



# Swiss Church News

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

Winter 2016 / 17

## Editorial

Dear brothers and sisters  
Dear reader

My mother's family originally comes from a small village in the Bernese Jura, just a stone's throw away from the Röstigraben that divides French speaking and German speaking Switzerland. My grandparents moved to Lyss near Bern as a young couple, and that is also where my mother grew up. We often went to visit my grandmother in her flat in Lyss where we spoke a mix of French and German. I guess 'grandmaman' was never quite at home on the other side of the Röstigraben.

With age, my grandmother became increasingly infirm, and she had several falls in her flat. She could not really live alone anymore. My parents decided to take her to St.Gallen where she could move into a flat in the neighbouring house. And so 'grandmaman' became our neighbour. At the beginning, she would often sit on the stove bench in our house. After she broke her hip we popped over to see 'grandmaman' in her flat where we played hours of Halma, a popular board game, or watched French soap operas on TV. She also sent us to the kiosk to buy the 'Point de Vue' for her, a magazine with the latest royal gossip, which probably explains my secret fascination for royalty. One of us sisters had to bring her a plate of food every lunch and dinner. We would just simply jump over the garden fence, climb on her balcony and sneak into her flat through the balcony door that was left ajar.

'Grandmaman' was our neighbour until she moved into a nursing home in her



*The "Samichlaus" will also visit the Swiss Church on Sunday 4th December*

Jurassic home valley; back to her roots where many of her cousins and her sister lived and where she died when I was eighteen. She is buried in the cemetery in Lyss, next to my grandfather who I never knew but who she mentioned a lot throughout her life. "Il me manque, ton grandpapa", she used to say.

What I did not quite realise at the time was that 'grandmaman' was not just a neighbour, but that my parents, and especially my mother, were her carers whilst raising three kids and working as a doctor and a language teacher. Many people who struggle with day to day life, both physically and mentally, are cared for by relatives, neighbours and friends. Spouses who care for their sick companions, children who look after their aging parents, neighbours who do the

grocery shopping, parents who care for their disabled children. This work is not remunerated and barely appreciated in public life, and yet it is an indispensable pillar of our society.

In this issue we want to pay tribute to all the unpaid carers who commit parts of their life, or their entire life, to care for others. They make our society more human and more compassionate. Rather

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# Editorial

than being hidden, they deserve to be in the spotlight. Read more about care and economy on the focus page (page 4-5).

As winter falls, many homeless people are facing freezing cold nights. Every winter a number of homeless people will die on our streets. Homelessness has risen sharply over the past few years. The reasons for homelessness are varied: mental illness, unemployment, drug addiction, family breakdown, rent increase or the loss of social benefits. London based author and journalist Peter Stäuber has investigated the reasons for the sharp increase in homelessness. He presented his book "London: Unterwegs in einer umkämpften Metropole" at the Swiss Church on 18 November, copies can be purchased from the office. There was a panel discussion with Richard Cotton,

designated Mayor of Camden 2017, street photographer Andy Palfreyman, who experienced homelessness himself and the author Peter Stäuber. In the run up to Christmas it is good to remind ourselves that many will face this special time alone, housebound or deprived of a home all together.

Let us share what we have with those most in need. Let us share more often, not just at Christmas, but any day of the year.

I wish you a blessed Christmas period and a wonderful start into 2017!

Yours,



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

### Deadline for the next Swiss Church News

20 January 2017

## News from the Team

There will be a number of staff changes at the Swiss Church, and we are delighted to introduce to you the new faces in our team.

Anina Smith is expecting her first child and will go on maternity leave at the end of November and is planning to return part-time at the beginning of 2018. We wish her and Ricky every blessing and wish them health and happiness for their life as a family.



Mr Colin McIntyre, who is a regular worshipper at the Swiss Church and

has been working in the banking sector, will do the accounting and bookkeeping during this time. We are grateful to Colin for taking on this role. His expertise will be a great addition to the team.



We are excited to introduce to you our new Venue Manager, Ms Nat Breitenstein.

Nat was born in Finland but has lived in many different countries throughout her life. London has become her home and she can draw on a large network to promote the Swiss Church as an event venue and raise further income. Nat is fluent in several languages and has a background in event and venue management as well as catering, having previously worked for art galleries and other event venues. You can contact Nat on [venue@swisschurchlondon.org.uk](mailto:venue@swisschurchlondon.org.uk)

The Swiss Church News will be edited by Mr James Rasa who has designed the booklet for the reformation year 2017 'Still reforming - Reformation on London's doorsteps' and other print

work. His expertise and knowledge of the Swiss Church will be greatly appreciated.



The familiar voices of Lili and Carla will be answering the phone at the Swiss Church office from Tuesday to Friday, and the general email address [info@swisschurchlondon.org.uk](mailto:info@swisschurchlondon.org.uk) will be answered as usual.

Come and say hello to the new team when you happen to be in the area. We look forward to seeing you!

*Rev. Carla Maurer*

# News from the Community

## It is that time of year again!

I don't know about you, but I am already looking forward to Christmas. We are probably not going to have a white Christmas in Zurich this year – we did not have one last year, or the year before that, winter is running away from us. But what I am looking forward to are boxes full of Christmas cookies, nativity sets in every room, sitting in between the fireplace and the Christmas tree the day after Christmas, watching one of the many traditional Christmas films on German TV.

However, before I am going to sit on a plane and fly home for the holidays, there are lots of exciting things happening at the Swiss Church.

If you are still not in the holiday spirit after our big Christmas Fair on 26 November, here are a bunch of events

that will turn every Ebenezer Scrooge into a carol-singing Christmas angel.

On the 4th of December, we will have two very special guests at the Swiss Church. The “Samichlaus” and his friend and helper “Schmutzli” are coming all the way from Switzerland to visit us after the service. Children will be able to meet them and recite a little verse in exchange for a small present.

On Sunday 18 December we are going to gather at the church – which will be fully equipped with Christmas tree and nativity set – at 5pm for this year's Christmas Carol Service. Join us for an evening full of your favourite German, French and English carols.

On the first three Thursdays in December the Swiss Church will be illuminated by

hundreds of candles in the early evening, welcoming you to enjoy the silence after a busy day.

But enough of Christmas for now – let me invite you to our big Fondue Night on 9 February 2017! This time it will be organised by our brilliant volunteers Nicole and Salome, who came to the Fondue Night last February and were so blown away by its cheesy greatness that they just had to make sure the next one is just as fantastic. Come along, bring your friends and be prepared to smell of cheese for the next couple of days!

Have a wonderful Advent time, eat lots of “Guetzli” and happy new year!

*Lili Jost*

## Reformation Year

2017 will mark 500 years since an Augustin friar named Martin Luther published 95 Theses that challenged the malpractices of sections of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. Little did he know that his ideas would shake Europe to its very foundations and change its history forever. Twelve parishes across London will welcome each other on their doorsteps as an invitation to experience the diverse heritage of the Reformation. Each month, a different congregation will host an event. At the Swiss Church, we will commemorate the beginning of the Reformation in Zurich with a sausage lunch and a talk by Prof. Rebecca Giselsbrecht from the University of Zurich.

Purchase a paper copy of the Reformation booklet for £1 or find more information on our webpage: [www.swisschurchlondon.org.uk/reformation-500](http://www.swisschurchlondon.org.uk/reformation-500)

## Art and Film

Art lovers will appreciate the varied programme coming up next year. Once again, we will exhibit the winning project of the Goldsmiths competition from 23 February to 8 March 2018 which will be announced in November. Check out our webpage for more information.

Furthermore, curator Kirsty White will present us with an exciting series of art events throughout the year. There will be one off performances as well as exhibitions engaging with the historic relationship between religion and art whilst providing a platform for critical comment and social change. More information about the arts programme will be published on our webpage and on social media.

Film lovers will love to hear that we will run a short film night in December. Save the following date:

**19 December, 7.30pm: Art film night with collectif-fact**

Swiss art collective Annelore Schneider and Claude Piguet invite you to an evening of short videos by Swiss and British artists.





# Focus: Care and Economy

*In the years since I joined the Swiss Church I have heard many stories from members of the congregation and the wider Swiss community who care for their sick partners, their disadvantaged neighbours or friends, or for their children, grown-up and small. From the moment we are born we depend on our environment, a fact that we often forget when things are going to plan. But then there are times in life when we suddenly need more support than usual. This can be caused by an illness or an accident, unemployment or the breakdown of familiar structures, memory loss or disorientation in a complex world. Suddenly we depend on others more than we used to, and our relatives and friends may become our carers, or we care for them. Most care work is unpaid and unaccounted for, and yet our whole economic system would fail without carers. Theologian Ina Praetorius from Zurich reflects on the future of our economy shaped by care rather than profit. Mark Bradford from the Carers Network in Westminster clarifies what unpaid care work is and what help is available for those affected. Unpaid carers are entitled to support, and the Swiss Church in collaboration with the Swiss Benevolent Society are happy to point you in the right direction.*

Rev. Carla Maurer

## We are all dependent on care by Ina Praetorius



All humans are dependent on care. Although we have got used to speaking of „independent individuals“, mostly referring to people who earn or own money, nothing can change the fact that we are all needy, that we are part of nature and that money is not edible: From the first to the last day of our lives we need to breathe, eat, drink, shit, dwell and sleep. So it's not only “the weak” but all who are dependent on people who care for them, producing food, cooking meals, keeping the air breathable and the water drinkable, constructing houses and streets, cleaning toilets, nursing the sick and so on.

### Economy is Care

The notion “economy” is derived from two Greek words: oikos and nomos. Oikos means house or household, nomos means rule or doctrine. So, the oikonomia originally was the theory of good housekeeping. According to Aristotle who was the first to systematically define the word “economy”, economists have to answer the question how can all human needs be fulfilled, based on a reasonable division of labor.

Aristotle, however, lived in ancient Athens which was a society of slaveholders. So,

he believed in a bipartited humanity consisting of “higher” spheres of independent male citizens and “lower” spheres of slaves, women, children (plus animals) whom they considered to be born to fulfill the needs of their masters. As most philosophers belonged (or wanted to belong) to the higher seemingly independent sphere they gradually began confusing the human condition with the condition of slaveholders who were permanently cared for by invisible hands. This is how the current fiction of man as “independent individual” came into being. And this is how the economy became a theory of money, markets and profits only. Gradually most economists simply forgot the fact that the fulfilling of the needs of billions of humans was their core business, and they never realized that half of the world's work, the care-work done mainly by women in private households, was unpaid yet the basis of the oikonomia.

### The Postpatriarchal Confusion

Meanwhile women, the former slaves and the “dependent” workers have unmasked the ideology that it is their “natural duty” to care for masters who, for their part, claim to be “independent”. Women found out that the God-like “invisible hand” that is supposed to mysteriously regulate markets in fact consists of billions of

invisible hands doing the necessary care-work day in day out without “financial incentives”, above all bearing, raising and nursing future workers in families. Many women have already stopped doing the traditional care work at home, striving for professional careers. However, as everybody still needs care, the unpaid private work does not disappear but is, for example, delegated to migrants from ex-colonies. As many of these migrants, however, have also stopped believing in their “natural duty” to care for masters the whole biparted construction is finally collapsing. This is what I call the “postpatriarchal confusion”. Today, in ending patriarchy, we literally do not know what is above and what is below any more. Although this makes us dizzy sometimes it is a good thing as we finally realize that all humans, men and women, children and adults, ex-masters and ex-slaves are dependent on each other.

### Many Ways Out

What will we do in the postpatriarchal confusion? We will stop believing in higher and lower spheres and humans will reorganize the world in a more adequate way. This is all the more urgent as nature itself, too, has begun to revolt: Climate is changing, glaciers are melting, extreme droughts and floods are becoming more and more frequent. We no longer can avoid

# Focus: Care and Economy

realizing that we humans are not superior to nature but part of it, in need of all the care that nature has always given for free: water, soil, air, plants, animals... For a long time humanity has taken for granted these gifts of nature, just as slaveholders have taken for granted the services of slaves. This misperception is coming to

an end as slavery has come to an end. Luckily there are already many hopeful social experiments going on around the world, reorganizing human neediness in a more gentle and equitable way. Let's look at them, let's join them and invent new economic systems.

Further reading: Ina Praetorius, *The Care-Centered Economy. Rediscovering what has been taken for granted*, Berlin (Heinrich Böll Stiftung) 2015

<https://www.boell.de/en/2015/04/07/care-centered-economy>



## Unpaid carers by Mark Bradford



A carer is anyone who cares in an unpaid capacity for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health

problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support.

**3 out of 5 of us** will become a carer at some point in our lives, looking after a family member or close friend.

**Every year more than 2 million people in the UK become a carer.** It can happen suddenly, often without any planning, leaving most carers coping alone without help or recognition.

Carers Network is a local independent charity working with carers who are looking after someone in Westminster, Hammersmith and Fulham or the City of London. Carers Network can help carers with support, including:

### Carer's Assessments

These provide a chance for the carer to discuss their life, and how being a carer is affecting it. This information is used to

work out what help the carer needs to be better supported in their caring role.

### Help with money

Many carers struggle to make ends meet. They may have had to give up work to care, or work less, and now find they need to spend more because of caring. They can receive help to get the money they require, for the things they need.

### Support groups

Here carers share experiences, meet kindred spirits and get practical advice from specialist support workers.

### Trips out

These include theatre trips and days out which can help carers take a much needed break from their caring role.

### Training and workshops

Carers Network runs sessions on important subjects such as first aid, stress management and falls prevention.

### Events

At these events carers hear from experts and celebrate the contribution of unpaid carers!

### Information and advice

Caring can be a minefield with information appearing both complex and confusing. Many carers do not know where to turn for help, or even that there is help out there. Carers Network try to be the helping hand and listening ear that they need.

To find out more about Carers Network please visit [www.carers-network.org.uk](http://www.carers-network.org.uk)

If you are an unpaid carer looking after someone in Westminster, Hammersmith and Fulham or the City of London please call 020 8960 3033 to register.

If you care for someone living in another London borough, please call Carers UK on 0808 808 7777 to find out which local carers centre can support you.

Carers Network is a local independent charity and any donations will be very gratefully received. Every penny donated goes to fund local services trips and activities for carers. To make a donation please visit [www.justgiving.com/carersnetwork/donate](http://www.justgiving.com/carersnetwork/donate) or contact the office on 020 8960 3033.

# People from our community

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*In this section we want to give people who are associated with our church a voice. Many of these people live in Switzerland. They are former members of the Swiss Church, regular visitors or supporters. Now that the funding from the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches is coming to an end, these individual contacts are more important than ever. This year, the 'Verein Ehemaliger Glieder der Schweizerkirche in London' (VEGSIL), which is the association of former members of the Swiss Church in London, held its annual meeting at the parish church of Sempach/Sursee. Reverend Hans Weber has supported the Swiss Church with business advice and fundraising in Switzerland, and therefore we thought we should find out a bit more about him. Most recently we received a generous donation of CHF 2'000 for our Christmas Fair. We have also received a donation of CHF 4'500 from the parish church of Wil-Hütswangen-Wasterkingen.*

*Rev. Carla Maurer*

## Rev. Hans Weber



My name is Hans Weber, and I am the Minister of the Reformed Church in Sempach. Every year in October, I travel to London with my confirmation class so they have the opportunity to learn more about other religions, the Church of England and about some of the social problems in the city. It is always part of our week to stop by at the Swiss Church to cook lunch with the Mothers Group and to talk to people affected by homelessness. It is great to have a church in London that can give us the necessary support to plan our trip, and Reverend Carla Maurer's walking tour connecting the Swiss Church with Westminster Abbey is very popular. Most importantly, the confirmation students return from London knowing that they have a home from home at 79 Endell Street where they can find support and friendship.

I live in Sempach with my wife Luzia and my daughter Nina. I came to theology late in my professional life. I felt that it was time for a change, and so I put my tie and my briefcase in the attic to live in a camper van with my family for a while. Before I became a Minister, I was an economist and my career was as Press Officer for the Swiss Railway SBB, for the Rigi bahn and other Swiss companies. Finances and business strategies were my daily bread.

The Swiss Church in London is at a crossroads in its history due to the phasing out of its funding by the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches. With my expertise in economy and theology, I try to support the Swiss Church as much as I can by networking and fundraising in Switzerland as well as giving business advice. It would be such a pity for the Swiss to lose their church in London! I look forward to be back at the Swiss Church next year, and who knows, some of you might drop in at Sempach one day. You would be very welcome!

# Announcements

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## Baptism



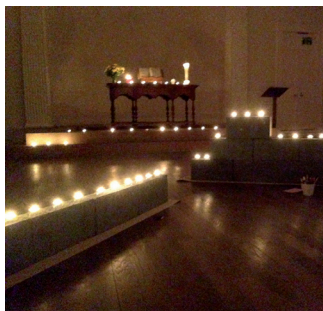
Naira, the daughter of Verena Hefti and Dean Johnstone, was baptised at the Swiss Church on 18 September 2016. May Naira's life be blessed with friendship and happiness.

"So do not fear, for I am with you;  
do not be dismayed, for I am your God.  
I will strengthen you and help you;  
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."  
(Isaiah 41:10)



# Events @ the Swiss Church

## Forthcoming events



### Sit in Silence

**Thursday 1 / 8 / 15 December, 5 - 6pm**

Step out of your daily routine to treasure a moment of quiet during the cold season. Everyone is invited to find a moment of peace in a space bathed in candlelight. You will have the opportunity to light a candle, write down a prayer or a thought at the 'Wailing Wall'.

You are invited to drop in and out at your own rhythm.  
Tea & Coffee will be served.



### Christmas Services

**Sunday 11 December, 3pm:**

#### Christmas Family Service in the Woods

Join us for stories and carols at our Family Christmas Service in the woods.  
Meet at 2.45pm outside Queens Wood Cafe (N10 3JP), 5min walk from Highgate station.

**Sunday 18 December, 5pm:**

#### Christmas Carol Service

Join us to celebrate Christmas with the talented Dieci Voices. This evening will feature performance and audience carols with readings. Mulled cider and mince pies will be served.



### Organ Recital

**Saturday 14 January, 5pm:**

#### Jonathan Hope, Gloucester Cathedral

Jonathan is Assistant Director of Music at Gloucester Cathedral, where he is the principal organist for the cathedral services and is also accompanist to the Gloucester Three Choirs Festival Chorus.

Entrance is free with retiring collection.

Peter Yardley-Jones and Julian Simmons produced a **CD with recordings of the Swiss Church organ**. The CD can be purchased at the Swiss Church office for £8.



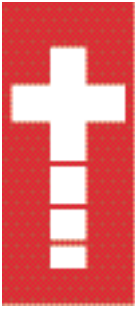
### Fundraiser

**Thursday 9 February, 7pm:**

#### Fondue Night

Join us on this fundraising event for melted Swiss cheese with bread, white wine, a pub quiz and goody bags and help us to raise funds for our work with the homeless, families and the elderly.  
Tickets are £35 / £25 concession.

Bookings taken via Lili in the office:  
020 7836 1418 or [Lilian.Jost@swisschurchlondon.org.uk](mailto:Lilian.Jost@swisschurchlondon.org.uk)



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*James 1:27*

*“Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God is this:  
to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.”*



***“I am of certain convinced that the greatest heroes are those who do their duty in the daily grind of domestic affairs whilst the world whirls as a maddening dreidel.”***

***(Florence Nightingale, 1820-1910  
English social reformer and founder of modern nursing)***

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