

ST. MARTIN'S MONTHLY

December 2019

50p



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

(Registered charity no. 1132976)

www.stmartinswestacton.co.uk

Email: stmartins@stmartinswestacton.com

The Vicar	The Rev'd Julia Palmer 020 8992 2333
SSM Assistant Priest	The Rev'd Brandy Pearson (c/o Parish Office)
Permission to Officiate	The Rev'd Robert Pearson
Assistant Curate	The Rev'd Bryony Franklin (Fri & Sun)
Commissioned Lay Minister to Japanese Anglican Church UK	Mrs Yuki Johnson (07572 324107) yukifunakawa@btinternet.com
Parish Administrator (weekdays: 9.30am – 1.30pm)	Parish Office, rear of Church Hall, Hale Gardens, W3 9SQ 020 8992 2333
Reader	Dr Margaret Jones (020 8997 1418)
Reader Emeritus	Mrs Lynne Armstrong (020 8992 8341)
Churchwardens	Mrs Liza Ambridge (020 8992 3029) Mr John Wilson
Director of Music	Mr Kenneth Bartram (c/o Parish Office)
Magazine Editor	Lizzy Edgington

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
The Parish Office (email: stmartins@stmartinswestacton.com)
Please title the email "magazine item"

They should reach the Editor by 15th December.

The January magazine will be on sale by 22nd December.

Happy Christmas to you all

It's great to be here with you all on my first Christmas at St Martin's. Although it is always a busy time of year, I like the season of Advent and Christmas because it is a time when communities and families come together and for a while the world seems to change. It's a special time, and at its heart is a gift of love from God to the world. Peoples' hearts and minds are generous in spirit and there seems to be more joy, love and peace in the world. Not only do I like the focus on the meaning of Christmas – that Christ came into the world as one of us 'Emmanuel' so that we could share in the love of God. But I also like the carol singing, the social gatherings, the bright array of Christmas lights and decorations and the excitement of the children opening their presents and the stories of Christmas etc etc. It seems that at Christmas time the world has a change of heart.

This change of heart is very much expressed in the story of the Scrooge in Charles Dickens' Christmas Carol'. You probably know the story – the old miser hates Christmas, loathes people, runs a bank, exploits his colleague (Bob Cratchit) and clients, including his own nephew (Fred). He shouts 'Bah Humbug' to anyone wishing him a merry Christmas. But on one Christmas Eve he is visited by the doomed ghost of his former partner, Jacob Marley, who tells him that three spirits would visit him that night. The spirit of Christmas Past, recalling his miserable youth when he lost his only love to his greed, the spirit of Christmas Present showing him the poor situation of Bob's family but how joyful life could be and the spirit of Christmas Yet To Come showing him how he could die unloved and be buried in an unmarked grave which nobody visits. He realizes he doesn't want this and promises to change and 'whoosh' wakes up tucked up in bed a changed man. He becomes generous, loving and caring much to everyone's surprise.

This story reminds us that we all have choice and we could enter into this Christmas with that spirit of love, joy and generosity and consciously share it with others and make this a Christmas we will always remember, being grateful to God for his gift. It is also important to remember that joy, love and generosity are not just for Christmas - it is about spreading some of this throughout the year. It is about being mindful of those who don't have family, who won't have anywhere to go at Christmas and doing something about it. In the church we are supporting the Children's Society and donations at our Christingle service will be going to their good work.

So, do join us this Christmas we have a variety of services, and I look forward to celebrating Christmas with you and nurturing the true spirit of Christmas – the joy of God with us, in the moving story of the nativity.

With every blessing and wishing you a reflective advent and a joyful, loving and generous Christmas.

Rev. Julia Palmer

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SUNDAY 1ST DECEMBER
10AM
CHRISTINGLE SERVICE



FOLLOWED BY
THE CHRISTMAS BAZAAR



News from the Women's Refuge

The residents and staff at the local women's refuge have asked me to thank the congregation of St Martin's for all the support which we give them.

They were delighted with our harvest festival gifts of food, but have also been very pleased with the various donations of children's clothes, toys and equipment which they have received throughout the year.

The refuge is always full; it has accommodation for 12 women and their children who are fleeing from domestic violence. The residents usually stay for about 6 months whilst they have the opportunity to resort their lives.

A new social worker has now been appointed to work specifically with the children. She has particularly asked for replacement toys, games, craft materials and books for the playroom. I know that our Sunday School children will be looking for Christmas presents for the individual children. Ideas include dolls, toy cars, colouring books, as well as construction toys, such as Lego.

The children would also be grateful for warm winter clothes, such as coats, scarves and gloves as well as socks and winter vests; of course, these need not be new, but in reasonable condition.

Please contact me if you need more information or have any queries.

Margaret Jones

020 8997 1418 / margaretrosaleenjones@googlemail.com

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3. FROM BRANDY'S COMMONPLACE BOOK



This is a Christmastime quotation, which I found in an Advent booklet. Kathleen O. Chesto is a retired American mission and retreat leader, video producer and author. Until MS limited her activities, she led workshops throughout the English speaking world. She is a wife, mother and grandmother, who continues to write and to babysit for her grandchildren.

CHRISTMAS DAY - SURPRISE!

There is a children's song that begins:

"Surprise! Surprise! God is a surprise!"

Often when I read the deep insights offered by mystics and theologians about incarnation and divine presence, I think of that song and smile.

The eleventh century Islamic mystic, Kwaja Abdullah Ansari, wrote:

"My God, I left behind the whole world to search for you, but you were the whole world, and I could not see it."

- Surprise!

The great Jesuit theologian, Teilhard de Chardin, thought:

"It is not only close to us, in front of us, that the divine presence is revealed. It has sprung up universally..."

- Surprise!

We think of God as mighty,
revealed in a column of fire, in a cloud,
or even in a burning bush.

But a God who would choose to come as a helpless infant, that kind of divinity is incomprehensible to us.

- Surprise!

by Kathleen O Chesto in a Journey of Deep Love

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Young People of St Martins

The following events are coming up for our young people...

- **IGNITE** - A Night of Worship and Prayer to celebrate Advent, Twyford school, **Tuesday 26 November 2019**, at 7pm in the Performance Centre. The vision behind IGNITE is to create a space to encounter the presence of God in a fresh way. There will be an external speaker and the school's Student Band will be leading us in worship, with a selection of popular Christian Contemporary songs. We will also have a collection of students, staff and local youth workers, doing readings and leading prayer points linked to young people and the power and arrival of Jesus Christ. Let Bryony know if you would like to join a group from St Martins to attend.
- We invite our young people to help decorate the **Christmas tree** after church on **Sunday 15th December**, and then join the junior church Christmas party. Please let Bryony know if you can help!
- Can you **play an instrument, or sing?** Would you be interested in playing or singing at our all age services? Please let Rev'd Julia know if so.

And more things coming up after Christmas:

- Would you like to attend **LIFT**? This takes place once a term at St. Alban's Church, Turnham Green. There's amazing music, new friends to make, free hot dogs, indoor football cage, fun inflatable obstacle course, inspiring testimonies and opportunity to respond to the gospel, all in a safe, epic venue! The next one is **Friday 24th January, 7- 9pm**. See <http://www.christchurchw4.com/lift> . Please let Bryony or Paige know if you would like to join us.
- Boardgames in the vicarage! Date to be arranged after Christmas.
- Would you like to do something to help the homeless of Ealing? There will be an opportunity to help set up the Ealing Night Shelter on Saturdays (daytime) during February and March at St Matthew's Church on Ealing Common. More information to follow.
- Interested in making the church garden into an area that you can enjoy? We will be arranging an afternoon of gardening, followed by pizza, one weekend afternoon in the Spring. Date to follow. Speak to Bryony or Paige if you are interested!



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DATES FOR THE DIARY:

Sun 8th December – 6pm

Bishop Sarah will be guest preacher at St. Barnabas Church on Pitshanger Lane. She will be preaching about the role of local churches serving the broader community for the common good. There will be an Advent Procession and Carol, all local churches are invited to attend.

Nb there will be no evening service at St. Martin's on this date.

15th December 10am.

Eucharist with Nativity

22nd December 6.30pm

Nine lessons and carols

24th December

4pm - Children's carol service;

11pm – Midnight Mass

ALTERNATIVE-ETHICAL CHRISTMAS

GIFT BUYING GUIDE



Christmas Poems

'Twas the Night Before Christmas

by Clement C. Moore

...And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.

He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot.
A bundle of Toys he had flung on his back,
And he looked like a peddler, just opening his pack.

His eyes-how they twinkled! his dimples how merry!
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard of his chin was as white as the snow...

"O Holy Night" by John Sullivan Dwight (based on the French text from Placide Cappeau's Cantique de Noel)

O holy night! The stars are brightly shining,
It is the night of our dear Saviour's birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
'Til He appear'd and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.

Fall on your knees! O hear the angel voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born;
O night divine, O night, O night Divine...

"How the Grinch Stole Christmas"

by Dr. Suess

...So he paused. And the Grinch put his hand to his ear.

And he did hear a sound rising over the snow.

It started in low. Then it started to grow.

But the sound wasn't sad! Why, this sound sounded merry!

It couldn't be so! But it WAS merry! VERY!

He stared down at Whoville! The Grinch popped his eyes!

Then he shook! What he saw was a shocking surprise!

Every Who down in Whoville, the tall and the small,

Was singing! Without any presents at all!

He HADN'T stopped Christmas from coming! IT CAME!

Somehow or other, it came just the same!

And the Grinch, with his grinch-feet ice-cold in the snow,

Stood puzzling and puzzling: "How could it be so?"

"It came without ribbons! It came without tags!"

"It came without packages, boxes or bags!"

And he puzzled three hours, till his puzzler was sore.

Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before!

"Maybe Christmas," he thought, "doesn't come from a store."

"Maybe Christmas...perhaps...means a little bit more!"...

St Martin's, West Acton, London



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

(Registered charity no. 1132976)



www.stmartinswestacton.co.uk
email: stmartins@stmartinswestacton.com

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 an All-Age or Parade Service.

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** in the Parish Room

11am: Informal Eucharist followed by the Coffee Club at 11.30am