



# Swiss Church News

Winter 2017

Swiss Church in London  
Eglise Suisse de Londres  
Schweizerkirche in London  
Chiesa Svizzera a Londra  
Baselgia Svizra a Londra

## Dear Reader,

It has been a year full of new encounters and sad goodbyes, exciting projects, and ups and downs, both in my personal and professional life. It was a year of dramatic change on the world stage which has left many people feeling insecure. The election of the highly controversial President of the United States has dramatically changed the diplomatic tone which has become more aggressive, and has made visible the divisions and wounds in our societies.

As Christmas approaches, it is good to remember the very core of the Christian message which was brought to us with the birth of God as a vulnerable and dependent baby, born from a woman, which is a painful, messy and often traumatising experience. This story tells us that every human being has dignity and that God will be found where we least expect it. No one can take this dignity away from us, no matter who we are or what we believe. No acts of evil, no discriminatory behaviour or act of harassment can ever take away our dignity. We need to defend this belief and act accordingly in our daily lives by standing up for others and for ourselves, and to not let the bullies of this world shape our minds. We have the choice to either stand on the side of the powerful, or on the side of the oppressed, and as Christians our allegiances are clear. Mary, the mother of Jesus, put this in to words in a Song of Praise:

*"God has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly." (Luke 1:51-52)*

When we are feeling vulnerable and low it is easy to turn against others and find a scapegoat to blame. To look at our own hurt feelings and find a way to heal is much more challenging. But we will eventually grow stronger and more understanding and tolerant. We are closest to God in our vulnerability and lowliness, and not in our powerfulness and wealth.

In this edition, I would like to take you on a visual journey through the past year. I feel passionate about the work we do and the community we are able to build in the midst of a city where there is little room left for community space. These spaces need to be treasured and protected, and the Swiss Church is one such place.

We are tremendously grateful for all the support we have received from Switzerland on our journey to becoming financially and structurally independent from the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches. Although we deeply regret this separation, it gave way to many new relationships with our sister churches in Switzerland and the exchange is more vivid than ever before on many different levels. We are welcoming a growing number of church groups, Ministers on sabbaticals and interns from Switzerland every year, and we have some very exciting projects coming up at the Swiss Church, namely four days of meditation with Reverend Monika Widmer from Basel from 18-21 May, and a London city pilgrimage in collaboration with Reverend Michael Schaar from Zurich from 20-25 August.

More information will follow soon.

We are particularly grateful that the Cantonal Church of Bern-Jura-Solothurn has decided to continue to raise a cantonal collection for Swiss churches abroad in the years to come. Furthermore, Venue Manager Nat Breitenstein has done a fantastic job in making the Swiss Church even better known for private venue hire which helps raise substantial funds, and it has been a joy seeing so many people using our beautiful hall.

I look forward to continuing this exciting journey with all of you!

Yours:

Carla Maurer

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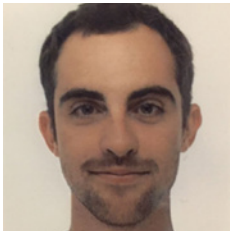
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# Latest news

## + New treasurer



**Marco Mambelli**

I am a financial analyst active in the Asset Management sector, currently pursuing an MBA at the Cranfield School of Management where I chair the university's Consulting Club. Over the past five years I have covered a number of sectors both on the equity and fixed income markets, meeting with a smorgasbord of EU-based companies and executives, and progressively

moving my focus to global equity markets.

I'm originally from Milan and over the years I have had the pleasure to visit Switzerland on numerous occasions, particularly the canton of Valais that I hold very dear. On these occasions I had the opportunity to appreciate different facets of Switzerland's culture and values.

My decision to join the Swiss Church stems from my desire to help the local community in London, as I understand the importance of building and maintaining a "home away from home" both from a cultural and spiritual

perspective. I have also been drawn to the Swiss Church by the great work that Rev. Carla Maurer and her team do in terms of cultural and charitable activities for the local community, the latter being something I have always wanted to be a part of.

I look forward to assisting the Swiss Church in my role as Treasurer and to ensure that its assets are managed in the best interest of both the current and future generations of the Swiss community in London as well as the less fortunate within the local community.

## From the Venue



**Nat Breitenstein**

That familiar rustles of leaves on the streets of London

indicates one thing, autumn, my favourite season. And what an autumn it's been here so far, we have been busy, busy, busy!

Those of you who've been through our doors since the summer's end will have seen that we've spruced up a little, the floors are cleaned and re-sealed and we have a fresh coat of paint in our beautiful Hall and Foyer.

Our bright clean interior didn't go amiss with another London Fashion Week here come and gone. This time we hosted the shows of 3 shining stars, Hannah Weiland's Shrimps, Sabinna by Sabinna Rachimova and Ashley Williams. With our sleek appearance it's no surprise that we've got repeat booking enquiries for 2018!

From fashion to food, we had the glittering annual fundraising dinner for the Swiss Church here at the beginning of October expertly put on and supported by all at Mosimann's. We were also lucky enough to have a palette pleasing selection of wines brought to us by the fabulous Joelle at Alpine Wines and the amazing performing talent that is Julie Clare ([www.julieclare.co.uk](http://www.julieclare.co.uk)) singing the night away. A big thank you to all of them and to all those who generously support the Swiss Church by attending and further helping make it the memorable evening extravaganza and great success that it was.

Next up in the diary we had the Tavistock Institute Festival for an entire week celebrating the institutes 70 years. They showcased their fascinating archive here alongside talks and performances. What a great opportunity to have popped by and learn something new!

These are only some of my venue highlights this autumn. On a personal note this is particularly special time for me as it marks the close of my first incredible year at the Swiss Church. Here's to many, many more.

Next up, Christmas. Something I may like even more than autumn!

## + Meeting the Mayor of Camden

On Sunday 17 September, the Mayor of Camden, Richard Cotton, has invited faith leaders from across the Borough of Camden to join him for a civic service in Russell Square Gardens recognising and paying tribute to those in public service who serve the local communities each year and celebrating the diversity of these communities. The Mayor said in his speech: "Ours is a community rooted in every corner of the planet and that diversity is our strength. That diversity is reflected in our faith communities who do so much to promote social cohesion and harmony. The faith communities provide the heart in what often seems like a heartless world."

As a contributor to diverse community life in the Borough, the Swiss Church was invited to the service and Reverend Carla Maurer said a prayer alongside other faith leaders. The Swiss Church was well represented by a group of eight of its church members and had



the opportunity to meet and greet the Mayor afterwards.

Sir Ian Johnston, Deputy Lieutenant, paid tribute to all the volunteers: "Can I use this occasion also to thank all those volunteers in the Borough who, like many in the faith and non-religious groups here today, give so much time to helping others. To me volunteering to assist fellow human beings represents one of life's greatest values, and is one of life's greatest actions."

The Mayor of Camden also joined Breakfast on the Steps at the Swiss Church on Tuesday 26 September to listen to the needs of homeless people in Camden.

We are delighted to have such a good relationship with the Mayor and his office and wish him all the best for his service.

Thank you, Richard!



# Greetings from Switzerland

## ✚ Intern Viviane Schnetzler



*Viviane Schnetzler (17) was at the Swiss Church on a two weeks work experience from 9-22 October.*

I got to know Carla and the Swiss Church in London when I came here on our confirmation trip to London in 2015. I loved the principle of the church to provide a place in the city where homeless people get looked after, Swiss people can make themselves a home far from home and everyone is welcomed. At my school we all have to complete an internship in fourth grade and

I'm very happy to have the opportunity to do mine here.

I am from the canton of Argovia in the North-Western part of Switzerland and I'm living in a rather small village with my parents and my elder brother. My sister and her husband live near Aarau, which is not far. My family is very important to me and has always been a huge inspiration and support to me.

My grandfather and my uncle are both Ministers, so church and christianity have always been part of my childhood and our household. I'm glad about that since I find the Christian morals

very important. To me, the greater meaning of church is the sense of community. I enjoy being part of our congregation. We all know each other well and spend loads of wonderful times together. It's good to have people around to share thoughts and new ideas with. I think it's important to take some time off and think of more than just oneself.

Also, music is an important part of my life. It has always had influence on my character and thinking. When I was only five years old I started to play the Cello and I wanted to become a cellist nearly ever since. Since culture and

creativity have always been important to me, I chose the City of Basel to be my further place of education. I wanted to explore something new and inspiring after my graduation in the canton of Argovia. Basel gives me the diversity and the open-minded spirit I need.

I see and get to feel the same here in London, but maybe even in a more extreme way. The diversity here is breathtaking, I think there's a little bit of everything in this city. Even though it's huge one can feel very welcomed. My time here in London is a wonderful experience in so many different ways.

## ✚ Peter's cheese cake recipe



Position an oven shelf in the middle of the oven. Preheat the oven to fan 160C/conventional 180C/gas 4. Line the base of a 23cm springform cake tin with parchment paper.

For the crust, melt the butter in a medium pan. Stir in the biscuit crumbs and sugar so the mixture is evenly moistened. Press the mixture into the bottom of the pan and bake for 10 minutes. Cool on a wire rack while preparing the filling.

For the filling, increase the oven temperature to fan 200C/conventional 240C/gas 9. In a

table top mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat the soft cheese at medium-low speed until creamy, about 2 minutes. With the mixer on low, gradually add the sugar, then the flour and a pinch of salt, scraping down the sides of the bowl and the paddle twice.

Swap the paddle attachment for the whisk. Continue by adding the vanilla, lemon zest and juice. Whisk in the eggs and yolk, one at a time, scraping the bowl and whisk at least twice. Continue on low speed as you add the soured cream. Whisk to blend, but don't over-beat. The batter should be smooth, light and somewhat airy.

Brush the sides of the springform tin with melted butter and put on a baking sheet. Pour in the filling - if there are any lumps, sink them using a knife - the top should be as smooth as possible. Bake for 15 minutes.

Reduce oven temperature to fan 90C/conventional 110C/

gas 1/4 and bake for 45 minutes more. If you gently shake the tin, the filling should have a slight wobble. Turn off the oven and open the oven door for a cheesecake that's creamy in the centre, or leave it closed if you prefer a drier texture. Let cool in the oven for 2 hours. The cheesecake may get a slight crack on top as it cools.

Cover loosely with foil and refrigerate for at least 8 hours or overnight.

Run a round-bladed knife around the sides of the tin to loosen any stuck edges. Unlock the side, slide the cheesecake off the bottom of the tin onto a plate, then slide the parchment paper out from underneath.

For the crust

85g butter - melted, plus extra for tin  
140g digestive biscuit, made into fine crumbs  
1 tbsp sugar, granulated or golden caster

For the cheesecake filling

900g Philadelphia cheese, or other full-fat soft cheese  
250g golden caster sugar  
3 tbsp plain flour  
1 1/2 tsp vanilla extract  
finely grated zest of 1 lemon (about 2 tsp)  
1 1/2 tsp lemon juice  
3 large eggs, plus 1 yolk  
200ml carton soured cream



# From the Embassy

## ✚ Greetings from the new Ambassador



When, on 31 October 1989, my wife Nicole and I presented our passports to the immigration officer at Gatwick Airport to take the last possible

outbound flight back to Switzerland just before our student visas expired, he said: “You make the cut sharp!” Indeed, we had wanted to benefit to the very last minute from our stay in Britain, as we felt that the 14 months at Oxford and London had had a tremendous impact on us in our formative years. We had married just before coming over and had experienced a wonderful, one year long honeymoon.

We’ve been back numerous times with our children as tourists or on business trips. And now the Federal Council has bestowed upon me the honour and privilege to serve as the Ambassador of Switzerland to the Court of St James’s. Given the personal history that connects Nicole and me to the United Kingdom, I do not need to stress how pleased and thrilled we are with this posting!

One of my priorities during my tenure will of course be Brexit, which will have a considerable impact not only on the United Kingdom but also on

third countries. Take the example of Switzerland:

The economic footprint of the relationship between our two countries is huge. Switzerland as an export market for UK goods is larger than Australia and Canada combined. It is 82% larger than Japan, more than twice the size of South Korea, twice as large as Australia and New Zealand combined, and significantly higher than India, South Africa, Nigeria and New Zealand combined. Switzerland as an export market for UK services is larger than all services exports to Australia, Canada, India and New Zealand combined; it is more than twice as large as Australia or Canada and three times as large as India. Switzerland as an origin market for UK imports is equally important (11th overall).

We have taken all this for granted, but we do realize that the close economic relationship that unites us is rooted in Switzerland’s many bilateral agreements with the European Union and Britain’s membership of the EU. Once the UK leaves the EU this framework will disappear in our bilateral relations. It is my Embassy’s task to help establish a replacement regime that will be effective come the day the UK leaves the EU, in order to “avoid the cliff edge” in our economic relations. The Federal Council

has devised a strategy to this effect which we call “Mind the Gap”.

But I am also very much looking forward to meeting my Swiss compatriots, their families and friends. My experience in my younger years and later as a diplomat on postings in Canada and Australia has taught me how important good and trustful relations amongst the Swiss are for their well-being as expats. I remember how at Oxford one of the focal points of the close-knit Swiss contingent was the Catholic chaplaincy. I can therefore relate to the role of the Swiss Church as a centre of the social and spiritual life of the Swiss community in London and beyond. Nicole and I have already had the opportunity to enjoy the welcome and the company of Reverend Carla Maurer and the community at the Swiss Church in the early weeks of our stay in London. We are looking forward to many more encounters.

*Alexandre Fasel*



# From the Community

## + Josh Kelly, Community Worker

Hi, I'm Josh Kelly the new Community Officer and I'd like to introduce myself.

I was born in North London and although I have lived in many places around the world I have always called London my home and have that unique appreciation of life that comes from knowing London with all its ugly and beautiful facets. I trained at the Rambert School and worked as a dancer for many years. Towards the end of my dance life my agent told me that she had been sending me for all the 'Quirky Jobs' and didn't know who to cast now that I was retiring. I took this as a compliment as I have never liked to be pigeonholed and think quirky fits me well.

Next I studied sports medicine, worked free-lance as a dancer-teacher-choreographer, and accidentally managed French restaurants and taught in state education. One morning I realised that I had not had the chance to do all the crazy fun things that non dancers do, so I applied for a work permit and spent 18 months backpacking around the world. Enriched by this experience I returned and accidentally fell into secondary teaching. Years later I realised it was time for another change. I analysed my skills set and recognised that I still

wanted to contribute meaningfully to society and so applied for the Community role here at the Swiss Church.

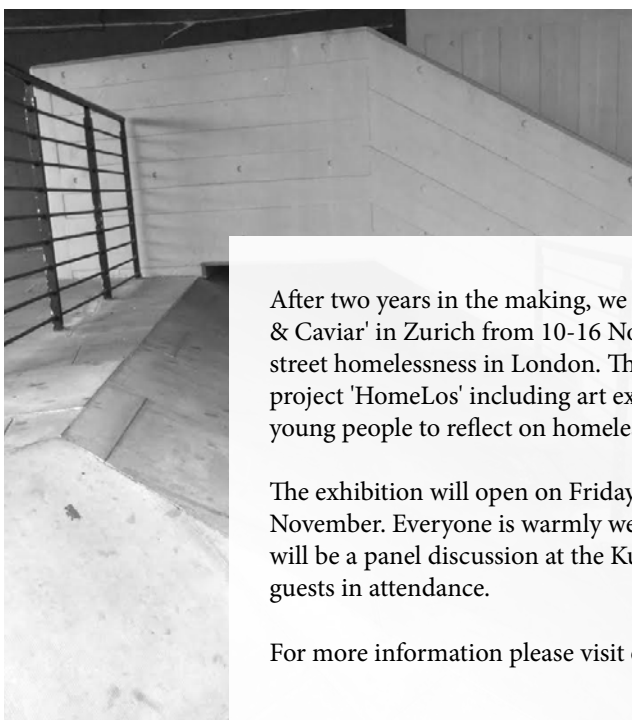
A Swiss string of events have also shaped my life. I met Emma (half Swiss) at ballet school, then her mother Vreni (Swiss) and later became godfather to Emma's children (quarter Swiss). Much later I met my life partner David (also Swiss!) and I now work for the Swiss Church in London. For a full blood Londoner that is a rather lot of coincidental Swissness! I don't have a label for the faith that I hold to, but my life has been moulded by too many fortunate accidents that it would be hard to dismiss the shaping powers that have affected it.

Since my arrival at the Swiss Church I have been managing Breakfast On the Steps each Tuesday morning where we welcome members of our community in need of support and sustenance. It has been a rewarding experience and has far surpassed my expectations. We offer a cooked breakfast once a month from chefs Robert and John, a haircut every 8 weeks with Jake our stylist, and a well balanced breakfast buffet the rest of the time. We are supported by Renate, Cecile



and volunteers from Farrell Associates. We have welcomed The Mayor of Camden, Mr Richard Cotton, for breakfast who socialised with our regular guests and gained an insight into the homelessness situation in the Borough. We are planning a series of training events based around homelessness, are exploring a new relationship with local super markets and looking at how we can further support the wider community. For those of you who are not aware, our breakfasts are for anyone in our community so feel free to join us anytime between 8am and 10am.

*Ich freue mich darauf, Sie auf dieser neuen Straße begrüßen zu dürfen/  
J'ai hâte de vous rencontrer sur cette nouvelle route./ Non vedo l'ora di incontrarmi lungo questa nuova strada.*



## HomeLos.

### An event on homelessness

After two years in the making, we are delighted to be exhibiting Andy Palfreyman's photo work 'Cardboard & Caviar' in Zurich from 10-16 November showing the places where he slept rough during his 30 years of street homelessness in London. This photo exhibition, previously shown at the Swiss Church, is part of the project 'HomeLos' including art exhibitions, film screenings, panel discussions and writing workshops for young people to reflect on homelessness in the two trading capitals Zurich and London.

The exhibition will open on Friday, 10 November at 7pm at the Offene Kirche St. Jakob and run until 16 November. Everyone is warmly welcome to the opening event! On Wednesday, 15 November at 7pm there will be a panel discussion at the Kulturhaus Helferei with the Mayor of Camden and other interesting guests in attendance.

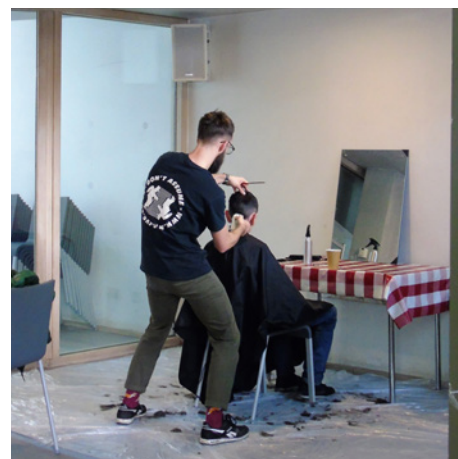
For more information please visit our webpage: [www.swisschurchlondon.org.uk/homelos](http://www.swisschurchlondon.org.uk/homelos)



Baptism Sunday



Youth group from Rapperswil, Switzerland learning about homelessness



Free haircuts for the homeless by stylist Jake Fox

# 2017 Year in review



Two-hundred people celebrated the Swiss National Day at the Swiss Church



Farewell to Xanthe and Lili and to the weekly Holy Soup



Parish trip to York in May



Farewell Johannes (President) and Andrea (Company Secretary)



# Events @ the Swiss Church

## Video Art Screening

**Friday, 17 November, 6-8pm**

Curated by Annelore Schneider and Katie Goodwin

**Louisa Fairclough and  
Richard Glover:  
VOICE IMAGES**

**Friday, 24 November  
from 9:30pm**

A series of new compositions by Fairclough and Glover devised in response to the architecture of the Swiss Church in London. Performed by Dieci Voices.  
More information:  
[beingandappearing.org.uk](http://beingandappearing.org.uk)

## Commemorative service

**Sunday, 26 November, 5pm**

We will light candles in the memory of those who have passed away. With choir, followed by refreshments.

## Sit in Silence

**Monday, 27 Nov, 4 Dec  
11 Dec - 5-7pm**

Step out of your daily routine to treasure a moment of quiet in a space bathed in candlelight. You can drop in and out at your own rhythm. Tea & Coffee will be served.

## Reformation on London's Doorsteps

**Friday, 1 December, 6pm**

"A service of remembrance and fellowship"  
The Most Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church, Dockhead, London SE1 2BS

## A Christmas afternoon for families

**Sunday, 10 December, 2-6pm**

Christmas story, hymns, handicraft and Samichlaus - join us for a festive afternoon for young and old! Please sign up:

[anna.tomaschett@gmail.com](mailto:anna.tomaschett@gmail.com)

## Christmas Carol service

**Sunday, 17 December, 5pm**

Traditional German, French and English Christmas carols. With choir, followed by refreshments.

## Breakfast on the Steps Christmas Special

**Tuesday, 19 December,  
8-10am**

Everyone is welcome!

## Organ Recital

**Saturday, 13 January, 5pm**

Greg Morris, Temple Church, London

## Fondue Fundraising Night

**Thursday, 8 February, 7pm**

Save the date! More information will be available on the webpage.

## Parish trip

**24 - 26 April 2018**

Location TBC Save the date

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You can download the latest Swiss Church News on our website.

# Announcements

## Birthdays

One of our longest-standing church members, Elena Bertin, turned 95 in September. She celebrated this special occasions surrounded by her friends from the Swiss Church with a champagne afternoon tea. All the best and many blessings, dear Elena!

Congratulations also to Vreni, Silvia and Helen who celebrated their 85th, 80th and 90th birthday recently. May you be blessed with good health and friendship for the years to come!





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*(Psalm 146:7-9)*

***God executes justice for the oppressed;  
and gives food to the hungry.***

***He sets the prisoners free;  
and opens the eyes of the blind.***

***God lifts up those who are bowed down;  
he loves the righteous.***

***God watches over the strangers;  
he upholds the orphan and the widow,  
but the way of the wicked he brings to  
ruin.***

*“The oppressors do not favour promoting the  
community as a whole, but  
rather selected leaders.”*

*(Paulo Freire, Brazilian educator and  
philosopher, 1921-1997)*

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