

Trustees Report

May 2024

Dear Members and Friends of the Swiss Church in London,

The year 2023 was marked by change with periods of uncertainty for the congregation, the Office Team, for our Members, as well as our many volunteers and friends.

The Interim Minister Harry Ching departed for a new post overseas at the end of May and the Swiss Church was left without a Minister over the summer period, until Carla Maurer returned from her maternity leave.

Carla Maurer then decided during the final weeks of 2023 to share her intention to resign in early 2024, in order to seek a new Ministry role and return to Switzerland with her young family.

The Trustees also experienced change and bid a fond farewell to a number of long standing and valued members and observers of the Consistoire.

The Trustees express thanks to Colin McIntyre, Jenny Breitschmid, Emma Brown, Yvon Tse as well as Robert Kaufeler.

Although the Consistoire remained without a President, Treasurer or Company Secretary, Katrin Frey stepped up as Vice President and helped steer the numerous activities together with the Minister and the other members of the Consistoire.

Notwithstanding all these changes, the many and varied activities of the Swiss Church continued and thrived.

The weekly local community outreach program to provide a breakfast for our homeless citizens in Covent Garden and the surrounding area 'Breakfast on the Steps' continued to bring hope and love to so many guests. Andreas Feller-Ryf and his team of dedicated volunteers continued to attract sponsorship and donations to ensure that the Swiss Church can continue to fund this important program.

The Arts Committee led by Diane Chappellay and Lizzy Drury in the Church Office built upon the existing platform of the Artist in Residence program to create further outreach and drive engagement with a large and diverse network in the community.

The ever-growing calendar of events is testimony to the importance of art as a catalyst for thought and discussion, and the Swiss Church provides the environment to foster this in an inclusive and welcoming space.

Our Director of Music Peter Yardley-Jones continued to provide an incredibly high level of musical accompaniment to church services with both his organ recitals as well as the support of the High Holborn Chamber Choir, the latter in exchange for regular practice facilities in the Swiss Church on a weekly basis.

The Trustees also wish to express their thanks to the entire Office Team for their achievements in 2023.

Therese Theurillat our Venue Manager had a particularly successful year in generating letting income and a high point, certainly from a financial perspective, was the 'Genesis' light show which attracted many hundreds of people into our beautiful building.

Towards the end of 2023 we were also able to identify a candidate to join the team as a new Finance Officer. Janice O'Brien subsequently joined the team in early 2024.

Towards the very end of 2023 the Trustees were able to identify and welcome two new members to the Consistoire, Lindsey Wiercioch as Arts Committee Trustee and Daniel Everett, who subsequently assumed responsibility as President and Chair of the Trustees in late November.

The Trustees thank all those that contributed towards supporting the Swiss Church through 2023, whether financially or in dedicating their time and skills to ensure that our work in the community continues to bring joy and hope.

Daniel P. Everett on behalf of the Consistoire

Katrin Frey, Cecile Mistry, Philip Maillardet, Lindsey Wiercioch, Niccolo Aliano and Thomas Wagner (Observer).