

ST. MARTIN'S MONTHLY

January 2015

50p



A light to reveal you to the nations

St Martin's Church, Hale Gardens, Acton W3 9SQ

(Registered charity no. 1132976)

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Deputy Churchwarden

Mr John Wilson (c/o Parish Office)

Director of Music

Mr Kenneth Bartram (c/o Parish Office)

Magazine Editor

Mr Clive Davis (clive.a.g.davis@btinternet.com)

The Vicar is available for consultation and enquiries by appointment.
Please ring the Parish Office.

Articles for the next month's magazine should be sent to
Clive Davis (email: clive.a.g.davis@btinternet.com)

They should reach the Editor by 12th January.

The February magazine will be on sale by 25th January.

... and a Happy New Year!

It's a bit late of course as the Church celebrated its New Year on 30th November last year, Advent Sunday ... and if we'd lived between the 12th and 18th centuries, the civil or legal year in England began on 25th March before that is we moved to the new Gregorian calendar in 1752.

In other words the New Year as far as the calendar is concerned isn't always what it seems. Nevertheless this is now 2015 and we have almost 365 days ahead of us that frankly look as uncertain as last year's.

It does seem in this respect that we have entered not only into a New Year but also into a profoundly new era. The old post Second World War certainties both political and social are now defunct as new political tensions arise and as societal norms have changed out of all recognition.

One thinks in this respect of the frequent terrible news from the Middle East including the plight of ancient Christian Churches whose history stretches back almost to the beginning of Christianity itself. I wonder how we would react if standing up for our Faith might lead to arrest, torture, refugee status and even death. Western political interference in all this has a distinctly mixed record and the voice of the Church of England and Anglican Communion has been muted at best.

We might also look into our own backyard as it were at the kind of society we live in. Dominated nowadays by electronic communication, face-to-face contact and human relationships seem attenuated. This is a society not at ease with itself and distinctly nervous about the older virtues of trust, community and neighbourliness.

However, I don't want this New Year's vicar's article to sound defensive or disgruntled or indeed to counsel despair. There is a great deal to be optimistic about not least in our church community here at St Martin's. We actually have a fellowship that is welcoming and concerned for the wider community. We have in practice become a

'gathered' church where the majority of our members now come from outside the formal parish boundaries. In fact I doubt very much if many apart from the wardens and I know where the parish boundaries are? People come to St Martin's because they like what we offer not because of where we are – we must be doing something right.

That's overall a good thing because we can concentrate on what we should be doing, being Christ's people and proclaiming his name in our own generation.

So, there's a brand new secular year ahead and a liturgical one that has already got off to a good start by celebrating Christmas, not as a festival of mammon but the birth of the Saviour of the world.

A happy New Year to you ... again!

Nicholas



Our new pew cushions



The lovely new pew cushions given in memory of the late Derek and Iris Fenton have been installed.

ST MARTIN'S PLAYERS

Present an
Aladdin-themed Winter Revue



7.30pm
Friday 30th January
in St Martin's Church Hall
Entertainment, refreshments, raffle
Come Chinese (if you dare)
Adults: £7; Concessions: £5;
Children under ten: £1
Tickets on sale in January in the church
& from the Parish Office

Farewell to Bruce and Alyson



Bruce and I want to say how very much we have enjoyed being part of St Martin's for the past 4 years. I am especially grateful for your friendship and prayers. I had a very complicated job for the Anglican Communion, involving much travel, as you know, and it was really important to me that I was grounded in the life of a local parish. Knowing that the ordinary rhythm of life was being marked Sunday by Sunday, that people were gathering around the table and singing God's praise, was something that sustained me in the many unusual circumstances that I found myself in.

We will miss being with you but when we are worshipping at another St Martin's, in Toronto, we will think of you and continue to hold you all in prayer as you grow in your life in faith and make Christ known in West Acton.

Thanks from the bottom of our hearts.

Alyson and Bruce



Bruce and Alyson cutting the cake after their last service with us before returning to Canada.



The Wednesday morning Coffee Club saying farewell to Bruce.

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East Aisle Roof Repairs



Thanks to a generous anonymous donation we have been able to repair our east aisle lower church roof. Here the roofers Dion and his son Dan are hard at work.



Christingle from last month.....



Christingle candles giving light.

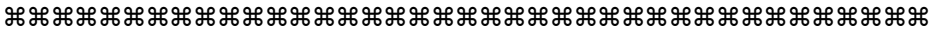


The Christingles under construction.

New translation of the Bible – for Iran

A new translation of the Bible into modern Persian was recently launched in Istanbul. The publishers are Elam Ministries and Wycliffe Bible Translators. Elam was founded in 1990 by senior Iranian church leaders. At the time of the Islamic revolution in 1979, there were only 500 Christians from a Muslim background in the country. Now Iran is thought to have one of the fastest growing churches in the world; a conservative estimate puts the number of Christians in Iran at 100,000. The generally accepted estimate is 370,000. Elam aims to print and distribute at least 300,000 copies over the next three years.

The Editor of the new translation Rev Dr Mehrdad Fatehi said: *"This project is like raising a child. It has been 18 years of hard work but worth it for such an exciting day."*



Christian death toll in Pakistan reaches record high

An average of two to three Christian girls are being kidnapped daily, raped and forced into Islamic marriages in Pakistan, where more Christians died for their faith last year than any other year in recent memory. In response, South Asian Christians in the UK recently called a special meeting to pray for the Christians in Pakistan. Wilson Chowdhry, of the British Pakistan Christian Association, said Christians in Pakistan face oppression daily. "We all have friends and family in South Asia who are living in fear of persecution. Not only are young Christian girls being kidnapped and forced into marriage but we are getting reports that Hindu girls are also being kidnapped and forced to convert to Islam. Some Imams are reportedly preaching from the pulpits that forced marriage is legitimised by the Qu'ran," said Chowdhry whose wife, Juliette, lost 13 members of her family in the twin bombing in Peshwar last year. "Children have to travel to school and church on buses with armed security escorts while police and army are guarding churches."

Sheem Gill of the Scottish Asian Christian Fellowship said: "The disturbing reality is that persecution of Christians in the Islamic world has become endemic."

The newly refurbished Parish Room



Situated at the rear of the church hall and next to the new parish Office our newly opened Parish Room is proving to be a great asset.

XX



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Support and dignity

Memories of our Christmas Bazaar



Helpers getting the Hall ready on the Saturday evening before the Bazaar. Below shows St Martin's Christmas Bazaar in action.





Michael Franks repairs the Tombola Machine after the Christmas Bazaar.

Thank you to everyone who worked hard to make the Bazaar such a success. St Martin's Bazaar has so far made a profit of over £2,100. Please return any Raffle Ticket money to the Parish Office as soon as possible.



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Christmas at Acton Care Centre



The Acton Care Centre Carol Service took place on Wednesday 17th December. Here's the vicar (who is chaplain there) with the General Manager, Mrs Mary McLaren, taken after the service.



The Vicar sets about painting the passageways to the vestries which he has been intending to do for the last twenty years.



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From Alec Griffiths.....

Last Christmas, due to circumstances mostly beyond my control, I was not able to send you an update on my life and times. You are not going to be as lucky this year. A year ago I was managing (just) to exist with carers coming in three times a day, a cleaner two hours twice a week and the good offices of friends and taxi drivers. In January there was a slight deterioration in my mobility leading, via a visit to A & E, to three weeks in a nursing home with physio and occupational therapists coming in to see me. This was to continue after I returned home. However after I had been home for 10 days after a mishap I had to call the "alert" service, and the carers who came in later wanted me to be checked over. So I had another trip to A & E which resulted in a 7 week stay in hospital. I was able during that time to realistically assess my situation and discuss it with friends and family as well as the social service team and the NHS specialist nurses for my various "conditions". The upshot of it all was that it would be ill-advised for me, even with increased support, to live alone. I, therefore, moved into my new residence in mid-April, and have settled in very happily. I still get out for meals with friends, and to church and to Rotary. The emphasis of the establishment is on it being our home. I have a large en suite room, which accommodates my bed, desk, wardrobe, dressing-table, bookcase, recliner chair and my TV, laptop and printer.

Amidst all the excitement of moving and starting over anew there has been a sadness. Alan, the middle one of our three children died in mid-July. He had suffered for the last ten years from several chronic conditions, Crones Disease, emphysema, liver failure. He didn't always look after himself, not following his dietary regime, or keeping his medical appointments. Not being able to work consistently, he undertook community activities in his neighbourhood, which earned him some satisfaction and appreciation.

I had hoped to keep the flat for visitors to use, but this proved to be impractical in respect to insurance and "servicing" it between visitor's stays. I have therefore sold it, but I still value visits (telephone calls and e-mails as well) and there are plenty of places of all sorts which offer accommodation in the area. I look forward to learning of all your news and activities in one way or another.

Alec Griffiths
Christmas 2014

100 Ways to get your church noticed!

In today's society, we can rarely do anything without something screaming for our attention. In a typical day, we will be exposed to more than 3,000 adverts – from the obvious ones in newspapers and on websites to more subtle commercial logos on supermarket plastic bags or the side of beer glasses. Not surprisingly, many churches struggle to make their voices heard above the cacophony. Some still rely on methods they used 40 years ago to try to communicate their messages – the hand-drawn poster stuck to the church noticeboard, the photocopied parish magazine, or the verbal notice during the service. Because there is so much more information for everyone to absorb these days, even regular churchgoers may miss the casual reference to an event or an opportunity.

The majority of people in the UK could be classed as 'browsers' – not those who devour books, but those who might flick through magazines or websites, stopping only to read when an eye-catching headline or photo catches their attention. Broadly speaking, congregations and church leaders will tend to be among the 'readers' within the population. The type of communication they use tends to be text-based, rather than visual. Yet for the vast majority of people, this often isn't attractive. We live in a highly visual age, with umpteen digital TV channels to choose from, millions of snazzy, image-based web pages to look at, and well-designed glossy magazines in every newsagent. Give a 'browser' a typical piece of church literature, and it's unlikely to grab their attention for long.

So how can we make sure our churches, activities, events and people get noticed in this busy, secular, visual world? The book *100 Ways To Get Your Church Noticed* by Neil Pugmire incorporate ideas you might understand as 'publicity' in the normal sense – websites, posters, parish magazines, media liaison, social media – and other ideas that have more to do with involvement with the local community or the look and feel of our church building. These also have a valuable role to play in our church's communications strategy.

The Parish of St Martin Hale Gardens, Acton W3 9SQ

(Registered charity no. 1132976)

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Email: stmartins@stmartinswestacton.com

Skype: smartins.westacton

Usual Sunday Services

8am: Holy Communion

10am: Parish Communion

6.30pm: Evensong

Our Junior Church meets in the Church Hall at 10am except when there is a Family Service.

The next non-Eucharistic Family Service will be on Sunday 1st February.

Japanese Anglican Church UK

meets every third Sunday of the month:

(except July, August and December)

3pm Bible Study and Evening Worship in Japanese

Every **Wednesday** at 25 Birch Grove, W3

11am: Informal Eucharist

Followed by the Coffee Club