

## **Churchwardens' Report 2025**

2025 has been another busy and rewarding year at St Martin's Church. The year can perhaps best be described as a game of two halves - before and after the arrival of our new curate, Fr Joe, who was ordained Deacon at St Paul's Cathedral and began his ministry with us last summer, fresh from his time at Muirfield. It has been a joy to help Fr Joe settle in and discover the rhythm and pattern of life in our church, parish, and wider community. Since joining, he has revitalised our pastoral visiting and made significant connections with both the youth and the young-at-heart among our congregations.

Earlier in the year Rowland continued with us as Intern until the end of July when we held a leaving do for her in the Church grounds. During this time, she organised activities for our young people, including youth Masses, picnics, and socials, as well as relaunching our much-loved Children's Holiday Club with the theme, the Restoration Station. Fr Joe continued to build on this good work by hosting a Young Adults Group and leading a Young Person's visit to St Paul's Cathedral after Christmas. These initiatives have continued successfully into 2026.

### **Social Life and Special Services**

Social events continue to be at the heart of our church life, starting with the ever-popular Quiz and Fish & Chip Supper and included our annual Harvest Supper. We provided refreshments after the Confirmation at our Ascension Mass when we once again welcomed Bishop Lusa to St Martin's. Talking of Bishops, it was a joy to welcome back our former vicar, Bishop Richard Fenwick, who preached at our Patronal Festival in November. Bishop Richard was delighted to be reunited with old friends and parishioners and in turn it was wonderful to catch up with him and Jane. The PCC Social Committee also once again provided mince pies and mulled wine for a large congregation at the Carol Service.

Staying on the singing theme we have enjoyed participating in community events, singing carols for the first time at the Christmas Duck Pond Market at The Barn (a great turn out despite inclement weather!) and returning to the Hop & Vine for more carol singing.

### **Worship and Growth**

Christmas services were very well attended, reflecting what some are calling "the quiet revival." Numbers at the Children's Crib Service were so high last year that Fr Robert and Fr Joe are now considering how this service might further evolve going forward.

We were also pleased to host the Archdeacon's Visitation in June. It was a privilege to be admitted as Churchwarden on my home patch (while Pete was engaged elsewhere, celebrating his son Andrew's 18th birthday, and was duly admitted at another service). The Social Committee provided a wonderful buffet for the occasion, which proved a fitting 'dress rehearsal' for our forthcoming hosting of the Ordination of Priests service for Fr Joe and seven other Willesden Area Ordinands in June - closely followed by Fr Joe's First Mass just two days later! (We would gratefully welcome offers of help for those celebrations.)

### **Fabric and Finance**

The Churchwardens' Goods, Fabric, and Ornaments Report sets out the progress of the Chancel Roof Campaign. I would like to reiterate our thanks for the support and donations received so far and encourage everyone to consider supporting the upcoming Windsor to Ruislip Sponsored Walk, which will raise further awareness and much-needed funds for this vital project.

## **Acknowledgements**

Throughout the year, we have been blessed as ever by the leadership and care of our Vicar, Fr Robert. With such a large parish for Fr Robert to care for, the support from Rowland and Fr Joe has been invaluable, and we look forward - as no doubt does Fr Robert himself - to seeing Fr Joe minister as a fully-fledged priest and able to celebrate very soon. Our thanks for Fr Robert's continuing, dedicated ministry and pastoral care are heartfelt.

We are also grateful to those priests who have provided cover during holidays and so enable us to maintain our daily Mass and prayerful presence, which underpins our church's life and mission.

I would like to thank all the PCC members for their energy and commitment this year - especially our Treasurer, Danny Dartnail; PCC Secretary, Catherine Tugnait; Parish Safeguarding Officer, Judith Kaplan; and Children's Advocate, Sue Hammond. Each of them carries out their responsibilities with diligence and dignity. Our continued gratitude also goes to Gill Dargue, our Parish Administrator, whose skill and organisation help everything run smoothly. Any mistakes or omissions over the past year are ours and not hers!

We should also record our appreciation for the dedication demonstrated from Viktoria our Director of Music in training and leading the choir and providing us with excellent Church music which enhances our worship. Thanks also to our Sacristy Team Liturgical Ministers and Sides people and to those who prepare the various rotas for all of us who volunteer week by week and month by month - at times an unenviable task - as well those who prepare the Thursday lunches, Sunday refreshments and leadership and support for The Toddler Group.

Finally, my sincere thanks to my co-warden Pete who has overseen many maintenance tasks both at Church and at 5 Wyteleaf — I look forward to another year of us working together. I am also grateful once again to John for his patience and support, enabling me to serve as Churchwarden this past year managing church responsibilities alongside further spinal surgeries, rehabilitation, and work as I prepared for my recent retirement.

Thank you for your continued support and prayers as we journey together as a church community.

**Jacqueline Alderton**

Churchwarden

April 2026