the last twelve months I am delighted to announce that we have opened the new archive space on the first

floor of the parish office, which is open to the public. This has only been made possible thanks to the generosity of a legacy. Please do speak to me for details on how to access our records - I am in church on Sundays.

I would really like to thank Victor Grant, Dudley Green, Alison Hardwick, Sally Scott, Ursula Sullivan and Rhonda Crandle for all their help in supporting the work of the archive. We would welcome more volunteers who would be interested in taking on specific projects.

*Michael Hellyer, Archivist*

## Bell Ringers

We ring every morning from 9.00am-10.00am, prior to the Sunday morning service, and welcome any visitors who would like to come and watch. We strive as a band to compete in competitions and more generally to improve the standard and complexity of our ringing.

We have a band consisting of around 30 people, and regularly have over 12 people on Sunday mornings; this allows us to ring all 12 bells at the church. Our committee consists of a Captain, Vice-Captain, Secretary, Treasurer, Steeple keeper and Auditor.

Over the last year we have celebrated success by coming first place in the Middlesex 8 Bell Competition and are hoping to repeat this performance in the upcoming London 12 Bell. We rang a Peal for the 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday of Queen Elizabeth II and held our annual band dinner at the Punch Tavern in August. The bells were also rung out for the 25<sup>th</sup> consecutive year during the Pride march in London. We also host a number of visiting bands for practice evenings including the Royal Society of Cumberland Youths and our own band practice monthly.

There are many opportunities, over and above the regular service ringing, to hear the church bells, marking royal events or historic dates to name a couple. On all of these occasions the bells are being rung by real people. As a band we try and provide ringing for as many of these events as possible and the more people we have the easier this is.

We are in a unique position, being part of the community of one of the most iconic churches in London, as well as being outward-facing and heavily involved with general ringing events in the city.

*Christopher Rimmer, Secretary*

## **Breakfast Group**

The fortnightly Breakfast Group has been meeting since 2010. We meet every other Wednesday in the Café in the Crypt at 7.45am. Our formula is simple. The group's chair selects one of the lectionary readings for the day and we read it aloud and discuss it for a few minutes, considering its implications for us today. We then buy breakfasts or hot drinks from the Café, and discuss, in confidence, whatever we wish to share about what is going on in our lives at the moment.

The original ethos of the group was to talk about work and jobs, and workplace issues, and we try to maintain that emphasis. However, our discussions are wide-ranging and various, and "having a job" is not necessary to drop by. We aim to be done by 8.30am, so that people can go to work or to Morning Prayer upstairs.

Turnout tends to hover at around six to eight, but it has ranged from as few as two to as many as 12. For all who come it aims to provide a welcoming space to focus on our relationship with God and with each other at the start of the day.

*Dan Kaszeta and Caroline Essex*

## **C-Club**

C-Club is the core of our children's ministry at St Martin's: a space for children in the congregation to gather and experience faith, friendship, fellowship and fun. C-Club isn't an alternative to church - it is a special part of children's experience of church, providing space for the gifts of children to flourish in the life of our congregation.

C-Club meets weekly in the Dick Sheppard Chapel after the 10.00am Eucharist for interactive sessions led by our Children's Worker. In this time we respond creatively to what



we have heard in church, as well as working on particular themes and projects throughout the year. Through this programme we hope that our young people will grow in faith, maturity, friendship and wisdom: getting to know themselves, other people, and God. Children and young people from age five upwards are welcome - as are adults if accompanied by a child!

Over the last year we have continued to involve children in regular Sunday services, as well as festivals and special services (e.g. Advent, Pentecost). In addition, we have run a longer term project focusing on prayer and the Eucharist and welcomed new members to C-Club.

In the year ahead we hope to recruit more volunteers, involve a larger number of children and devise more activities for teenagers.

*Andrew Bennison, Pastoral Assistant (until September 2016)*

## Chaplains in Church

One of the important but sometimes hidden ministries at St Martin's is the regular presence of our lay chaplains team in church on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings who greet and welcome visitors, answer questions, hear stories and offer prayer. Each member of the group is trained either in spiritual direction or counselling and includes members of the congregation and some from other church communities who give of their time generously in this way.

The chaplains produced the popular Prayer Walk booklet, which is being translated into different languages. They meet together twice a year for reflection, to share experience and engage together on areas of interest and training. The vergers hold the 'chaplains log,' a day to day record kept by the group of their mornings in church, full of interesting and moving encounters and observations about life in church that day. It shows both the depth of ministry and the breadth of life that flows through St Martin's. Do take a look, it is a window into the life of God in this place.

*Revd Katherine Hedderly*

## Church and Worship

The Church and Worship Committee's purpose is to offer a place to reflect on worship (our liturgies and music), and to help plan and arrange activities to develop St Martin's spiritual life. It has an explicit role to help coordinate congregational feedback on the shape and style of our liturgies. We also assist with events and oversee the production of various resources to enrich the individual and collective spiritual life of the church.



In the last year we have been delighted to support the 2015 Advent Booklet on the theme 'Experiment in Hope'. We have also been able to commission and fund a new Eucharistic prayer setting for general use during the year. It was also a pleasure for members of the committee to join with members from the Education Committee in the planning and preparation for the St Martin's Away Day, held at St Mellitus in July, on the theme 'A School for Prayer'.

In the coming year, with the assistance of various members of the congregation, we are hoping to expand the number of languages in which the St Martin's Prayer Walk is available, to help make St Martin's as welcoming and accessible as possible for our international visitors. We also plan to be commissioning the 2016 Advent Booklet.

I would like to thank the committee for all that they do: Andrew Aitken, Alice Bree, Chris Braganza, Jeff Claxton, Andrew Earis, Katherine Hedderly, Ruly Tsang and Tom Williams.

*Caroline Essex*

## Cloak Groups



St Martin-in-the-Fields has a diverse and growing congregation. It welcomes all people and has a long history of shared fellowship and hospitality with all who enter its doors inspired by St Martin who shared his cloak with a beggar. A growing church is a sign of life and vitality. But a larger congregation also challenges us to think creatively about how to support and care for one another and thread our community together in Christian fellowship and practical action.

Cloak groups offer members of the congregation the opportunity to join a small group to grow in fellowship, prayer and bible study and to support each other in turning our faith into action in the world. The aim of small groups at St Martin's:

To provide a context for knowing and being known, growing as explorers in faith through bible study, prayer, fellowship and supporting each other in faith-based action in the world.

*Revd Katherine Hedderly*

## Club Wednesday

Club Wednesday meets on the first Wednesday of every month. It begins with Choral Eucharist at 1.00pm held in the church. Afterwards regular members and visiting of the congregation and all who are interested are invited over to 6 St Martin's Place to join us for a light lunch and tea and coffee in the George Richards Room. This is a time to get to know one another and to chat. This is followed by a talk in the Austen Williams Room on a subject of interest often given by a member of the St Martin's Community or someone connected with St Martin's.



In the last year we have had the following talks:

Andrew Bennison talking about being a teacher in London: Rod Beadles talking on 'HIV: 30 Years On', drawing upon his experience of working with those with HIV/Aids: Phyllis SantaMaria talking on international development, drawing upon her work establishing microfinance initiatives in the developing world: I talked about my visit to the Solomon Islands for the Great Conference of the Melanesian Brotherhood, the largest Anglican Religious Community in the world: Lucinda Murphy, a member of our Open Circle group and a student at Heythrop College, speaking about her research exploring nostalgia as spiritual homecoming: Revd Dr Alastair McKay, speaking about his journey of faith and his work prior to ordination: John and Pat Pridmore speaking about their recent adventures on the slow boat to China: Elinor Newman, our parish administrator, speaking about her travels in America: Revd Jonathan Evens speaking about his ministry at St Stephen Walbrook. There was also a Club Wednesday Quiz, testing knowledge of many parts of St Martin's and its history. And in October this year Wendy Quill will be speaking about her recent travels in China.

Club Wednesday is particularly grateful to Brian Mears and Marjorie Wilkinson who prepare the refreshments so beautifully each month. The group is especially aimed at the older senior members of our congregation and other visitors but in the true St Martin's tradition it is open and welcoming of all who would like to come.

*Revd Richard Carter*

## **Disability Advisory Group**

The Disability Advisory Group (DAG) brings together people with insight or interest arising from their own lived experience of long-term illness, physical or sensory impairment, or mental health; or from a support, caring or professional role (paid or unpaid). We hold open meetings once a term around a particular focus or topic and share issues and ideas. These inform and guide our work of increasing access and participation, sharing experience and learning within St Martin's and more widely.



In 2015 DAG meetings focused on themes around healing, exclusion and belonging. We shared experience and ideas with congregations in liturgies for Bread for the World and St Luke's Day; with staff and Boards in a whole-site meeting exploring disability; and with the wider Church through our annual conference on disability and church, *Living on the Edge*, in partnership with Inclusive Church. We also shared messages from the conference in a display in the marketplace at General Synod, and developed plans for a new cross-site working group as part of a disability SMAP project.

In 2016 we will be working with others on a co-ordinated basis to address issues of access and participation across St Martin's. We will mark our fifth annual conference on disability and church with a weekend of events: Prophets & Seers with the conference, St Luke's Day service and a special screening of the film *Notes on Blindness*. As part of sharing our learning and experience more widely we will feature our work on St Martin's website, and work with IC to create a booklet to capture and share stories from the conference and our work here.

We are grateful to the many individuals and groups across St Martin's who are open to ideas and work with us to make stuff happen. We are glad of the 2016 conference planning team who help us to open the ideas to others - Bob Callaghan (Inclusive Church), Jonathan Evens, Tim Goode (Diocesan Disability Advisor, Southwark), Mims Hodson and Ann Memmott (National Autism Advisor).

At the heart are the DAG members who open up experience and ideas to make things better; Jeff Claxton, Genevieve Hamilton, Mims Hodson, Sue Lawson, Ali Lyon, Jane Nelson, Gemma Poncia, Hannah Reed, Roger Shaljean, Jon Stanford, Manuela Sykes, John Varanakis, Susanne Wood and Susan Woolf.

*Fiona MacMillan*

## **Education**

The Education Committee plans, organises, delivers and evaluates education and formation events and programmes for St Martin-in-the-Fields, serving both our own congregation and the wider public. These include: the Autumn Lecture Series, the Lent programme, annual parish away day or weekend, one-off lectures or panel discussions, drama productions and other educational events taking place across the site (such as *Living the Questions*, Cloak Groups, *Changing Attitudes* and *Inspired to Follow*). In coordination with the Festivals and Events Planning Group, the committee considers longer-term themes and programmes for the whole site.



This year is the second that we have joined Wednesday evening's Bread for the World community for the Lent programme, with eight listening and discussion groups and record numbers signing up (over 100 people). In addition, we organised the Parish Away Day at St Mellitus College with the Church and Worship Committee on the theme of 'Lord teach us to pray', with a large number of lay and clergy sessions to choose from. We are very excited about this autumn's lecture series on *'Who Is My Neighbour? The Ethics of Global Relationships'* with a range of prominent speakers, including former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams and Stanley Hauerwas.

I would like to thank Richard Carter, Duncan McCall, Eugene Ling, Sarah Crompton, Hannah Reed, Wendy Quill

and Amanda Tan for all that they do on the committee.

*Martin Haigh, Chairman*

## Endowment and Stewardship

Our main purposes are to increase the culture of congregational giving, to encourage members to give (especially via standing orders), and to make it easy for members to do so. We help run what is now the annual giving campaign, in 2016 on the theme 'A Grateful Heart', by for instance recruiting members to speak to the topic 'why I give to St Martin's' for the four weeks leading up to Giving Sunday.



This year we focused on 'A Grateful Heart'. This

campaign asked the congregation to consider their giving to St Martin's, especially via standing orders. Four members of the congregation spoke about their experiences of giving at the Sunday morning services, then on 14 February we ran Giving Sunday. By early May, the campaign had brought in pledges of just under £16,000 (including Gift Aid commitments) of additional income. 25 members have increased their standing orders including 10 who have taken out new standing orders and 6 who increased this year as well as in 2015.

In the year ahead, we hope to increase the conversation about giving among members of the congregation and to make it easier for newcomers to know what they can do to contribute to the parish's life and vision. For instance, we are working on creating a newcomers' welcome pack; encouraging PCC members to be proactive at coffee hours and Bread for the World; and planning a brainstorming session with the diocesan financial advisor.

With thanks to the members of the group for their work and support: Katherine Hedderly, Gail Elkington, Helen Platts, Oliver Cooper and Caroline Essex.

*Lawrence Warner*

### **Flower Arrangers**

We focus on providing flowers for occasions, events or services which require a theme and to encourage flower arranging as a social and therapeutic activity.

It is a wonderful privilege to serve St Martin's. Being in church whilst arranging flowers means we listen to fabulous music being rehearsed and often listen to the stories of the many visitors who pass through. We would love to encourage more people to join us - it is great fun and very rewarding.

With continued thanks to Cathy Miller, Noriko Ignaki and Ruth Wooldridge.

*Rosanne Townsend*

### **Friends of St Martin's**

We are a worldwide community sharing the vision and supporting the mission of St Martin-in-the-Fields. Our members are those living anywhere in the world who wish, through fellowship, to maintain contact with the ministry of St Martin's. This includes those within the Trafalgar Square congregation who wish to share in the fellowship of our global family.



Over the last year we have organised the London Open House, distributed the Lent study guide to Friends internationally, supported our partnership with St Mary's Cathedral, Johannesburg, funded some of the work of our flower arrangers and paid for extra food for the Sunday International Group.

In the year ahead we are hoping to appoint additional committee members for the Saturday volunteer guide programme and to build our web presence, strengthen relations with other SMITF groups and complete the Friends Prayer book. Thank you to the committee for all they do: Lavinia Anson, Dorothy Cone, Bob Demming, Celia Ellacott, Andrew Goodhart and Ruth Wooldridge.

*Susanne Wood, Chairman*

## Friends of The Connection at St Martin's



The sole purpose of the Friends of The Connection is to raise funds to support the work of The Connection with homeless and vulnerable people, funds that can be applied wherever there is the greatest need. The Friends came into being originally as the fundraising arm of St Martin's Social Care Unit. We now work in close collaboration with the professional fundraising team at The Connection, seeking to complement their work while at the same time providing a vehicle through which individuals in London and across the country can become more actively informed about and engaged with the work of The Connection, as well as supporting it financially. In this way, the Friends offers an important way for members of the congregation and the wider St Martin's family in particular to give concrete and active support to The Connection.

2015/16 was successful financially. We raised £250,000, roughly half from membership subscriptions and donations and half from legacies. A small proportion of our income also came from fundraising events, either organised centrally in London, or by individual Friends in their home areas. Christmas was a particularly

busy time, with carol singing at Charing Cross Station, guided walks round Trafalgar Square, a series of educational coffee mornings, and a very successful Christmas Concert in The Connection, led by the St Martin's Singers, who have agreed to come back again this December. Two of our members also hosted a Christmas Musical Evening in their house for the third year running, raising over £1,000.

At the same time, the Committee has been developing a growth strategy, with the aim of increasing both our membership and the funds we raise. This takes into account wider changes, such as in the scope of the Radio 4 Christmas Appeal with St Martin-in-the-Fields and in the nature and availability of volunteers to support this kind of work. To back up this strategy, the Friends office is now staffed on Monday, Wednesday and Friday by a paid Charity Administrator, Bert-Jan Zuiderduin.

There are three key elements to the strategy: developing a Speakers' Panel, volunteers briefed and resourced to talk about the work of The Connection and the Friends to societies, clubs and at other public events; organising more fundraising events, both in central London, and also across the country through a network of Friends' fundraising initiatives in their own areas; attracting more people who want to be active, informed supporters of The Connection to become Friends and make an ongoing financial commitment.

If this strategy is to be successful, we need volunteers - people willing to join an Action Group to implement the strategy, people to join the Speakers' Panel, people to run fundraising events, both in central London and/or locally, and people to help us beef up our communications. If you would like to know more about the Friends or any of these opportunities, contact me on the email address below, or Bert-Jan in the Friends office at [Friends@cstm.org.uk](mailto:Friends@cstm.org.uk) or on 020 7766 5522.

*Charles Woodd, Chair*

## God of Surprises

We started meeting after the 2014 Lent Course and have been gathering monthly ever since. Currently the group is reading and discussing Gerard Hughes' last book *Cry of Wonder*. The group meets once a month in one of the small meeting rooms, usually on a Monday. New members are welcome. The group facilitators are Duncan McCall and Michael Moran. *See also Cloak Groups*.

*Duncan McCall and Michael Moran*

## Hospitality

The Sunday Morning Coffee Team pours in excess of 13,000 cups of coffee or tea in one year. Great thanks to the Team who serve coffee (plus tea, cake and chocolate bickies...) each Sunday morning; Alison Hardwick, Brian Haslem, Michelle Yap and Annette Aitken, plus those who appear when needed, particularly the cake cutters (Andrew Aitken, Michael Angus, Susannah Woodd, Sophie Tyler). We welcomed Rhonda and Peter Cradle to the team and thank them for their dynamism.



In 2016 Andrew with his Sustainability Group hat on, encouraged (or bulldozed) us in introducing china mugs which has been a great success, although if anyone knows how to get rid of that horrid tea stain...! He has organised a great team of volunteers around him to set up or stack the dishwasher, a big thank you to Judith Russenberger, Biniam Negash, Zarina Tahseen, Peter Cradle, Renate Rothwell, Wendy Quill, Sophie Tyler, Marion Dickens, Helen Harris, Matias Wibowo, and Douglas Board. Andrew would welcome more volunteers, please.

Over the past 12 months we have celebrated Baptisms, significant birthdays, a wake for Brian Murphy (the custard cream king!), welcomes and farewells and lots, lots more. Most recently we celebrated Sybil Allen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday and the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the St Martin's Relief in Need charity. New faces would be warmly welcomed. If you are new, it is a great way to meet people. Please contact Alison or Bron if you would like to give it a try.

The Hospitality year begins with Alison Hardwick serving hot cross buns after the Good Friday Three Hour Vigil. Then Easter Breakfast follows the 5.00am Eucharist. Thanks to the cooks, Revd Richard Carter, Matias, Andrew Bennison, Andrew, Anna Yew and many more in the team who in the early hours of the morning prepare each year a fabulous hot brekkie with fruit canoe, shared around the Lightwell. It is really a lovely experience, so if you have never done it, get yourself up before the crack of dawn and join us this Easter.

Events during the year include; Confirmation with wine and cake, Pentecost lunch, the Disability Advisory Group's Conference in October (thanks to Susanne Wood for her help), Marketplace Sunday (Loren Mrkusic cooked up a mini story last year) to name a few... and the Big One, The Patronal Festival Supper in November which comprises a Feast and Party.

The Hospitality Team is a fluid beast with help appearing when called on. A gigantic thank you to all who cooked, picked up shopping, poured wine, arranged flowers, ferried equipment from No. 6 to the Hall and then back again, washed up, cleaned up and stayed until the late hour to tidy. New faces and old trusted helpers. To those who did not help, maybe this is your year!! Thank you to the vergers and security staff, Ladka and the Café staff for all their help throughout the year, and Edith Lau and the Chinese Congregation for their cooking and volunteering plus the generous loan of the Ho Ming Wah kitchen whenever requested. An enormous thank you to Richard Carter for EVERYTHING - his pre-planning, ordering, shopping, collecting, cooking, and sheer drive and force of enthusiasm and encouragement.

*Bronwyn Sanders*

### **International Committee**

We represent St Martin's in building international relationships and welcoming and including people of all cultures in the life of our church. We aim to make international issues an integral part of the life of St Martin's. We allocate the PCC's annual budget for overseas giving by making small grants to grassroots organisations and groups. We also offer a particular welcome at services and events which have an international focus, such as the recent Humanitarian Aid event and the annual Archbishop Romero trust service.

Over the last year we have supported SENEthiopia in the Big Give, through which they raised £15,000 to provide Mekele Blind School with 'Talking Textbooks' - solar powered MP3 players containing six textbooks each. We gave support through the Women's Education partnership for vulnerable and disadvantaged women, especially from the Nuba Mountains and Darfur and helped to provide a functioning solar water pump, toilets and showers for the Sisters of Melanesia in Verana'aso.



We have started working towards a long-term partnership with St Mary's Cathedral, Johannesburg. Last year Sam Wells and Will Morris visited St Mary's and, with support from The Friends of St Martin's, the new Dean, visited St Martin's last November. Mike and Ruth Wooldridge, with Richard Carter, will soon visit the cathedral to explore with them what a new partnership might involve. A small working group will be supporting these discussions, before and after the visit. We hope to develop a faithful, prayerful relationship, with both churches learning from each other, sharing their experiences and encouraging each other in their mission.

With thanks to the committee: Phyllis SantaMaria, John Subbiah, Bob Demming, Edward Bacon, Ruth Wooldridge, Ike Anya, Angela Dawson, Peter Keegan and Richard Carter.

*Susannah Woodd*

### **Liturgical Ministries and Prayer**

There are many opportunities for all ages to take part in our worship and liturgy at St Martin's as a reader, server, intercessor or chalice assistant at our Sunday morning Eucharist, as we come together in all our diversity and with all our gifts as the body of Christ, week by week. Taking up one of these roles is a way of growing in faith, deepening our life of prayer, and serving one another, and welcoming newcomers, as we grow as a community together.



Members of the community also lead **Evening Prayer** on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays in the Dick Sheppard Chapel, as we mark the ending of the day with prayer, and we welcome regulars and those passing through and offer the day and all its activities to God, praying for St Martin's and the life of the world, with the liturgy, reading, psalms and prayers of the church.

On Wednesday evenings **Bread for the World** brings together a mid-week community around the Eucharist, with music from our Choral Scholars and reflections and

liturgy led by members of the community. The evening continues with supper together and the opportunity to explore faith in reflective groups. We are now entering our third year and have welcomed many week by week, as we have seen the life of this community grow, with input from groups across the life of St Martin's, as well as those who have come to share their stories and experience with us.

*Revd Katherine Hedderly*

## **Meditation Group**

The Meditation Group meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month for an hour of contemplative meditation based on meditation papers supplied by a national Christian meditation group, The Fellowship of Meditation.

The aim of the meditation sessions is to enhance our being with God through meditation on a key sentence that contains some divine truth, eg 'Be Still and Know that I am God' sessions include three-15 minute periods of silent meditation inviting a chance for members to put aside daily worries and focus on being present with God, and enabling his spirit to empower and uplift us.

The group at St Martin's attends a yearly silent afternoon held at a church in Walthamstow which is organised by The Fellowship of Meditation. Group members at St Martin's can join the fellowship as a member which entitles them to attend other silent afternoons and weekends across the UK. However those attending the group at St Martin's do not need to become members of The Fellowship of Meditation. The group also maintains regular contact with Anne Duffin who was the leader of the St Martin's group until recently and is honorary President of the Fellowship.

A small and friendly group, members are committed to prayerfulness through silent meditation using the sentence to maintain focus. The group has seen some new members join this year but sessions are open to all at St Martin's who feel they would benefit from a period of silence with God. Sessions are usually held in the Dick Shepherd Chapel after evening prayer unless activities in St Martin's Hall force a change of room.

To those interested in meditation it would always be hoped by the author that the sessions at St Martin's are a starting point for a practicing stillness and meditation and that the full benefits of meditative practice will come through regular periods of meditation outside of the bi-weekly sessions.

Any queries can be directed to me by email on [roberts\\_dg@hotmail.com](mailto:roberts_dg@hotmail.com).

*Duncan Roberts*

## Music

It has been another busy year in the musical life of St Martin-in-the-Fields. In September we welcomed Tom Williams as Assistant Music Director (Choral) and Jeremy Cole as Assistant Music Director (Organ), alongside a new departmental administrative structure. Regular patterns of choral worship have continued, with the addition of a monthly Sunday evening Compline series.

Alongside festival services at Christmas and Easter, we also held celebrations for the 90<sup>th</sup> birthday of Her Majesty the Queen in June. Our flagship Thursday lunchtime Great Sacred Music Series has continued to flourish, frequently

attracting over three hundred attendees. We were pleased to begin choral offerings at St Stephen Walbrook through their Monday lunchtime Discover and Explore series. Concerts in our Sound of St Martin's Choral series have included Bach's *St John Passion* (Good Friday) and Mozart's *Requiem* with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, as well as the regular pattern of Christmas activity. In June we began a new venture, Voices in the Crypt, a series of afternoon concerts in the Gallery in the Crypt.



A number of high profile broadcasts have taken place over the year, including A Celebration for Ascension Day on Radio 4, with the Will Todd Ensemble, a special Sunday Worship programme A Lament for Nice, as well as continuing our monthly series of Radio 4 Daily Services. Activity outside St Martin's has included a three day tour with the Development department to New York and Washington DC (St Martin's Voices) and Malmesbury Festival (St Martin's Choir), as well as a new venture with Sam Wells and the St Martin's Charity called With St Martin's, a day of varied music and speech trialled in Newcastle Cathedral.

*Andrew Earis, Director of Music*

## Open Circle

Open Circle is a relaxed, friendly community of young people (20s, 30s and beyond!) in our congregation. We meet regularly for fun and inexpensive social events at St Martin's and around London - past events have included a brewery tour, riverside walks, a theatre trip and a pub quiz (amongst other things!). We also enjoy a weekend away together every year in January, which is a great chance to strengthen friendships and explore our relationship with God. Members of Open Circle are involved widely in the worshipping and community life of St Martin's - keep an eye out for us during coffee after the service on a Sunday morning! We would love to welcome you.

Our highlights include: continued growth in numbers, particularly in the 20s age bracket; successful annual retreat to Hilfield Friary, with the theme 'Life Together'; greater integration of Open Circle members to the wider life of the congregation, including a couple elected to PCC; members of Open Circle being confirmed at the annual confirmation service; successful programme of monthly social events, including: riverside walk, theatre trip, tour of St Stephen's Walbrook, National Gallery Tour, visit to Kenwood House and Hampstead Heath, 'Picnic and Proms' summer event.

In the year ahead we are focusing on: opportunities for continued growth in numbers and strengthening our core community, as well as a greater focus on spiritual discipleship, alongside the primarily social focus of this group.

*Andrew Bennison, Pastoral Assistant (until September 2016)*

## Partnerships



The partnership with St Stephen Walbrook was formally launched in February 2015 with my appointment as Associate Vicar for Partnership Development and Priest-in-Charge of St Stephen's. A number of access, arts, business, events, facilities, heritage, music, partnerships, services and visitor programmes were begun including Start:Stop (early morning reflections for working people) and the 'Discover & Explore' service series (a new lunchtime service featuring the Choral Scholars of St Martin-in-the-Fields). Plans for financial sustainability have been formulated and St Stephen Walbrook has also utilised facilities management support and on-call HR advice from St Martin's including temporary use of a Verger, recruitment of a Verger and staff access

to the St Martin's payroll.

In the year ahead we will launch and establish the Heart-Edge Network, an association of churches and other organisations seeking to discover together what it means to be both at the heart and on the edge. Members of the network will be those who believe God is giving the church everything it needs for the renewal of its life in the people who find themselves to be on the edge.

We will encourage and support other churches in setting up International Groups within their parishes to extend the network of hospitality groups available to those with no recourse to public funds.

At St Stephen Walbrook we will develop new forms of mission and ministry that engage with businesses in the City of London addressing aspects of work and spirituality. We will also aim to reinvigorate the ministry of the London Internet Church (which is based at St Stephen Walbrook) with new content and technology, including live streaming of services.

New members are needed particularly to contribute to the development of the Heart-Edge Network and to contribute to the London Internet Church and work and spirituality initiatives at St Stephen Walbrook.

With thanks to Chris Cowsls, Andrew Earis, Ally Hargreaves, Peter Keegan, Ali Lyon, Duncan McCall and Sam Wells for their work and support of this partnership work this year.

*Revd Jonathan Evens*

## Pastoral Group

The Pastoral Group meets every four months to plan and share with one another how we can provide pastoral support and care for those who may be unwell, isolated, elderly, infirm or in need within our congregations. The support the Pastoral Group provides is simple and practical: it aims to keep in touch with those who for whatever reason may feel cut off or in need of a conversation or a visit.

Some of the ways the ways the Pastoral Group are able to help members of our congregation include: regular phone calls; visits; help with transport getting to or from church; getting in touch when we have not heard from a regular member of our congregation for a long time; hospital visiting; praying for those who are unwell or in need; taking the reserved sacrament to those who would like to receive Holy Communion when one of the clergy is not available. This pastoral work is carried out confidentially and sensitively for anyone who would like pastoral support after discussion with the clergy team. Revd Richard Carter is the member of clergy responsible for the Pastoral Group and the initial point of contact.

The Pastoral Group is chaired by Alastair Anson. Please contact Alastair Anson or Revd Richard Carter if you would like to find out more about this group.

The Pastoral Group includes the following members: Lavinia Anson, Michael Boyle, Caroline Essex, Duncan Roberts, Roger Shaljean, Dorothy Cone, Gaby To, Stephen Green, Giles Andrews, John Subbiah, and the Pastoral Assistant.

*Revd Richard Carter and Alastair Anson*

## **Pilgrimage**

The pilgrimage organised by The Connection at St Martin's is an annual fundraising event, with a large group walking from St Martin's to Canterbury Cathedral in four days over the spring bank holiday weekend in May. There are about 100 pilgrims from all parts of the country and overseas who join this wonderful and fruitful pilgrimage journey to share friendship, faith and lives together.

There have been many congregation members who have taken part in the pilgrimage as walkers and helpers. In recent years, there have been ten Sunday International Group guests and volunteers from church joining. For most, the pilgrimage is not just a fundraising event for The Connection at St Martin's, it is also an opportunity for pilgrims to learn, share, build stronger relationships and enjoy faith and their lives with each other.

This wonderful journey is a calling that anyone can take part in every year, whether walking or assisting as a volunteer. Please do consider taking part and speak to Revd Richard Carter or myself for more information.

*Eugene Ling*

## **Social Media Team**

We have made great progress over the last year in sharing some of our key services with a global audience on Twitter and Facebook. In December 2015 we were asked to host the Church of England's Church Live initiative and broadcast both our 10am Advent Eucharist and Advent Carol services. Over 3,000 people from around the world watched the services via Twitter's Periscope. In May this year we used our St Martin's Facebook account to share our Pentecost Sunday service and had 629 people watching live, with over 2,000 replays afterwards. There is clearly an appetite for this content from around the world and both the December and May broadcasts proved that. Our hope is to broadcast more services and other events in the months ahead and eventually make this a regular feature (perhaps once every two months or once a quarter).



Thank you to the ever-patient verging team, and to Loren Mrkusic, Helen Harris, Andrew Bennison, Amanda Tan, Rachel Morrison, Emma Pritchard and Deirdre Alby for their work on making the Pentecost Sunday broadcast a success. In addition, more of our clergy are now tweeting and sharing the work of St Martin's on Twitter, including Katherine Hedderly, Jonathan Evens and Alastair McKay. Follow them for more!

Please speak to Adrian Harris or Katherine Hedderly if you would like to get involved with the social media team.

*Adrian Harris*

## Spirituality and Sustainability

The Spirituality and Sustainability (S&S) Group first met in November 2013; it grew out of the need for deep spiritual and theological discussion about both environmental and broader sustainability issues at St Martin-in-the-Fields. The group has been gathering every month to develop and deepen a Christian spirituality for sustainable action. The first half of each meeting explores different approaches to the theology of sustainability. The second half of each meeting is devoted to planning specific programmes that challenge us to think more deeply about the topic, and to deepen our commitment to sustainability.

Events over the last couple of years have included assisting with the Parish Away Weekend last year, and celebrating Earth Day at Bread for the World services. At the Parish Away Day in July, Judith and Sophie from the Sustainability Group facilitated a session focused on the environment and prayer. This explored how to pay attention to the world around us, how our concern for major environmental issues such as air quality can provide a focus for prayer and how that prayer can be supported by our actions day to day.

Over the last few years we have helped organise a period of time in the church calendar known as Creationtide, marked last year with a series of events with the theme 'Our common home'. Current activities include working with the Sustainability Group (the group tasked with reducing the carbon footprint of St Martin's and improving things such as waste management) on Ecochurch (<http://ecochurch.arochoa.org.uk/>) and a SMAP project to develop a range of initiatives to improve air quality and greening around St Martin's.

Members/contributors of Spirituality and Sustainability include Andrew Aitken, Anna Yew, Hannah Reed, John Falcone, Judith Russenberger, Heidi Russenberger, Zi Ling, Noriko Inagaki, Peter Keegan and Matias Wibowo.

We are always looking for new people and new ideas, so if you would like to get involved please talk to one of the people above, or email [stmartinssns@gmail.com](mailto:stmartinssns@gmail.com).

*Andrew Aitken*

## Stewards

The Stewards Team is made up of 90 plus members of the congregation who are split across:

- Regular Stewards – the stewards contribute on a monthly basis; Each service is led by a team leader
- Occasional Stewards – support special services throughout our church calendar; Advent, Easter, Weddings and BBC Radio 4 services.

Thanks to Helen Riley, who diligently manages our rota of 90 plus stewards.

In June 2016 we said goodbye and had a special thank you lunch for Adam Clark. Adam inspirationally led the stewards for over 11 years as Head Steward. Many will remember Adam's calm, clear thinking and very warm welcome on the portico.



At St Martin's we are blessed to have a diverse congregation of children and adults from different walks of life. Stewards are supported by experienced team leaders.

In 2017 we plan to: meet more individual needs. We start with joint work with members of the Disability Advisory Group on Sunday 11 September 2016, involve children and parents and explore new ways for the congregation to have a role.

If you want to feel more connected and contribute to the church services join us and be an active part of St Martin's vision to be **At the heart. On the edge.**

*Kristine Wellington, Head Steward*

## **Sustainability**

In 2010 the PCC was asked by the Diocese of London's Head of Environmental Challenge 'what are you doing at St Martin's on sustainability?' This was in the context of the Diocese's Environmental Challenge, which aims to cut the carbon footprint of London churches, in order to lessen the impact of churches and people on the environment and God's creation. In response, St Martin's PCC committed itself to make sustainability a priority and to steward our resources with greater care and efficiency.

We have supported other groups throughout the year including the Education Committee, Open Circle, and the Spirituality and Sustainability Group on awareness-raising events. Working with the Hospitality Committee, we have successfully switched away from paper cups to porcelain cups for Sunday post-service coffee.

Working with the Spirituality and Sustainability Group, the group has successfully applied for St Martin-the-Fields Action Plan funding to develop a range of initiatives to improve air quality and greening around St Martin's. Look out for ways in which you can get involved in the next few months including: events to understand why air pollution affects us all, young and old; finding out more about low pollution walking routes to church and developing worship that makes us more aware of the link with our surroundings.

The group is made up of Alex Hilton (chair and choir), Ryan Tyler (Estates Manager), Sophie Tyler (Congregation), Andrew Aitken (Spirituality and Sustainability Group, PCC), and Helen Freudenberg (Music and Concerts until June 2016).

Since 2011, Estates has been taking sustainability and longer term cost saving into consideration across all areas of its work. Ryan and the team are currently replacing the architectural lights in the church with LEDs, and have sourced suitable LEDs for the chandeliers which will be replaced in the coming weeks. Low energy LED lights have also been sourced for other areas of the site which will be fitted as and when they are needed.

This year the Estates team have also replaced the taps in the Crypt toilets for water efficient sensor taps and there is a plan to roll them out across the site as replacements are needed. These actions will lead to significant reductions in electricity consumption and water consumption going forward. You may have also noticed that stickers have gone on all light switches that are out of reach to the public encouraging users and staff to switch off when not needed.

The Music Department, as the largest single consumer of copier paper internally, have also been looking at ways of reducing their paper consumption, through producing better quality music copies that can be reused.

The group has also been engaging with the EcoChurch initiative. The group identified that the weighting of the questionnaire was not conducive to St Martin's achieving an EcoChurch award, and so the group have agreed to take forward learning from the questionnaire responses provided by the management groups of the church and business. Areas identified for improvement fall under the

headings 'Worship and Teaching', 'Communications' and 'Lifestyle'. Further action in these areas will be delivered in the coming year.

We are a 2-3 year time-limited group, with the PCC direction to support specific projects agreed in the St Martin's Action Plan. We want **your help** to deliver the establishment of sustainability within the DNA of the whole of St Martin's. Please speak to one of us if you would like to be involved, or email Alex Hilton at [mail@awhilton.com](mailto:mail@awhilton.com).

*Alex Hilton*

## **Sunday International Group**

The Sunday International Group was set up in September 2013, aiming to provide a place of welcome, hospitality and sanctuary for foreign nationals who are destitute in London, focusing especially on those with no recourse to public funds. It meets every Sunday and provides a hot meal,



access to showers, laundry facilities and helps with essential needs. The group is coordinated by Revd Richard Carter and the Pastoral Assistant at St Martin's and organised by weekly groups of volunteers with team leaders. Each team commits to one Sunday a month from 1.00pm-5.00pm and are members of St Martin-in-the-Fields church. We aim to create a sense of community and real interaction both between our guests and also between guests and volunteers. Guests are also encouraged to take part in the running of the group. Over the last three years we have welcomed refugees, migrants and asylum seekers from more than 30 different countries. Each week the number of guests range from 35-45. Ethnically and culturally appropriate food is provided by the Cafe in the Crypt and the volunteers. Sessions begin with team meetings and end with a time for evaluation.

Over the last year we've provided Christmas Dinner for 75 guests and volunteers, a day trip to Brighton, the pilgrimage to Canterbury in which 16 guests and volunteers took part raising over £2000 for the Connection at St Martin's and becoming engaged through Capital Mass Refugee Network in presentations about the church's response providing a practical model for help.

In the year ahead we wish to encourage and support other churches in providing similar international groups and to help provide a framework to share experiences. In addition, we aim to continue volunteer skills development by the provision of listening skills training, further development of guest participation and skills training, discussions and presentations for guests, a chess club and the potential for Baron's Court Project extension.

With thanks to the weekly team leaders and their volunteers: Robert Demming, Peter Crandle, Sophie Tyler, Dan Kaszeta, Wendy Quill, Brian Mears, Douglas Stridsberg, Michael Angus, Phyllis SantaMaria and Frances Middleton. I would also like to thank Jonathan Evens, who is responsible for partnership developments with the International Group, and Sarah Crompton, who assists the Pastoral Assistant with volunteer coordination. Philippa Smethurst and Frances Middleton provide counselling and listening skills to the weekly groups.

*Revd Richard Carter, Coordinator*