

ST. MARTIN'S MONTHLY

Aug/Sep 2021



AMWSS

Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them

Matthew 7:16-20

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

(Registered charity no. 1132976)

www.stmartinswestacton.co.uk

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

Articles for **next month's** magazine should be sent to
The Parish Office (email: stmartins@stmartinswestacton.com)
Please title your email 'October Magazine' in the subject heading

They should reach the Editor by 18th September.

The October magazine will be on sale by 28th September.

UPCOMING SERVICES AND EVENTS

Sat 4 Sept: 10-12am - Japanese Community Café
– live music, refreshments and table sales: 'eco' goods, sweets, sushi, home-baked goods, steamed buns; shoulder-massage; jewellery; second-hand books.

Sun 5 Sept: 8am - Holy Communion (BCP)
10am – All Age Service – New beginnings

Wed 8 Sept: Online Bible Study in Japanese

Sun 12 Sept: 8am - Holy Communion (BCP)
10am – Holy Communion.

Sun 19 Sept: Celebration Sunday (celebrating the reduction of 'lockdown' restrictions)
10am – Holy Communion, guest preacher is Catherine, Archdeacon of Willesden
Lunch after the service in Church Hall

Sun 19 Sept: 3pm Worship in Japanese (in Church)

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Letter from the Vicar

“Dear all,

As we come to September and the new term, I am filled with a sense of ‘cautious hope’ as lockdown restrictions have lifted. Hopefully, with more and more people being vaccinated, we can break the chain of the infectious nature of the pandemic and get back to being ‘normal’.

Also, this September, I will have been at St Martins for two years, and what an unusual two years it has been! The first six months was about ‘trying to get to know the church’, the people and community, and trying to discern a way forward. Then we had lockdown, so the following 18 months were about ‘being church’ in a completely different way, using social media platforms to keep people together, and keeping the flame of faith alive.

It feels like we have been on a journey together, even though many of us haven’t actually travelled anywhere. But we have got through and there are things happening now that brings this sense of cautious hope. We have two new choirs – an adult and a junior choir, which will enhance our worship - led by Becky Stockland, our new Choir Director. We have a new young peoples’ apprentice, PJ Grayson, who will start to work with our junior church and develop the work with our young people from September. We also have a new parent-and-toddler group called ‘Stay and Play’, which is based in the Church on a Tuesday morning from 10-11am, led by Gemma Wheeler.

It will take a while for us all to be ‘fully functioning’, but hopefully by Christmas we will have regained our

confidence to meet with others in real life and our activities and church ministries will be moving forward. But our 'normal' will probably be a different normal. The pandemic has left a legacy of looking out for others, of being creative in doing church, and using technology to enhance what we do.

During lockdown, I also rediscovered the benefits of walking outdoors and how refreshing this can be, how the outdoors can be 'balm for an anxious soul' and a source of peace. I came across the following poem which sums this up, it is by Wendell Berry and is called 'The Peace of the Wild Things':

*When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's lives might be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water,
and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought of grief.
I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light.
For a time I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.*

So, let's enjoy this next phase of our journey together, rediscovering what it means to 'be church' at St Martins and looking outward to spread the peace and love of Christ, not forgetting the wild things! Amen."

Rev Julia Palmer

August 2021



'Pray for Peace'

Remembering the 76th Anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima & Nagasaki, 6 and 9 Aug 1945

The 'Pray for Peace' event, organised by members of the Japanese Anglican Church (UK) and the Japanese Community, with the help of St Martin's, was intended to encourage people to rethink their response to the reality of war, and to pray for peace. In the UK, many people alive today don't know what really happened in these two cities in southern Japan on 6th and 9th August 1945, when the only atomic bombs ever used in war were dropped. According to the Kyodo News Agency, by the end of 2020, 127,000 people had suffered as a result of the bombs, both directly and subsequently because of the effects of the very high radiation levels. Some people weren't in the cities at the time, but were contaminated and became ill after going to help others.

War always brings horrible experiences and memories, so much so that it is tempting to avoid thinking about the reality of war. But if we do this, the danger is that we miss the signs which may lead to war. Four years ago, I attended a lecture given by a Jewish survivor of the Holocaust. I learned how easily an attitude of self-justification or hatred leads to conflict and undermines peace and security.

One thing we wanted to do through 'Pray for Peace' was to introduce the reconciliation work of the charity AGAPE World <https://www.agapeworldreconciliation.org/>. This organization was founded by Keiko Holms, OBE, and the charity has been working hard to build bridges between British former prisoners of war in Burma and the Japanese people.

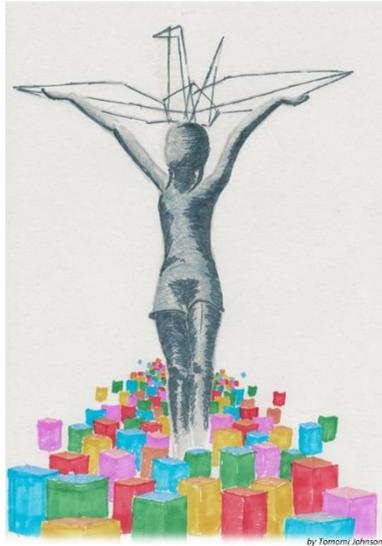
We organised the showing of the film, 'Paper lanterns', directed by an American, Barry Frechette. The film tells the story of Mr Shigeaki Mori, who was himself a victim of the atomic bomb in Hiroshima. Subsequently he learned that 12 American prisoners of war were in camps in the city on that day, and also died. Their relatives had no idea how their loved ones had died and so Mr Mori spent nearly forty years looking for the families to ensure that they knew the story and could properly mourn the deaths. <http://www.paperlanternfilm.com/>

As time passes so the opportunity to hear the voices of witnesses of the World Wars reduces. It is part of our duty to younger generations to pass on the wisdom and knowledge of those who lived through these experiences, and so help sustain a peaceful world.

Yuki Johnson

Licensed Lay Minister Japanese Anglican Church (UK) St Martin's West Acton Diocese of London; Commissioned Lay Chaplain to the Japanese Community St Michael and All Angels Church, Mill Hill

On Sunday, August 8th, the joint Eucharist service took as its theme 'Pray for Peace' with the Japanese Church and Community, and a sermon preached by Yuki. A link to the recording of the service is available on the following link.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JscQ7MZ66-s>

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News from the Women's Refuge

Once again, the residents and staff of the women's refuge have asked me to thank you, the congregation of St Martin's, for your continued support. I have recently taken lots of towels and bedlinen to them, together with toiletries, children's clothes, food and some St Martin's Welcome Packs. We provide each new resident with a starter pack of toiletries, shampoo, tissues, toothpaste, pants and towels, etc. Through the year, the refuge has been particularly grateful for our gifts of bedlinen and towels as the women need new supplies to take when they leave the refuge.

The women and children were all looking forward to the summer break. They have a large garden as well as a play room. The staff are organising summer outings and activities and everyone seems more relaxed than at this time last year.

This year is passing quickly, and Harvest Festival will be on 3 October at St Martin's. Once again, our donations from that service will go to the refuge. All gifts of food are warmly welcomed. Fresh food is distributed among the residents, but tinned food is also stored so that new residents who arrive during the year can also be helped. The refuge accommodates 12 women together with their children. They are all fleeing from domestic violence and many of them arrive with almost no possessions; there is often difficulty in accessing emergency finance, so the extra food is most welcome. The refuge has 2 kitchens and the residents are able to cook their own meals.

St Martin's can be proud that it has continued to support this important local charity for more than twenty years.

Dr Margaret Jones

Introducing our Children's and Youth Apprentice

Some very exciting news – we have been successful in bidding to be one of four parishes in the Diocese of London to host a Children's and Youth Apprentice. This means that we will have an apprentice for three years, who will work for us two days a week as well as studying for a Certificate in Foundations in Theology, Ministry and Mission, with a focus on youth and children's work, at Ridley London, the London training centre of Ridley Hall Cambridge. The Apprenticeship Scheme, funded by the Bishop of London's Mission Fund, aims to fuel new mission activity among young people across the Diocese of London, and to raise up a new generation of youth workers from within our communities.



Our apprentice, PJ Grayson, has been a member of St Martin's for several years, and was baptised here in January 2020. Since that time, PJ has felt a calling to working with children and young people, and to youthwork in particular, with a passion for supporting young people as they face the challenges of today and explore what their faith means them in practice.

We therefore felt that PJ was the ideal candidate to put forwards for this scheme.

PJ was previously known to some of you as Paige and used they/them pronouns, but going forward has asked to be referred to as PJ, with he/him pronouns. He is always happy to answer any questions.

PJ has previous experience working in care homes, interacting with both residents and families, as well as seven years working in customer services. As well as being a “people person”, PJ’s own spiritual journey – including attending Soul Survivor as a young adult – has also highlighted the importance of Christian youth work leading to his desire to want to do this in practice.

PJ will start at the beginning of September, initially focusing on working with our existing volunteers to re-start face-to-face Junior Church, and recruiting and training additional volunteers to join the Junior Church rota. He will also be conducting a ‘listening’ programme with our existing network of older young people and our wider community to explore what they would like to see in terms of youth-orientated events and discipleship at St Martins, as well as building relationships with Twyford Church of England High School to explore possible collaborative projects. PJ’s working days with us will be Tuesdays, Wednesday afternoons and Sunday mornings.

If you would like to get involved with any of these activities, or would like to find out more, please do contact PJ on pjgrayson@hotmail.com or 07306 302465, or contact Julia, or me.

Rev Bryony Dean Franklin



Play for our time: 'Romeo & Juliette'

On the evening of Tuesday 5 August, St Martin's hosted a performance of 'Romeo and Juliette' in the Church.

Local theatre groups, Emerge Production House and the Butterfly Theatre Company, had approached us, looking for a space to rehearse their new venture, which they have since performed at the Albany Theatre in Coventry.

We were delighted to be involved. As part of the arrangement, they agreed to put on two showings of the play at St Martin's to raise money for the church. They have adapted Shakespeare's well-loved classic into a bilingual, reimagined, modernized version, set in an imagined future time when every country in the world has adopted isolationist policies and closed their borders.

England and France, former allies, are on the brink of a war fighting over the ownership of the Channel Islands. Prime Minister Montague of England and Ambassador Capulet of France are forced to come together to attempt to avoid such devastation. It's at this 'summit' that Romeo, the son of the English Prime Minister meets the daughter of the French Ambassador, Juliette, and their story of forbidden love unfolds.

The actors delivered a high energy, poignant performance, which they set beautifully in our church. Despite not following every word of the parts in French, it was a hugely enjoyable, immersive production, and the interaction of the actors with the audience had us engaged from start to finish.

The play ended with a meaningful, uplifting message relevant to us all: "Spiritual growth and not economic growth should be our focus. It is a journey we can all go on together... we will not lose our hope. We will make it happen."

Not only did I relish the chance to be 'out' again after lockdown, but it was heart-warming to see the church buzzing with people, many of whom were new to St Martin's. It was amazing being able to use our beautiful space to bring people together and I'm genuinely excited this is the first step on the start of a journey to doing more with local arts projects.

The cherry on the cake was that we raised nearly £500 for the church. There will be another chance to see the play on the **17 September** if you missed the first showing, at St. Martin's Church.

Shelley Merrick



SHELLEY MERRICK

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**In memoriam
John Trussler
21st July 1932 – 13th July 2021**



*Here follows an edited version of the eulogy for John Trussler, given by **Rev Nicholas Henderson** at John's funeral on Thurs 5 Aug 2021 at St Martin's to a full and very appreciative congregation.*

"How can I commemorate in a few lines this remarkable man who lived the fullness of a God-given life in the community, both church and secular, of which he was an indispensable part? Let me try by noting his selfless service to others and infectious good humour, balanced by reflective wisdom, loyalty and commitment. John has touched all our lives in a way that makes it hard to believe that he has gone back to the One who gave him to us.

I have the privileged task of bringing together a few of the heartfelt tributes from those he knew and with whom he worked.

In this obituary, I have been ably assisted by Kathy Oliver, who came to know John well, especially after she took on the role of Treasurer at St Martin's. On behalf of John, I must give public thanks for her tireless work in arranging everything for John's funeral and for being such a longstanding good friend to him and his late wife, Janet.

Let's start at the beginning. John came into the world on Thursday, 21 July 1932 in Ealing Maternity Hospital in what Franklin D. Roosevelt the American President called "unprecedented and unusual times". They were, and John's formative years would be marked by them, as he was destined to experience in the span of his lifetime the colossal changes and events of the early and mid-20th century into our own extraordinary era.

At St Martin's, Remembrance Sunday was and still is important, and as the years passed it became the tradition that it was John who laid the 'main' St Martin's wreath. There was no mistaking from his stance and conduct of the wreath-laying that he had been 'in the military'. Frank, one of his Korean War service friends, shares his thoughts. "In 1951 John joined a group of national servicemen in the Middlesex Regiment for completion of his training. On completion we were transferred into the 1st Battalion, 'The Buffs', for specialist training. There were six young men, including John (then 18 years old), who volunteered for signal training in preparation for active service in Korea.

The Korean war was horrific, but we just endured what we had to do in extreme temperatures summer and winter. Fortunately, we all survived and returned safely to continue our lives back home."

Later from 1966-1978, John, an army man at heart, also served in the Territorial Army, initially with the Queen Victoria's Rifles (QVR) and subsequently with 4(V) RGJ, also in the Signals Platoon. He retired as a Warrant Officer Class 2. In plain

English, that's a Company or Squadron Sergeant Major with oversight of up to 120 men; a significant responsibility.

In the 1980s, John was a member of the BKVA (British Korean Veterans Association) and the Royal British Legion. He would regularly travel to Shrewsbury for the regimental dinner, and he also marched as a veteran in the annual cenotaph remembrance parade in London.

One of the principal parts of John's life was his marriage to Janet, who was his helpmeet, friend and support. They married on 29 August 1959 - the hottest day of the year, as John often recalled. Older church members will remember Janet's tireless work as 'Brown Owl' with St Martin's Brownies, and their almost legendary monthly church parades.

It's not so very long ago, sadly, that we also said farewell to Janet. In John's own words: "Janet was in the final years of her education and with all the local schools full, her parents found a place for her at Clark's College situated by the side of Barnes Pickle, adjacent to the Forum Cinema in Ealing. Here fate decided that she would be placed in the same class as me. New talent to get to know - I was on the case! We quickly became friends and after school used to walk up West Walk to the Reservoir and back before I saw her onto the 65 bus.

We kept in touch when I was posted to Korea, with her very long letters and my few lines in response. One of her specialities was the ability to write in a very small hand, and on holiday she wrote her part of the cards with at least 200 words, with me adding 'and John!'"

The marriage was a long and happy one, with memorable holidays including in Alderney, Southwold, and walking in fabulous Switzerland. As Janet's physical health sadly deteriorated, she moved into St David's Home in 2015, where she received excellent care. John's loving patient and dedicated support for her meant visits every day.

John's faith almost inevitably expressed itself in many years of loyal service to St Martin's. From the 1960s, when John was sometime Deputy Warden and then from the mid 1980's for a long stint as Churchwarden, John served St Martin's with dedication and enthusiasm. Always armed with copious files, John was notorious for his refusal to use email, which may partially explain his calm and relaxed authority!

He became the repository of the memory, even the soul, of St Martin's. He shared his wisdom, and fostered me (as a rather green young vicar) through what in the early days were some challenging times. John was a shrewd ecclesiastical politician and a man of unshakable or perhaps more accurately undisturbed faith. He knew a lot about buildings; it's not surprising that he was Churchwarden for so long and his financial skills meant running a really tight ship, which of course was just what was needed. He always supported me, even in some of my more, how shall I put it, 'silly' ideas?! I think we were greatly blessed, as the church flourished under his oversight and he was a terrific Churchwarden to work with.

Apart from his extensive church duties John also contributed in the workplace and voluntarily in the community. I also share with you some thoughts and remembrances from some of these organisations.

Sally Simon, of Relate Counselling Charity, writes on behalf of that organisation: "I feel very sad, losing such a long-standing friend and colleague. John was a very special person. He attended trustee meetings in his capacity as an Assistant Director of Richmond Social Services, who provided our accommodation and a substantial annual grant. When he retired some years later, he became a Trustee in his own right."

After his long service as Churchwarden was over, he was still giving committed voluntary service, this time to education through the latterly rapidly expanding Twyford Church of England High School.

As Valerie Drake, Head Clerk to the Governors at Twyford School said, "John has been involved with Twyford C of E High School as a voluntary member of the Admissions Appeals Panels since before I joined the school 16 years ago. The very important Admissions Appeals Panels met for six days every May to consider appeals from parents whose child has been unsuccessful in obtaining a place at the school - there would be approximately 60-80 appeals during the period, panel members would have to be present for every appeal and John normally would Chair every panel." This was a considerable task, dealing with disappointed parents is hugely difficult. Valerie continues, "When Twyford became a Trust and opened William Perkin school and then Ada Lovelace, John sat on the Admissions Appeal Panels for both these schools too. He was very knowledgeable in this area and highly liked and appreciated."

Pat Kynaston, John's work colleague, also reflects on his earlier professional working life. "John was the Chief Welfare Officer in the Welfare Department of the London Borough of Richmond. The Department cared for the Borough's needy and elderly. John led a large team of staff including social workers, home carers, home helps, and administrators. He supervised them and liaised with other Departments and Boroughs. The many Homes for the Elderly in the Borough (with their Matrons and multiple staffing numbers) were also under John's supervision. This was a big job." Later in the late 1960s, the Welfare Department was amalgamated with the Children's Department and the Department for Mental Health to become the Social Services Department, all of which came under John's control - an even bigger responsibility

Pat also remembers, "Mr T. (as we used to call him) used to sing as he came into the building as a warning to us that he was on his way! One of his favourite songs was 'I was born under a wandering star'. Hence he became 'Big Chief Wandering Star.'"



After the funeral service at St Martin's on 5 August, the committal took place at Mortlake Crematorium. On the coffin was a Brentford Football Club scarf (and as this obituary was being finished, Brentford beat their old rivals Arsenal 2 – 0 returning to the top tier after 74 years, so well done, John!) and with him Kathy had put his emergency military supplies: his "Housewife" sewing kit wrapped in oil cloth, and as a properly-turned-out soldier, he also wore the regimental tie of the King's Shropshire Light Infantry. You couldn't fault the old soldier in how he turned out for his last Parade.

John's ashes were interred on Thurs 26 Aug 2021 in St Martin's Garden of Remembrance, which he himself had helped to set up for us.

Not everyone gets such a long eulogy but John deserves every accolade, because he was one of those people who make the world go round and, with his passing, for us it turns a little more slowly. St Paul's words from 1 Corinthians 13 are much shorter, but apposite to describe the life of the man we knew, it was a life of 'Faith, hope and love'.

May he rest in peace and rise in glory."

Rev Nicholas Henderson

Thoughts for the Day

I have, for some time now, used social media, mainly for purposes of keeping in touch with family and friends. I'm talking about WhatsApp and Facebook, and only to specific people, and not very often. Anyway, I have recently joined a Facebook group devoted to the 'Far Side' cartoons of Gary Larson. If I don't like a particular cartoon, I pass over it... It could be that I am naïve and don't see what is under my nose, but I haven't seen anything to seriously upset me, so, as I said, if I don't think a cartoon is funny, I pass on by.

However, I have seen several posts from people on the cartoon site complaining about 'disgusting' or 'filthy' content, declaring that they're leaving the group in protest. I was surprised by these expressions of outrage. I thought 'If you want to leave the group, fine, go ahead'. I would leave too, if I saw anything that I found unacceptable to me. I probably wouldn't announce that I am leaving, though - my opinion and departure wouldn't break up the group, and I do not delude myself that my presence in it is *that* important! The same applies to TV programmes, or the radio. However, we *all* have access to this really great device. It's called an 'off switch'! I vote with my off switch, or change channels, when I see things I don't like, and some of the things I don't like are things which others love, such as boxing, or motor-racing, or football.

I have seen a number of quotes, sayings, memes, etc. on the two networking sites I have mentioned, which have been either new to me or have been put in an eye-catching way, etc., and have from time passed them on to friends if I think they might like them. One of the most useful ones I have seen involves a wise older person saying to a younger, less experienced one that a battle between two fierce animals sums up Life. The animals represent positive and negative thoughts, attitudes and opinions. I have seen the fierce animals depicted variously as wolves, bears, bulls and lions, but the question we're being

asked is really the same. "Who wins?" The simple answer is "the one you *feed* the most".

I have seen this concept attributed to Native Americans, Indian gurus, and all sorts of other wise men and women. If you 'feed' the negative, if you have a negative mindset (also called 'glass half empty'), there isn't a sunny side to any street. Life is hard and earnest, and you can't imagine that it will all come right in the end. This, I think, is a life without faith.

If, on the other hand, you have a positive mind set - the one I attribute to faith - things *will* be okay, or you'll feel more positive about them. This is certainly *not* to say that bad things do not happen to people with faith, they absolutely do. Faith does mean that you have a Friend always with you, who will help you cope with that adversity. Going back to sayings and proverbs, I liked the one I first heard in the film, 'The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel' - the young leading man said "Everything will be alright in the end, and if it's not alright, it's not the end".

This is not a foolish conviction. The positive mindset, which you get from being a faithful Christian, means that focusing on Jesus will help you cope. He won't make it all go away, but He is there for you, *in* those bad times. He helps us see the best way through, the way that gives hope. So, don't let the negativity of others upset you, in social media or the press. If the joke doesn't make you laugh, move on - you will have the last laugh. Feed the positive 'animal' in your mind, and it will be the more powerful. Jesus said 'love your neighbour as yourself' - sometimes you will be disappointed, but there is always another possibility...

Lynne Armstrong

Editor's note:

Thank you all very much for welcoming me back to my 'mother church' – as some of you know, I have recently returned to the parish to be close to my mother, Mary Sorensen, who is still very much 'of this parish' after 52 years, though sadly no longer able to take part in person. Mary is now a resident in Torkington House Care Home on Creswick Road. I am visiting her frequently and, with my husband and exceptionally beautiful cat, Inge, we are looking after her house and garden (from which the fruit and flowers pictures come) to the best of our ability. I am also thrilled to be back in Choir (in which I last sang when I was 18, so... some time ago!) – it really has been a 'homecoming' to come back to St Martin's, especially at this rather difficult time, so bless you all for your welcome and support. It is hugely appreciated.

Anna Sorensen Sargent



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'A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver'

Proverbs 25:11

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8am: Holy Communion, BCP

10am: Parish Communion (CW)

(All-Age Service – non-Communion -
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6.30pm: Evening Prayer on Zoom

Junior Church (2nd and 4th Sundays) returns to
'live' meetings from 26 September

Japanese Anglican Church UK

meets on the third Sunday of the month:

(except in August and December)

3pm Bible Study and Evening Worship in Japanese