



# Swiss Church News

## Summer 2021

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

Dear Readers,

Wednesday is my favourite day of the week. It's our office team day, and volunteers sometimes pop in as well, to discuss projects or use one of our hot desks. There can be quite a buzz in the building, especially when the hall is used for an event at the same time. After months and months of online meetings, this is such a welcome change. Without a doubt, online meetings are a great solution for remote working. In particular, I learned to appreciate them for our church governance meetings, as it's a much more inclusive and efficient way of working. And yet something is missing. During spontaneous coffee or lunch breaks, personal stories are frequently shared and friendships built, but spontaneity is not the strength of online tools.

After many months of remote working we can all feel the strain on our backs, eyes and brains that comes with staring at a screen. Yet at the same time, these tools enabled us to work efficiently through the crisis, and stay connected. Whether we think online meetings are a curse or a blessing, they certainly are here to stay.

So, what does a day at the church office in Endell Street actually look like? On a busy day, in the morning, you will see the office staff; Anina, Emily Rose, Ryan and I; sitting at our desks, looking at our screens, hammering

away on our keyboards to manage the flood of emails, as if there were some competition to win – until someone has had enough and shouts 'Tea anyone?'. That's when the chit chat begins and we start talking about holiday plans, favourite movies... and the British weather. Once a month we have a team meeting when our freelance staff may also pop along to discuss everything,



from flickering lights and shredding papers, to Consistoire decisions and art events. We talk about our highlights and challenges, discuss any areas of concern and how we can support each other.

But the best part comes after work, when we are heading to the pub, which happens about once a month. The friendly Cross Keys is our local, one of the oldest pubs in the area with a beautiful façade. It's a proper old pub, with a thick red carpet, sticky small wooden tables, and no music. In the

office world, new ideas and innovative projects are often born during those hours – and here lies the risk of after-work meetings. All too easily, they can become exclusive. Team members might have care duties, long commutes or health issues, or feel not quite part of the team, be too shy to participate and be left out. Making sure that our formal and informal work gatherings are

inclusive is something to look out for as we return to the office, and head out to enjoy a cool summer drink together. I hope you are enjoying this extraordinary summer of 2021, and hope to see you soon again in Endell Street – or indeed, online.

Yours,  
Reverend Carla Maurer

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## From the Consistoire

- By Katrin Frey, Trustee, Safeguarding Officer and Marriage Registrar



Dear readers,

“The times are changing, and we change with them”, a phrase often attributed to the roman Poet Ovid never gets old.

The world has changed collectively and significantly over this past year, yet some things will stay the same: People want to profess their love in front of others and bind their relationship lawfully and sometimes before their God. Often a wedding is years in the planning, like my good friends’ in Gossau: Both vicars, they had their church ceremony planned initially for April 2020. And then the pandemic happened... After many sleepless nights

and lots of preplanning, their wedding was finally live streamed from their church in April 2021. Glasses were raised to and with them on Zoom, and they could finally get on with their married lives. At other times though ties need knotting rather quickly, and involved officials are forced to perform earlier than anticipated. Said official was me.

Since early 2021 I have been your newly authorised person to officiate at weddings at the Swiss Church in London, and it is an honour to be entrusted with such an important position. What was to become the SCLs first Zoom wedding in March 2021 was also my first ever wedding I officiated. I admit I was rather anxious when I took over the reins from Colin McIntyre: Not only was I expected to fill

in the official marriage certificates with ink that is supposed to last for a hundred years and have the couple and all witnesses sign it in the correct places, I was also about to blotch said ink all over the 3 kilo mighty leather-bound church ledger. So far, I had only ever admired beautiful old books, being a theologian myself, now I got to (had to!) write in one! I succeeded with my best handwriting, and I am proud to say there are no ink stains to be found anywhere!

Traditions such as marriage are made by people for people and are never stagnant. As society is changing, so do rituals, and they must. For if one thing is certain in these anxious and uncertain times, then that is change.

*Ryan Moshwe completed his 6-months internship with the Swiss Church in June. We are delighted that he accepted our offer to become a permanent member of the Swiss Church team in his new role as Office Admin Assistant. Ryan will be working in the office two half-days looking after supplies, answering the phone, supporting event admin and many other tasks. So, welcome again, Ryan!*

## Contract negotiations and selfie instructions – My internship

- by Ryan Moshwe

A lot has happened in the last 6 months – I’m not sure where even to begin! At the start of my internship, I was overwhelmed with my new responsibilities and tasks as an admin for the Swiss Church. Project Manager Heidi Holenweg showed me the ropes. For instance, she showed me how to work with a laptop, so I could work from home without any issues. It was a good experience. At first, I was not doing so well. I found it hard

to communicate with the team as I was nervous meeting new people, but once I got to know them, I eventually opened up to them and could be myself. David Hume, one of the members of the Consistoire, and I decided to have a monthly Zoom Meeting catch-up where I display my ABCs, an acronym for Achievements, Benefits and Concerns. This tool will definitely help me out in the long run, and in other jobs. What this internship has taught me is to use my communication skills at all times including emailing/ messaging my supervisors whenever I’m stuck on something, or if I don’t understand. Heidi, Carla and Emily Rose were always there to answer my questions because they’re here to support me.

One of my highlights during my internship was when I got to be a part of the meetings with the Art Committee and select the project for the Goldsmiths exhibition. I got to state my opinion on which applicant’s art should be in the

exhibition. It was a tough decision because I liked three of the applications art pieces. It wasn’t easy, but I was happy to have the authors of Weeds win the votes, plus I was able to see the curators Marie and Leonore’s exhibition.



I’ve learned in my internship that it’s sometimes good to be flexible, like for instance to sacrifice my lunch break in order to make my way into the Swiss Church building to help out my team with some interesting tasks. I was even given a task to set up

and chair a zoom meeting for the team in preparation of a contract negotiation.

I’ve organised a project with James Rasa, the Swiss Church News editor, to create a new team photo. I emailed my team and explained that we’re updating our website, so James can collage all of our pictures together, and post it on the official page of the Swiss Church website. I gave them a deadline and gave specific instructions on how to take a selfie.

## News From the team

Andreas Feller from Solothurn has joined the team as Office Records Project Manager. In the coming months, he will be establishing new systems that will help to



store church documents in a safe and structured way, to make them more accessible, now and for future generations. Andreas is the owner of a start-up business and has been in London for nearly five years. He is a newly elected UK delegate in the Organisation for Swiss Abroad (OSA), representing the interests of the Swiss living in the UK.

Andreas is also an active volunteer for the homeless outreach programme where he coordinates the monthly homeless haircuts. He says about working for the Swiss Church: “I really like the diverse team and their open-mindedness. The projects we are working on are really exciting.”

## News from the Art Committee

*Diane Chappalley* recently joined the Swiss Church as Volunteer Arts Coordinator supporting the Art Committee with the planning and implementing of their programme and liaising with artists using the Swiss Church for rehearsals, residencies or exhibitions. Diane also occasionally assists the Venue Manger with the supervision of hirings in the church. It's been a delight working with Diane so far who brings a lot of positive energy and organisational skills to our team. She also represents the French speaking part of Switzerland having grown up in a small village in the Canton of Fribourg.



Diane is a Swiss/British artist based in London. In 2018, she received the Alice Bailly Award by the foundation in Switzerland. Diane is working primarily with paintings. Her large, imagined scenery are populated with flowers, shadows, birds and trees, a reflection on intimacy and our relationship with the environment.

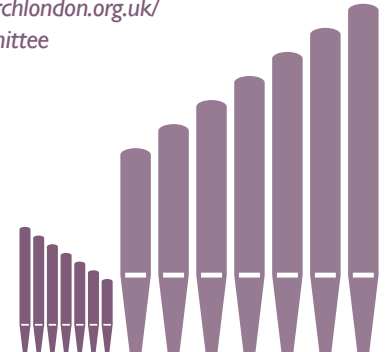


We are delighted to welcome a new member to the Art Committee, St.Gallen born artist *Lukas Angelini*. Lukas trained at a visual and performing arts school (SfAB) in Zurich to become a performer in the early 90's. After further

studies abroad, he became particularly interested in ensemble and experimental theatre as well as spiritual and physical practices like yoga and somatic approaches to bodywork. He has been an associate of the National Youth Theatre of Great Britain for the last 21 years and teaches at various drama schools in and around London.

He is married and a dad to three children and is now settled in the beautiful south of London. Lukas says: "Swiss culture to me means to be open to the north, east, west and south. To be willing to learn different languages and learn from different cultures. The Swiss Church, placed in a unique central geographical position in this multicultural city, can be just like that; open to the world, its people and its many beliefs and art forms".

Read more about the Art Committee and its members on [swisschurchlondon.org.uk/art/art-committee](http://swisschurchlondon.org.uk/art/art-committee)



## 10 years, and counting...!

Director of Music and Organist **Peter Yardley-Jones** has joined the Swiss Church team 10 years ago which makes him the longest standing team member. We are beyond lucky to have such a talented, dedicated and innovative organist! We would like to thank Peter for everything he has done for the Swiss Church and are looking forward to many more years of beautiful music and collaboration.

*Happy Swiss Church anniversary, dear Peter!*



## Artist Residency

*From March to May 2021, the church hosted a group of stage writers to develop their scripts and meet for readings and rehearsals, as part of the church's artist residency programme.*

- By Nicky Allpress

I can't believe how quickly our 12 week literary residency has flown by, and I'm full of gratitude for the opportunity it has afforded so many writers, actors, directors and other artists so far this year.

We have had so much benefit from the Swiss Church's generous donation of the beautiful building to productions that have progressed immeasurably, thanks to the time we've been able to spend researching and developing scripts, screenplays, musicals and poetry.

Among our artists who've enjoyed the space to work are: Alan Sleator who now has a redraft of his new play PIG set in 1950's Northern Ireland; Artistic Director Mojisola Elufowoju of Sheffield's Utopia Theatre was able to host a series of filmed a series of interviews called Preserving Legacies with prominent African theatre artists based in London, including leading voice coach Hazel Holder and Kwame Kwei-Armah, Artistic Director of the Young Vic.

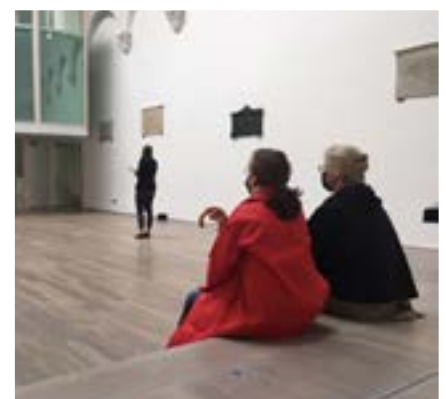
Playwrights including Becky Wilcox, Isabelle Kassam, Laura Grillo, Nicky Allpress, DWH Mildon, Claire Amias, Alison Rose, Jack Condon, Mattias Mella, Kyle Rose wrote,

rehearsed, improvised and improved their plays and progressed their story drafts, ready for submitting to stage and television prizes this year. Poet Anna Robinson and her group of spoken word artists were able to use the church to rehearse for a performance of their latest verses, and Tamara Barshak whose play about a Jewish family learning that their wealthy uncle left his fortune to his Palestinian lover is having its reading during our penultimate week in May – a timely piece about the power of love and unity.

Writer Steve Darlow & composer Glenn Tollett used the opportunity to develop their musical Spitfire which the church's own Emily Rose helped us with by narrating the script, while the songs are having their first public performance at the Crazy Coq's cabaret venue at Brasserie Zedel in Piccadilly.

None of this would have been possible without the support and generosity of your beautiful venue, and on behalf of all of my fellow artists who have had so much creative benefit, I'd like to extend a heartfelt thank you.

This quote is from 'PIG' set in 1950's Northern Ireland, by retired journalist Alan Sleator: *"A man armed with words will hit you every time. You're dead before you know it. Jumping sideways will make no difference. Words are like bloodhounds. They'll track you down and strike deep into your heart. The worst weapons of all. They come out of the factory newly minted, and fly across a room, as sleek and sharp as stilettos. Woe betide anyone who gets in their way."*



## Forgotten women healers - Review of Goldsmiths exhibition WEEDS

- By Carla Maurer

It has been a privilege and joy working with exceptionally talented curators Marie Ganay and Léonore Larrera for their exhibition WEEDS that took place at the Swiss Church from 21-26 June. They presented a sound installation by artist Marguerite Humeau in collaboration with musician Lafawndah. The voices and sounds that filled the church were deeply moving and transformed the church in a subtle yet powerful way. The names of women healers and doctors from across the centuries and the globe were read

out, names that had been erased from the history books. The installation was an important reminder of the Church's own sombre past and the role it played in persecuting and executing women in the notorious witch hunts which raged Europe for centuries.

Art plays a crucial role in bringing to light these topics. Confronting the past enables dialogue and can help the healing process. The Swiss Church is committed to create a safe space for this to happen.

# + From the community

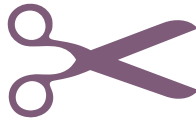
## Barbershop on the Steps

15 June was an important day for the church. We reopened our doors for the local community, organising free haircuts for people affected by homelessness.

Hair stylist Jake Fox from Ena Salon returned with his barber scissors. It was a pleasure to welcome back some of our regular guests from Breakfast on the Steps that we had to close down in March 2020. They looked the part after Jake had done his magic.

Haircuts will take place monthly and people can sign up at the door. It's first come, first serve.

Due to ongoing health risks and volunteer shortages, we have not yet set a date for reopening of Breakfast on the Steps. Instead, volunteer Jenny Breitschmid has organised take-away care packages containing socks, sanitary products and snacks.



Contact [Andreas.feller@swisschurchlondon.org.uk](mailto:Andreas.feller@swisschurchlondon.org.uk) for more information about the haircuts; or [volunteer@swisschurchlondon.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@swisschurchlondon.org.uk) if you are interested in becoming a volunteer.



Take-away package replacing temporarily the weekly Breakfast on the Steps



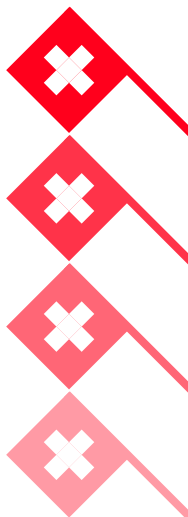
## Swiss National Day

Every blue moon, Swiss National Day (1 August) falls on a Sunday, which was the case this year. We decided to mark the occasion with a special Sunday service, followed by a glass of wine sponsored by the Swiss Embassy, and delicious 1st August-Weggen.

Peter Yardley-Jones played the national anthem on the organ. What an

occasion to sing together for the first time in 17 months, although for the safety of all, we kept our masks on.

We were delighted to welcome Switzerland's new Ambassador to the UK, Markus Leitner, who gave a speech, and are looking forward to further the collaboration with the Embassy.





## From The Pulpit

The following are excerpts from Rev Carla Maurer's sermons of the past months. You can listen to, or read the whole sermons at [swisschurchlondon.org.uk/downloads](http://swisschurchlondon.org.uk/downloads)

### Coming out of lockdown -Easter Sunday 2021

Do you know that feeling when you open the fridge, and it stares back at you, empty? Some sprouting potatoes, half an onion and some partly rotten carrots that really don't look very appealing.

In this past year we have been thrown back and forth, between hope and resignation, promises and disappointments, sudden change and relentless routine. 'No plans for today?' – 'No.'; 'Any news?' – 'No.' The phone calls became shorter and the stretches between them longer. We sat at the kitchen table staring at the next day or the next week, not knowing how to lift our spirits.



One week after the resurrection of Jesus, the disciples were in their boat, that day of sheer joy and unleashed enthusiasm slowly drifting into the past. The resurrection of Jesus is not a one-off event. The resurrection is not the big finale of Jesus' life. Quite the opposite, it is the beginning of a new life for everyone. If the fridge looks empty and the days ahead of us bland, let's begin with small changes and gestures. Perhaps listen to a new piece of music and have a little dance in the kitchen. Call a friend you haven't spoken to in a while, or perhaps, meet up for a cup of tea.



### On privilege -18 April 2021

When privilege is called out, when we are personally part of that privileged group, our first reaction is often to become self-defensive. "I am not like that", we say. "I am not racist, misogynist, homophobic; I am not biased." Or: "I matter, too!" What is the worst that can happen, if rather than defending ourselves we acknowledge our privilege? If we say: "Yes, it's true; because I'm a man, because I'm white, because I'm able bodied, I do have it easier." The worst that can happen is that it feels uncomfortable. Each privilege we enjoy takes away opportunities from others. We don't necessarily want to give up our privileges, because they got us to the place where we are now. No one likes to sit with uncomfortable feelings, feeling guilty, insecure, caught out.

After the expulsion from paradise, human life became a fight for survival. In order to survive in the world outside of paradise, to a certain extent we will always seek advantage for ourselves, and this always comes at the cost of others. It's part of the original sin, if not THE original sin, to use this controversial notion. And yet, how much of paradise can we bring into this world? Jesus teaches us one or two lessons about the handling of privilege and power. He advocates and empowers. He advocates for those excluded from power and he encourages every person to claim their place.

### God's silence -19 July 2021

Just days before the first lockdown, and immediately after, I spent a night at St Katherine's Monastery in Limehouse. Almost everything was the same, except for the green leaves that now adorned the big trees, and the few withered leaves on the grass announcing the next season.

I wanted to ask God what was the purpose of this all. I wanted to know the answer. I wanted to know where we were going, but I knew that God's answer to my questions was going to be silence. So, I embraced God's silence.

**I knew in God, I was at home. God is home.**

**In God I feel no judgement.**

**In God I feel no guilt.**

**God is Eternal, there are no time pressures.**

**God is everywhere, there are no constraints.**

**In God's presence I am an open book, I am seen and understood like no other human being can ever see me. I am vulnerable, and yet I will never be hurt.**



# Events & Announcements

## Connect with the Swiss Church

Due to the ongoing uncertainty surrounding the pandemic, there are fewer events and gatherings taking place at the Swiss Church. Up to date information can be found on [swisschurchlondon.org.uk](http://swisschurchlondon.org.uk)

## Sunday Service

We are currently meeting every first Sunday of the month at 11am in Endell Street. On the third Sunday of the month, we continue to provide an audio service which you can listen to at home. Go to [swisschurchlondon.org.uk/downloads](http://swisschurchlondon.org.uk/downloads) to find current and past audio services.

## Homeless outreach

Haircuts for people affected by homelessness are taking place once a month on a Tuesday morning from 8-10am with stylist Jake Fox. The dates are published on our website and outside the church building. Sign up at the door - first come, first served! Guests are given a hot drink and care packages.



## Podcasts and Social Media

You can follow us on Instagram [@swisschurchlondon](https://www.instagram.com/swisschurchlondon) and [@swisschurchvicar](https://www.instagram.com/swisschurchvicar) and you will also find us on Facebook for event information and news from the church. Listen to Carla's podcast More Tea, Vicar? on [reflab.ch](http://reflab.ch) or via your podcast provider.

## Announcements



Congratulations to Phoebe Pickering and Paul Cook who got married at the Swiss Church on 6 March in the presence of a small circle of wedding guests and many more on zoom! It was a very special moment under the most unusual circumstances, and we wish the happy couple all the very best for their future as husband and wife.

## Obituary

Sadly, we had to say goodbye to Serenella Bertin who passed away on the 2nd July. Serenella was a regular at the Swiss Church for many decades, together with her husband Albert Bertin. Although her memory faded in the recent years, Serenella always kept her good humour and the love for her cats and for her native Italy. Our sincere condolences to her family in Italy and Switzerland and to her close friends in London who have cared for her.

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

## Frauenverein

Every first Tuesday of the month.  
Mrs Cecile Mistry 07778 508 405

## La Causerie

Every second Tuesday of the month.  
Mrs Lisa Hall-Zeller, 020 8894 2114

## Mothers' Group

Every second Wednesday of the month.

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“Women have always been healers. They were the unlicensed doctors and anatomists. They were abortionists, nurses and counsellors. They were the pharmacists, cultivating healing herbs, and exchanging the secrets of their uses. They were midwives, traveling from home to home and village to village. For centuries women were doctors without degrees, barred from books and lectures, learning from each other, and passing on experience from neighbour to neighbour and mother to daughter. They were called “wise women” by the people, witches or charlatans by the authorities. Medicine is part of our heritage as women, our history, our birthright.”

*Barbara Ehrenreich, born 1941.  
American author and political activist*

“For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end—it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay.”

*Habakkuk 2:3*

To give online: [swisschurchlondon.org.uk/church/donate](http://swisschurchlondon.org.uk/church/donate) and follow the link.

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