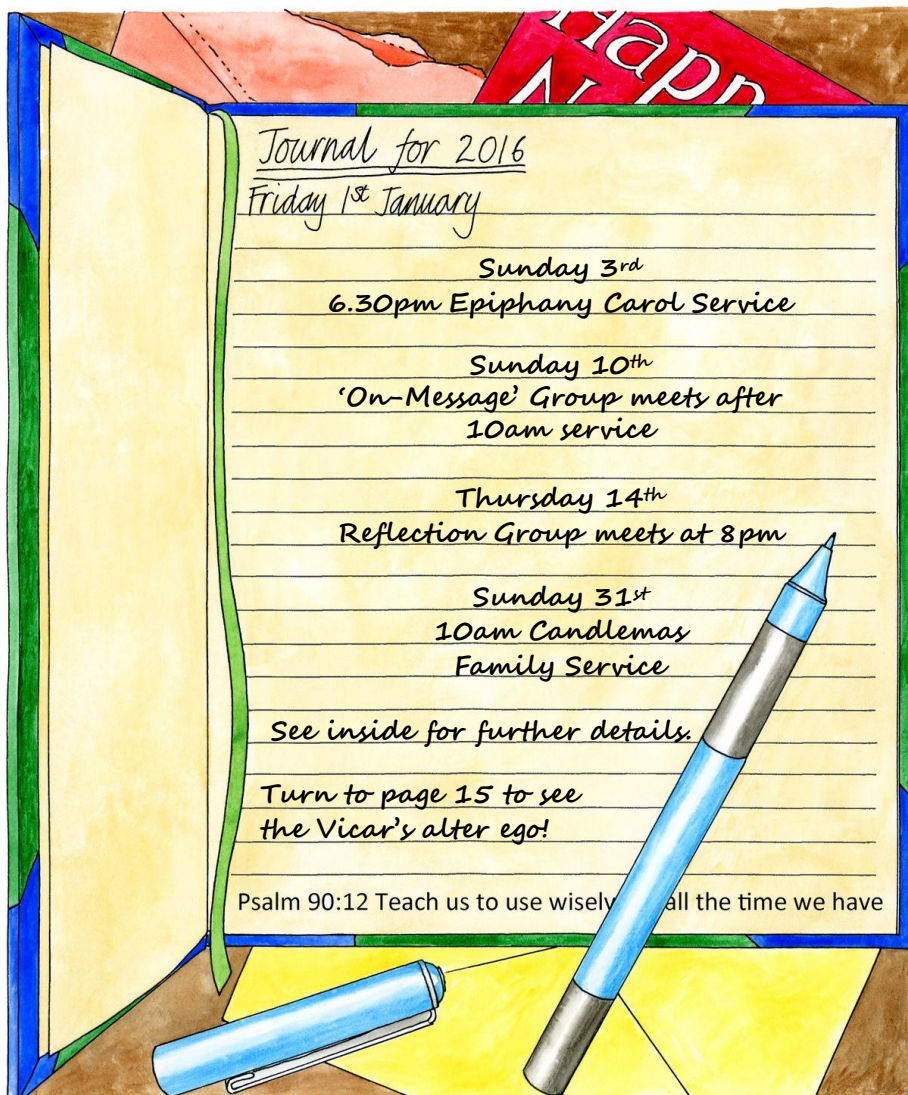


# ST. MARTIN'S MONTHLY

January 2016

50p



Journal for 2016

Friday 1<sup>st</sup> January

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup>

6.30pm Epiphany Carol Service

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup>

'On-Message' Group meets after  
10am service

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup>

Reflection Group meets at 8pm

Sunday 31<sup>st</sup>

10am Candlemas  
Family Service

See inside for further details.

Turn to page 15 to see  
the Vicar's alter ego!

Psalm 90:12 Teach us to use wisely all the time we have

# **St Martin's Church, Hale Gardens, London W3 9SQ**

(Registered charity no. 1132976)

[www.stmartinswestacton.co.uk](http://www.stmartinswestacton.co.uk)

Email: [stmartins@stmartinswestacton.com](mailto:stmartins@stmartinswestacton.com)

<b>The Vicar</b>	The Rev'd Dr Nicholas Henderson (also Chaplain to Acton Care Centre) 020 8992 2333
<b>SSM Assistant Priest</b>	The Rev'd Brandy Pearson (c/o Parish Office)
<b>Permission to Officiate</b>	The Rev'd Robert Pearson
<b>Commissioned Lay Minister to Japanese Anglican Church UK</b>	Mrs Yuki Johnson (07572 324107) <a href="mailto:yukifunakawa@btinternet.com">yukifunakawa@btinternet.com</a>
<b>Parish Administrator (weekdays: 9.30am – 1.30pm)</b>	Parish Office, rear of Church Hall, Hale Gardens, W3 9SQ 020 8992 2333
<b>Reader</b>	Dr Margaret Jones (020 8997 1418)
<b>Reader Emeritus</b>	Mrs Lynne Armstrong (020 8992 8341)
<b>Commissioned Lay Minister</b>	Mrs Jacqueline Nicholls (c/o Parish Office)
<b>Churchwardens</b>	Mrs Liza Ambridge (020 8992 3029) Mr Jeremy Thorpe-Woods
<b>Deputy Churchwarden</b>	Mr John Wilson (c/o Parish Office)
<b>Director of Music</b>	Mr Kenneth Bartram (c/o Parish Office)
<b>Magazine Editor</b>	Clive Davis ( <a href="mailto:clive.a.g.davis@btinternet.com">clive.a.g.davis@btinternet.com</a> )

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](mailto:clive.a.g.davis@btinternet.com))

**They should reach the Editor by 17<sup>th</sup> January.**

The February magazine will be on sale by 30<sup>th</sup> January

## Why can't we have New Year in August?

Forgive me if that sounds like a re-run of my Christmas lecture, which asked 'Why we can't have Christmas in July?' \*



New Year's Eve in London

Well, just like Christmas, New Year wasn't always a fixed date celebrated on the 31<sup>st</sup> December, and by the way the liturgical New Year has already started from Advent Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2015.

It's complicated but until the arrival of the reformed Gregorian calendar (named after Pope Gregory VIII who commissioned it) most nations of Christendom (Christian Europe) used Lady Day – the Feast of the Annunciation on 25<sup>th</sup> March as the beginning of the year. In England, until the adoption of the Gregorian calendar in 1752, well after the rest of Europe (essentially because England as Protestant country didn't want to follow a papal practice) this remained the case and we followed the old 'Julian' (named after Julius Caesar) calendar. In fact when we did change there were riots in the streets as it was necessary to lose eleven days and people thought their lives would be shortened accordingly!

There is much more that could be said about these dating anomalies but I think I have made the point that the New Year is simply a chosen date to suit a calendar and could in fact be marked on any day.

If this is the case you might wonder what all the fuss is about? I think it is because as human beings we all feel that we need new starts and fresh opportunities and New Year is as good as any. This becomes a theological point in the sense that the Christian Faith also recognises that new starts are essential. We express this concept in two ways in the idea of repentance and forgiveness and also in the idea of death and resurrection. Both give hope even in the most adverse of circumstances.

This New Year we will once again embark on a liturgical journey through the yearly calendar that will take us on a journey of hope

through to the great events of Easter and beyond. It is a wonderful thought that God can forgive, can heal and provide new starts. Given the current state of the world this is Gospel, which is what the word really means 'good news'.

We haven't got a clue how 2016 will unfold apart from thinking that it doesn't seem very promising. Nevertheless, our Faith and even the Church as the very inadequate servant of Christ's message can help us forward. It doesn't matter therefore what the calendar is showing, Jesus' message of love and hope is always there for us.

I can't wait until August, so may I wish you all a Happy New Year now!

Nicholas

*\* Answer – there were political and practical reasons for making it 25<sup>th</sup> December but the biblical accounts don't actually reveal any particular time of year for Jesus' birth.*



## **For your Diary this month**

**Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> January**

**6.30pm: Epiphany Carol Service**

**Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January**

**11.15am: 'On message' Group meets in the church.**

**Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> January**

**Reflection Group meeting at 8pm**

**Details on page 17**

**Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> January**

**10am: Candlemas Family Service**

## ON MESSAGE.



The first meeting of the reconstituted On Message Group gathered on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December and wasted no time in fulfilling its brief of dealing with the difficult questions that confront us as we attempt to live out our faith.

There were three questions relating to the threat of terrorism and our response to the crisis in Syria. When faced with reckless hatred can we simply fall back on the scriptural injunction to love our enemy? There was passion in the discussion and strongly expressed views, but also a depth of knowledge and a genuine seeking for understanding. When looking at issues that have such deep historical and political roots and yet are so immediate it would be naïve to expect anything approaching 'right answers', and we all recognized the danger of being overwhelmed by our emotional reactions to the brutality of Daesh (from Arabic words that mean 'one who crushes underfoot', and one who sows discord').

Love and wisdom were words that cropped up towards the end of our discussion and I was reminded of Matthew 10:16 where Jesus says to the disciples - 'See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.' Perhaps that could be the guiding principle of "On Message."

*Rob Pearson*



*This is the year of the American presidential election. With that in mind:*

"Don't worry about your son, he is set to become a great politician," the teacher said.

The parents were delighted and asked how she could tell. "Well, he can say more things that sound well and mean nothing at all than anyone else in the class."



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**As part of our community scheme, please mention St Martin's church and we will donate £100 for every fee generating instruction for sales or lettings.**

(Terms apply – please speak to our office).

## Recent Baptism

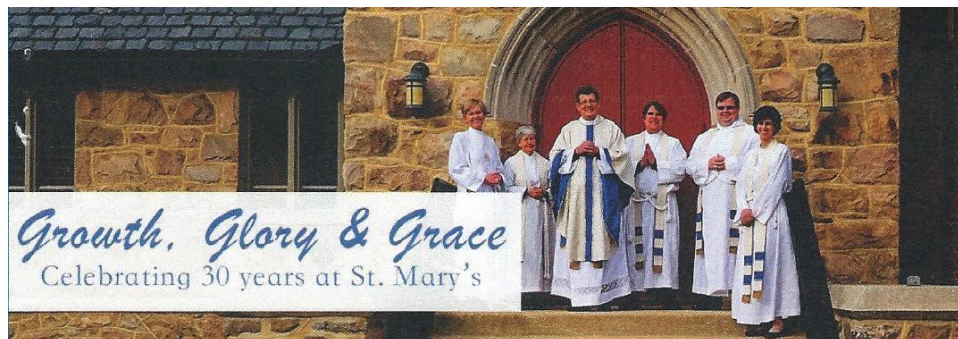


Amélia Freda Rozier David was christened at the Parish Communion on Sunday 6th December. Pictured left to right: her godparents Ellis and Eshetu, her parents Joseph and Hayley, and godparents Lorna and Melissa.



Our Clergy, Nicholas and Brandy, spreading Christmas cheer at the Acton Care Centre earlier in December.

## Congratulations to Andrew Merrow



Congratulations to Andrew Merrow, Rector of St Mary's Episcopal Church, Arlington, Virginia, USA (our link parish) who celebrates 30 years of his incumbency.

St Martin's have signed a card for him and it will be sent to Arlington to be read out at the celebrations.

St Mary's website can be found at: <http://stmarysarlington.org>

Nicholas



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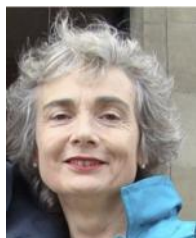
Please call Christopher Wickenden on

**020 8993 8040**



## St Martin's Foundation Lectures

Lectures take place at 8pm on Thursdays in the Parish Room  
(entrance via Parish Office, to rear of Church Hall)



### Matthew, Mark, Luke and John Spirituality in the four Gospels. 18<sup>th</sup> February 2016

The Rev'd Georgiana Heskins has a BD and Mth in Biblical Studies from King's College, London and trained for ministry at Westcott House in Cambridge. She is an Honorary Minor Canon of Southwark Cathedral, currently ministering in the parish of St John the Evangelist, Waterloo. She has worked on the Ignation Spiritual Direction Course based at the London Spiritual Centre and is currently completing a Post Graduate Diploma.

**[www.stmartinswestacton.co.uk](http://www.stmartinswestacton.co.uk)**



### Photos from the Bazaar



Father Christmas aka the Rev'd Rob Pearson.

The vicar with Amaya Mason  
aka a Bengali tiger.



## Rehearsals in progress ...



Caught on camera and planning their next show which will be on **Friday 12th February** at 7.30pm in the Church Hall – A Revue and Pantomime evening with refreshments and music!

Ken Bartram – ghost of Christmas past?



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## Farewell to Maureen as she moves to Essex



Maureen Fenton's farewell cake and speeches from Sunday 6th December.

Maureen is moving away to Essex and her longstanding association with St Martin's sadly draws to a close.



## Our Clergy with the new Area Dean



The Vicar and Brandy Pearson at the clergy Christmas lunch in December. Pictured with them is the new Area Dean of Ealing, the Rev'd Steve Newbold who is vicar of Stephen's, Ealing.

## In Preparation for Christmas...



Thanks to the team who worked so hard preparing the Christingle Oranges for Advent Sunday.

The Christingle Oranges on display before the service.



The "Christingle Banned" who performed at the annual Christingle Service on Advent Sunday 29th November.

Nicholas

## The Tree being dressed....



Kenneth Chan demonstrates part one of getting the Christmas tree to stay up!

The Christmas team in action:  
Left to right John Beastall,  
Zuzanna Chan, Kenneth Chan,  
Alexander Chan, Lyndon Plant and  
John Clark



The finishing touches applied before the tree is admired by Angela North and the Vicar.



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Nicholas meets his 'Lego' counterpart.

Or perhaps this is how the Vicar would look if he appeared in 'The Simpsons'.



## **Are you taking a mid-winter break?**

Are you preparing to take off for foreign climes, or have you just returned? In hotels, train stations and airports all over the world there are polite little signs that will bring a smile to an exhausted traveller. For instance, how about these\*:

Switzerland: We have nice bath and are very good in bed.

Romania: The lift is being fixed for the next day. During that time we regret you will be unbearable.

Russia: If this is your first visit to the USSR, you are welcome to it.

Italy: If service is required, give two strokes to the maid and three to the waiter.

Spain: Our wine list leaves you with nothing to hope for.

Denmark: In the event of fire, open a window and announce your presence in a seemly manner.

Canary Islands: If you telephone for room service you will get the answer you deserve.

*\*With thanks to 'Lost in Translation: Misadventures in English Abroad' by Charlie Croker (Michael O'Mara Books, £9.99)*

Have you spotted any signs that mistranslate English? If so, please email the editor (perhaps with a photo) for future inclusion.

## St. Martin's Reflection Group

We are starting a group to reflect on, and discuss, aspects of our faith and how we live it out. The first meeting is at 8 p.m. on **Thursday 14 January** at Bryony Franklin's house: 4 King Edwards Gardens, W3 9RG. The topic will be Discipleship. All are most welcome. If you can join us and have not yet said you are coming, please tell me, so that we know the numbers.

*John Beastall*

jsbeastall@hotmail.com

020 8998 6315



## Looking ahead next month

Tuesday 9th February.

'Drop in' Shrove Tuesday Pancake Party  
in the Vicarage 6pm - 8pm

Wednesday 10th February

Ash Wednesday: 8pm service

The 2016 Lent Course will be a series of sermons at the 10am service on 'Answering difficult questions'.

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February

7.30pm: Church Players' Revue Evening

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> February

11.15am: 'On message' Group meets in the church.

## **Next time someone tells you that Jesus did not exist...**

Recent research in England revealed that 40% of people do not realise Jesus was a real person. Among 18-34 year olds, 25% think Jesus was a mythical or fictional character. They probably have no doubts about other famous people from the past. Of course, it matters more when the authenticity of Jesus is questioned. If Jesus was as 'real' as the Christian creeds imply, then the whole purpose and destiny of humanity are changed.

How do we know that Jesus actually existed? We need to look for corroborative evidence. In any other historical investigation we would examine all literary sources. However, as sceptics often discount biblical material because they suspect the writers distorted the facts, we look outside the New Testament to non-Christian authors for clues.

First, to Roman historians. Tacitus (56-117AD) wrote "Christus was put to death by Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea in the reign of Tiberius". Suetonius (69-130AD) wrote of "Chrestus" and of his followers having been persecuted by Nero. In 112AD a Roman Magistrate, Pliny the Younger, sought advice from the Emperor Trajan, having failed to force Christians to renounce Christ whom they "worshipped as a god", when worship was due exclusively to the emperor. The Jewish historian Josephus (37-100AD) referred to James as, "the brother of Jesus the so-called Christ." None of these authors questioned Christ's existence.

Even-handed enquirers would also want to know what the New Testament has to say. Over 5,000 separate manuscripts are now available. One complete New Testament in the British Library is over 1600 years old. A substantial collection of New Testament documents is dated mid-3rd Century and is split between Dublin, Michigan and other locations. Much of the Gospel of John is in a document dated 200 AD or earlier. Modern translations of the Bible result from studying all these manuscripts. Let historian Michael Grant have the last word, "...if we apply to the New Testament, as we should, the same sort of criteria as we should apply to other ancient writings containing historical material, we can no more reject Jesus' existence than we can reject the existence of a mass of pagan personages whose reality as historical figures is never questioned..."

*Ven John Barton*

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## Don't work yourself to death this year

The saying goes that hard work never killed anyone. However, it just might, after all. A recent study suggests that constantly staying late at the office, sitting for hours and hours on end, could have a deadly impact on your health. It is thought that the stress of long hours can trigger biological changes in the body which, over time, can lead to deadly disease. Here's how the threat seems to increase:

35 – 40 hours a week: no greater risk of stroke.

41 – 48 hours a week: 10% increased risk.

49 – 54 hours a week: 27% increased risk.

55+ hours a week: 33% increased risk of stroke and 13% increased risk heart disease.

The study was published in The Lancet journal.

⌘ ⌘

### CHURCH FLOWER ROTA

23<sup>rd</sup> December – 4<sup>th</sup> January      Camilla Reid and Liz

8<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> January                      Susie Thorpe-Woods

22<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> February                      Bryony Franklin

Please call the next person on the list to remind them it is their turn once your fortnight is over. Don't forget to water your flowers every 3-4 days.

Many thanks.

*Camilla*

⌘ ⌘

### JUNIOR CHURCH ROTA & SERVICES

3 <sup>rd</sup> January	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Christmas	Zuzana
10 <sup>th</sup> January	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of Epiphany	Bryony and Jim
17 <sup>th</sup> January	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Epiphany	Rachel and Emma
24 <sup>th</sup> January	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Epiphany	Michela and Nadine
31 <sup>st</sup> January	Candlemas – All Age Service	

*Bryony*

St Martin's, West Acton, London



## **The Parish of St Martin Hale Gardens, London W3 9SQ**

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### **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 Family Service will be on January 31<sup>st</sup>.

The 'On-Message' Group meets every second Sunday of the month.

Over coffee the group discusses various issues for Christians.

The next meeting will be January 10<sup>th</sup> at 11.15am

Our Youth Group meets every Tuesday at 7pm  
in the Parish Room (rear of Church Hall)

### **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 at 11.30am

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