

# Saint Martin's, West Acton

## Parish Profile: Print only version

### A Letter from the Bishop

Thank you for your interest in the role of Vicar of St Martin's, West Acton and Chaplain at Twyford Church of England High School. I am delighted that you are exploring the possibility of applying for this role and I want you to know that there are many of us here in the Willesden Episcopal Area who are praying for those seeking to discern God's calling in this area.

As a Diocese, London has an audacious and ambitious vision to see every Londoner able to encounter the love of God in Christ. To serve this vision, we have committed ourselves to be churches that engender leadership that will nurture people of all ages and backgrounds to live out their faith among those with whom they do life Sunday to Saturday. We want to foster the emergence of a church that is visibly and meaningfully loving her neighbours. We wish to see a church landscape of ever-increasing varied configuration with new worshipping communities emerging in new and different ways alongside inherited ministry within parishes. We also hold to the aspiration of building church communities that will reflect the rich diversity of our city, welcoming all people across ethnic, cultural, and linguistic heritages, and safe places where we enable younger generations to flourish alongside others.

As an Episcopal Area we aspire to enable innovative expressions of ministry, actively partnering with our schools, chaplaincies and Fresh Expressions of Church. It has been encouraging to explore and develop new opportunities for the resourcing and revitalisation of mission and ministry across the Area. As you discern whether you are called to minister in Willesden, you will need a healthy dose of enthusiasm about being part of this fluid landscape.

Here in the Willesden Episcopal Area, we have been blessed with a rich diversity in theological and liturgical traditions. These have come with some remarkable examples of partnership and mutual support in mission and ministry across church traditions.

If this is something that you find exciting and daunting, then perhaps God is calling you to this role. Please keep reading, and if you need more insight into this parish and the Episcopal Area, do get in touch for an informal chat.

Yours in Christ's service,

**Lusa Nsenga-Ngoy**  
**Bishop of Willesden**

### A Letter from the Archdeacon

I am delighted to be able to commend St Martin's West Acton and Twyford Church of England High School\* to you and hope you will find the profile the PCC and congregation have written, and the job description from Twyford helpful.

This role is an exciting new collaboration between St Martin's and the Twyford Trust. We envisage that two thirds of your working life will be spent as Incumbent at St Martin's and one third (two days a week termtime) as chaplain at Twyford High School. The Diocese of London will provide the house and half a full time stipend and the school will provide the equivalent of half a stipend plus pension and National Insurance contributions.

As incumbent at St Martin's you will need to be skilled at working with and valuing the strong existing team and encouraging and growing new leaders. St Martin's has a family atmosphere, children and young people are taken seriously and well served. There is a commitment to community engagement and the connections with the Japanese congregation who meet in the church is a creative and important part of St Martin's identity.

Ealing is a diverse deanery, incorporating a wide range of church traditions and contexts. David Neno, the Area Dean, leads a supportive chapter which meets together regularly.

St Martin's relationship with Twyford High school, which is in the parish, is already positive and supportive. We believe that this role will help this important connection to flourish, that the two parts of the role will fit well together, with many pieces of work relevant to the church and chaplaincy equally. The previous incumbent at St Martins was not full time, so you will not be trying to negotiate the expectations created by the provision of a full-time incumbent on part time hours.

The vicarage is recently refurbished and has excellent public transport and road links.

If you would value an informal conversation about this post, please do not hesitate to be in touch with me at [archdeacon.northolt@london.anglican.org](mailto:archdeacon.northolt@london.anglican.org). I will also be on hand to support the post holder in developing this new role once appointed.

With every blessing for your discernment journey

**Catherine Pickford**  
**Archdeacon of Northolt**

\*Please note that 'High School' in this context means for children aged 11-18.

## **Who we are**

St Martin's West Acton is a friendly, happy and thriving church with a focus on worship, fellowship and community. We have a real sense of family where everyone is welcome and feels at home. We are 'middle of the road' Church of England with a fairly traditional style of worship with a high calibre of music.

We seek to know God better and grow in his love, as a church and as individuals. We aim to express our Christian faith in our daily lives and to be a caring congregation, supporting both our church family and wider community.

We have a committed and capable congregation with 150 people on the electoral roll and about 50-70 worshippers each Sunday. St Martin's is a great place for young people to engage with and develop their faith and we take pride in our growing children's ministry.

We have a steady flow of new members, with young families attracted by the local 'outstanding' Church of England primary and secondary schools. This, alongside our more established congregation, means we have a great mix of all ages.

We have strong links with the Japanese Anglican Church (UK) and are working with Ukrainian refugees in the area.

***"The connection across generations at St Martin's is very special."***

## **Our team**

St Martin's is blessed with a strong team, including a self-supporting associate priest, and 3 lay ministers, who work together to lead and coordinate worship, discipleship and pastoral care. St Martin's has a history of supporting and nurturing both lay and ordained ministry and has produced six ordinands over the last 35 years, as well as an ordinand who has recently completed their placement and will be ordained in June.

We currently have a Youth and Children's Work Apprentice who supports our children's ministry and is also our Communications Manager.

Other staff include our part-time administrator and our director of music. In addition, we have a troop of skilled and engaged volunteers in the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and/or part of one of many rotas, who all help to keep the church running smoothly.

The PCC and Standing Committee work with the clergy team to maintain the church, hall, St Martin's cottage and grounds, as well as to develop and deliver our vision. There are 5 sub-committees that drive each area and report back into the PCC: Worship, Community and Social, Mission, Fabric and Finance, and the Eco Group.

Find out more about our team on our website

## **The vicar we are seeking**

### **St Martin's West Acton**

We seek a pastoral priest who is comfortable with our more traditional style of worship, whilst helping us try new things and build on our musical heritage.

We are looking for someone who will help us to grow our faith, with the ability to translate the Bible and it's messages to modern life, in an open-minded, approachable and engaging way.

They need the ability to work well and engage with children and help us to expand our offering to young people, as well as helping us grow our congregation and extend our outreach.

They should be a strong leader and decision maker, capable of channelling our resources and skills.

The split role will need someone excited to shape and develop the role, with an organised, pragmatic approach to balancing the needs of the church and the school.

### **Twyford Church of England High School**

We are seeking a chaplain to work part time alongside the Trust Chaplain and chaplaincy team.

Part of the role is to enable students and staff to be equipped to be confident, humble, community minded citizens with a grounding that is distinctively Christian, but openly inclusive of students and staff from other religions (and none) within the school community.

They will need experience of working with young people, preferably in a secondary school context, and have skills in leading groups and 'engaging' public speaking.

## **What can St Martin's and Twyford Church of England High School offer you?**

- A unique opportunity to shape and develop this new role as joint parish priest and school chaplain and the chance to impact many young lives
- Assistance from a self-supporting associate priest and 3 licensed lay ministers
- Engaged and supportive congregation and volunteers, with a wide range of professional skill sets including a strong musical heritage.
- A friendly, diverse, kind and loving community with a fun mix of young and old, of tradition and energy
- A thriving Junior Church to build upon
- Stable income stream from hall and church rentals
- Established links with the Japanese Anglican Church (UK) and local Japanese community
- Recently refurbished vicarage, close to London, with excellent public transport and road links

## **Our vision for St Martin's West Acton**

**Our purpose is to be a caring, thriving Christian community, spreading the love of Christ, where all are welcome.**

We have dedicated time and prayer defining what we understand God's purpose is for St Martin's and have made great strides toward this over recent years. Looking forward we aim to build our church spiritually and increase our congregation, with a focus on these priorities:

### **Grow as disciples of Christ through inspiring worship, prayer and faith development**

- Build and enrich our faith and understanding of the Bible through inspiring, engaging services and teaching that is accessible and relevant to all.
- Enrich our worship through music.

### **Nurture and support our young people to grow in faith**

- Support younger children by building on our thriving Junior Church, Junior Choir, Junior Band and toddler groups.

- Develop our support for older children to keep them engaged within the church and wider community, in particular building on our links with Twyford Church of England High School.

**Care for and learn from each other and connect with and serve the wider community**

- Be a caring community where we recognise and support the needs of others
- Expand our involvement in our local community and our outreach and missionary activities to share God's love in the community.

**Delivering our vision: Next Steps**

- Develop our faith through regular and special services and beyond, running faith courses, prayer and discipleship groups
- Continue to use our church spaces in ways to support our wider community, working with existing and new local groups and societies, and continuing to provide our local Brownies and Guides groups a space for their meetings
- Increase our support for older children by developing groups or activities, including expanding our links with Twyford Church of England High School
- Grow our congregation through forging new relationships in the parish and encouraging more regular engagement from infrequent or lapsed congregation members
- Build on our pastoral ministry, including establishing a system for supporting church members who are unable to attend church in person
- Improve our finances and communications, in particular increasing planned giving, improving our communications with existing and new members and social media to promote our activities
- Continue the work of our Eco Church group aiming to reduce the church's carbon footprint and work toward the Silver Eco Church award

**Worship**

Our worship is Eucharistic, with the clergy, choir and servers wearing robes; and we're open to trying new things.

Our usual worship pattern is a sung Eucharist at 10.00am for 3 weeks in every month when our Junior church join us at the beginning of the service before going to their own service in the hall, and re-joining the main congregation for Communion.

On the first Sunday of each month we have an 8am Book of Common Prayer service of Holy Communion, followed at 10am by an All Age non-Eucharistic service. This is often lay-led and is a more informal service linked to a theme such as Harvest or Sea Sunday.

There is also a 6:30pm Evening Prayer service currently held on Zoom every Sunday and on Wednesdays we hold an informal Eucharist in the Parish Office, followed by a lively coffee club.

To support the large Japanese community in the parish, including a Japanese School and Kindergarten, we host the Japanese Anglican Church (UK). Led by Japanese Licensed Lay Minister, Yuki Johnson, we offer a monthly Sunday afternoon service in Japanese, online Bible study groups and as well as occasional joint worship time with the 10am Sunday morning service.

## **Music**

Music is a vital part of our worship at St Martins. We believe singing helps to unite us with each other and with God. We have a small, experienced choir, who lead our morning services with a high standard of singing hymns, traditional sung Eucharist, and anthems. They also support other events such as the Civic service at the Acton Care Centre and special anthems for our Coronation Service last year. Our annual Lessons and Carols service is one of the highlights of the year and is always well attended. In 2023 a 16 strong choir lead the service with beautiful music – the perfect start to the Christmas season.

To make music more accessible, we run a junior choir and church band for anyone who can play an instrument, who provide the music for our monthly all age services. We created Singing Sunday, featuring the congregation's favourite hymns, offer Taize style services and formed a 'congregational choir' who sang 'Carol of the Bells' at our last carol service.

## **Children and young people**

Children and young people are important to our church family and we have recently been lucky enough to have a Diocese of London Children's and Youth work apprentice for the last three years, whose enthusiasm has made this a growth area over the time he's been with us. He sadly leaves us this Autumn and we are currently planning how to continue to deliver and build on his successes.

The children are a special part of St Martin's and we have a thriving Junior Church attended by approximately 20 children each week, aged between 0 to 13. Junior church is held in the hall alongside the main service and is designed to mirror the main church service in a way that feels approachable and supportive.

Our junior church is blessed with a welcoming atmosphere that allows the children to meet with God in a comfortable, safe and accessible environment. We do this through different group activities, crafts and exploration of scripture in creative ways (including Ignatian Reflection and Lectio Divina). Activities have included decorating sunglasses to represent God's light, exotic fruit tasting for fruits of the spirit, and eating locusts just like John the Baptist! We do lots of crafts as well, which usually give the children something to take home and help them remember key messages.

We run a Godly Play service once a month to provide the children with a different approach to learning about God. Older children are also encouraged to participate in our all-age services, leading the prayers and readings as well as being part of the welcome team and sides people, helping them grow as confident young adults.

As children move to secondary school, attendance at St Martin's tends to dwindle and we're eager to address this by creating engaging groups and activities to support and engage with them, potentially across the wider deanery through the links with Twyford Church of England High School

## **Outreach and community connections**

We recognise our important position as a parish church with pastoral responsibilities and a desire to spread the love of Christ across the wider parish. St Martin's provides an important pastoral ministry to the community, including home visiting and a full range of services from joyful baptisms and

weddings to reflective and supportive funerals. We also hold an annual Memorial Service in collaboration with a local Funeral Directors

We provide a chaplaincy service to the Acton Care Centre for the Elderly, providing monthly services and their annual civic service. Our vicar is also the chaplain for the Wasps Rugby Club located near the church.

Our Japanese members run a monthly Japanese Community Café to provide pastoral care and fellowship. They also are an integral part of our annual Christmas and Summer fairs, providing musical entertainment, beautiful crafts and delicious snacks and treats.

We have a family from Ukraine who will be moving into St Martin's cottage. Since being with us, Olena has been the driving force behind our support for other refugees in the area, including food and clothing donations and occasional pop up cafes. Olena has also set up art classes for the wider community, met with local council and our local MP to raise the profile of St Martin's, secured several funding grants and gained a 'Community Access Scheme' certificate - allowing her to organise free tours to Royal Palaces for our community members.

We run regular Play and Stay sessions supporting mothers and toddlers from the congregation and wider community.

Both the church and the church hall are used extensively by the wider community and we pride ourselves on being a hub for community activities and clubs including a Montessori School, Questors Choir and a karate club. We also host the 4<sup>th</sup> Acton Brownies and Guides, who meet in our hall during the week, join us for Church parade at various services throughout the year and support our fundraising events for the church and other charities.

We encourage links with local schools through an annual Education Sunday service, which is well attended by the local Japanese School, Twyford Church of England High School, Christ the Saviour Primary School and the Montessori school as well as hosting annual services for Twyford High School, like their Carol Service,

In recent years we have been supporting Acton Homeless Concern, Mission to Seafarers, USPG, A Rocha UK, and Ealing Women's Refuge. We have an annual collection for Christian Aid and support the Children's Society as part of our Christingle Service. Our Harvest donations and other regular donations of gifts go to the women's refuge who are grateful for our longstanding support.

St Martin's is one of 28 members of the West London chapter of Citizens UK, we work together with other local institutions and Ealing council to make positive changes in our community. These include increasing the number of Living Wage employers in the borough, working with Ealing council to improve affordable housing availability in the borough and regularly meeting with councillors to collaborate on actions for the borough.

## **Social Events**

We run a whole range of events throughout the year to bring together the congregation and wider community, raise the profile of the church within the local parish, do a bit of fundraising and have lots of fun!

Recent successes have been our Jubilee and Coronation Street Parties in conjunction with CARA (Creffield Area Residents Association), where we closed the road and provided food and

entertainment for over 200 local residents, including attendance from a local Morris dancers group, a Glastonbury headliner, our local MP and Ealing's Representative Deputy Lieutenant.

We hold annual Summer and Christmas Fairs and are always looking for new ways to bring in new people. Our 2023 Fair not only had Santa's grotto but a Live Nativity petting area with donkey, Shetland pony, goats, sheep, chickens and ducks which attracted many families.

In the past we have held 'bring and share' lunches to celebrate Harvest, but switched to a Harvest Barn Dance in 2022, which was repeated in 2023 by popular demand.

We have hosted several theatrical performances in recent years, including a bi-lingual version of Shakespeare's 'Romeo and Juliet', and the 'Journey of the Magi' a sparkling production of dance, theatre, song and poetry, providing an entertaining way to celebrate Christmas. We are also part of the 'Ealing Arts Trail', hosting local artist Robert Newman for the last two years

## **Twyford Church of England High School**

Twyford Church of England High School is a mixed entry school which has a diverse ethnic and social mix. It has a majority of CofE applicants with other applicants including music scholars, those of other faiths, and applicants with an educational statement. The role of Chaplaincy is central to the pastoral life of The Twyford Trust, whose mission statement states "Jesus has come to bring life and life to the full." (John 10:10). This reminds us that although we are seeking for academic excellence, we primarily seek to build students who are equipped to be confident, humble, community minded citizens with a grounding that is distinctively Christian, but openly inclusive of other religions and none, within the school community. The chaplaincy role at Twyford Church of England High School is particularly distinctive as the school has a majority intake from Anglican schools in the Willesden area of the London Diocese. The school has a longstanding Christian fellowship which is run by volunteers and staff from the school.

<https://twyford.org.uk>

## **About the area**

Located in the London Borough of Ealing, leafy West Acton has a hugely diverse, international population, reflected in our wonderful selection of local shops & restaurants. This provides great opportunities to build new relationships within the community and expand our outreach.

Benefitting from significant new home building and regeneration, the area is well known for its excellent transport options, including the newest additions of Elizabeth Line connections and a Superloop bus route around London. In the Deanery of Ealing and Archdeanery of Northolt, the Parish has a population of **5,146** and covers an area of 0.3 square miles.

## **The Church**

The church was consecrated on St Martin's day, 11th November 1906, by Bishop Arthur Foley Winnington-Ingram, Bishop of London from 1902 to 1938. During the 1930s, vestries were added to the building and there are now numerous rooms to the back of the church including the choir vestry. There is a small kitchen in the church itself, mainly used for tea and coffee after our services and other social events in the church.



The Parish Office is accessible from the church, but also externally, and includes the main office and a meeting room that is used for our weekly informal Eucharists, PCC meetings and other various events as well as being an additional rentable room.

## **The Hall**

During the 1960s a sizeable hall was added to the church with additional toilet facilities and an “industrial standard” kitchen. The hall is rented long-term on term-time weekdays to a very established Montessori Pre-School, and rented out most evenings & Saturday mornings to various groups and can also be hired for parties, along with our bouncy castle which is very popular with our young people.

## **St Martin’s Cottage**

When the hall was built, St Martin’s Cottage was also added. It’s a one-bedroom flat and was renovated in 2015 with a new kitchen and bathroom being installed as well as being decorated throughout – all paid for by fundraising. The cottage currently provides ‘House for Duty’ accommodation for our Youth Work Apprentice.

## **The Gardens**

The front gardens of the Church host a Grade II listed memorial in our Remembrance Garden that was unveiled on 1 November 1919 as a permanent testament to the sacrifice made by the members of the local community who lost their lives in the First World War. It commemorates 36 local servicemen who fell during the First World War. This provides a poignant focal point for our gatherings on Remembrance Sunday.

## **The Vicarage**

Our vicarage is a well appointed detached property with off street parking for two cars, situated 2 mins walk away from the Church. Like the Church, it is located on a peaceful side street. It was refurbished five years ago and has a large garden.

## **Our Finances**

As many churches we have been impacted by pressures on income from donations, however we do have a strong income stream from the rental of the hall. We are currently paying a reduced Common Fund payment and aim to increase this and continue to stabilise our finances through:

- Improving our stewardship programme with existing and new members, including encouraging more planned giving
- Increasing our congregation numbers with new and existing members
- Reviewing the income opportunities from our buildings