

A U T U M N 2 0 1 5



ST STEPHEN'S HOUSE  
**NEWS**



INSIDE

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**New Vice Principal announced**  
**An ordinand in New York**

• **Writing the new College Grace**  
• **Restoring the Chapel organ**

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# PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME

Welcome to our Newsletter for 2015. We hope you will be engaged and enthused by what is going on



at St Stephen's House, and enjoy reading about the way in which the work of our staff and students is making a contribution to the Church, to academic life and to the world of education. We value the interest and support of our old members, particularly at a time of great change for theological education and for higher education in general. The College remains confident that through all these changes our core commitment to encouraging vocation in a community inspired by the ethos of the Oxford Movement remains valuable and relevant to the needs of the contemporary world.

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The organ in the College church, St John the Evangelist

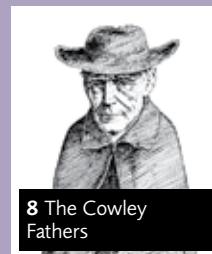


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**Editor:** Rachel Makari

**Front and rear photographs:** Phillip Babcock photography  
With many thanks to all contributors.

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# NEWS IN BRIEF

## Congratulations...

...to all SSH students on their examination results this year. We're delighted to report two candidates were awarded first class honours in the Bachelor of Theology, one in the BA in Theology, and one

candidate was awarded a Distinction in the Certificate for Theology Graduates. Distinctions were also awarded to two Masters students in Theology, and Islamic Studies & History.

## Rugby Blue

PGCE student Basil Strang, 22, was recently awarded a rugby blue for competing for the University in the Varsity Rugby match, which is played between the Oxford and Cambridge 1st teams at Twickenham Stadium. Describing it as 'one of the best things I have ever done', Basil was part of a winning Oxford

team, who won by a record margin of 43:6, scoring the most points ever recorded in a Varsity match.



Matt Henderson

## Church of England Inspection Report

The Ministry Division of the Church of England recently published its latest inspection report of the College, praising its 'clear and distinctive identity which informs all aspects of its life' and highlighting 'a community at ease and

comfortable with embracing a variety of perspectives and traditions on numerous issues whilst situated clearly within a distinct theological and spiritual tradition'. The full report is available on the Church of England website.

## Cloisters award

The recently – and beautifully – restored cloisters here at St Stephen's House have received an award from The Oxford Preservation Trust in recognition of the positive contribution the design and restoration has made to Oxford.

Now in their 38th year, the Oxford Preservation Trust Awards are judged by a

panel of experts from across all walks of the City and Universities, chaired by Professor Malcolm Airs, OPT trustee and eminent architectural historian.

The transformation of the College Cloisters has enabled the space to be used for a wide range of art exhibitions, private celebrations and even a play.

## New Vice Principal announced

Revd Dr Mark Clavier has been announced as the new Vice Principal and Charles



Marriott Director of Pastoral Studies. Fr Clavier brings a wealth of experience to the role, having served in parish ministry in the US and UK for fifteen years before taking up his current post as Dean of Residential Training and Acting Principal at St Michael's College, Llandaff. He has published books on the theology of St Augustine, and the challenge of consumerism to Christian believing, and is an energetic hill walker. We look forward to welcoming him and his family to the college in the New Year.

## SSH 2015 Alumni Reunion

The St Stephen's House Alumni Reunion Garden Party took place on Saturday 19th September



2015 here at the College. A record number of old members, plus their guests and families were welcomed, and enjoyed lunch, Mass and a tour of the College.

We will be in touch about upcoming alumni events in future, and these will also be advertised on our website, [www.ssho.ox.ac.uk](http://www.ssho.ox.ac.uk).

## Alumni appointments – Congratulations to...

- Revd Canon Judy French (SSH 1989–91), who took up the post of the First Archdeacon of Dorchester recently. Prior to this, Judy was Vicar of Charlbury with Shorthampton in West Oxfordshire for 17 years, and also served as Area Dean of Chipping Norton Deanery for five years.
- Rt Revd Philip North (SSH 1989–92), on his consecration as the eleventh Bishop of Burnley.
- Revd Dr Andrew Davison (Tutor in Doctrine, SSH, 2006–10), the Starbridge Lecturer in Theology and Natural Sciences in The University of Cambridge, on his installation as Canon Philosopher of St Albans Cathedral.
- Revd Canon Carl Turner (SSH 1983–85), on his appointment as XIII Rector of Saint Thomas Church Fifth Avenue, New York.

## Welcome to...

- Caspar Doyle, who recently joined as Conference and Accommodation Manager. Please do get in touch with Caspar if you're interested in staying at St Stephen's House, or for any enquiries regarding booking a conference or event with us. [assistantbursar@ssho.ox.ac.uk](mailto:assistantbursar@ssho.ox.ac.uk) / 01865 613504
- Rachel Makari, recently appointed as Director of Development & Alumni Relations. Please do get in touch with Rachel for anything relating to alumni relations, or to discuss how you can support St Stephen's House and its endowment appeal. [rachel.makari@ssho.ox.ac.uk](mailto:rachel.makari@ssho.ox.ac.uk) / 01865 613500



James Whitbourn

## The Choral Institute at Oxford

A joint enterprise between St Stephen's House and Westminster Choir College, Princeton, USA, The Choral Institute at Oxford now prepares for its fourth year. In July, the College hosted some eighty international students for an intensive and immersive study of choral conducting. Tuition came from Oxford and Westminster Choir College professors,

directed by St Stephen's House Honorary Research Fellow James Whitbourn and his American counterpart James Jordan. The week also included an historic performance of the Bernstein Chichester Psalms at The University Church on the 50th anniversary – to the day – of its first performance. The collaboration is set to develop and expand.

## Pye Charitable Settlement award

The Pye Charitable Settlement has generously awarded the College a grant of £5,000 towards the costs associated with restoring the Church organ. Fundraising continues in order to meet the full cost of restoring the organ and its Grade I listed Bodley case. This intricately decorated case is stunning, and stands out in an otherwise fairly simple church building. The organ itself is also quite unusual, in that it has one

'manual' (the term for an organ keyboard), which is split so that you can have two different sounds at once.

At the moment, the organ is used mostly in church services, and only very occasionally in concerts. But the restoration would open up other possibilities, including organ recitals and other innovative uses by the wide range of musicians that SJE Arts now attracts on a regular basis.

## Vigil for Peace in the Middle East

At the beginning of Hilary Term this year, one of the ordinand tutor groups designed and organised a Prayer Vigil for Peace in the Middle East Taking place in the nave of the church one Sunday evening, around 30 people attended, gathering in a circle around an image of Our Lord on the Cross lit by candlelight. Students and Staff were joined by representatives from

many other Christian Communities, both in the Cowley Deanery and further afield, including Blackfriars and members of various colleges. In an atmosphere of contemplation and earnest yearning for an end to violence in one of the most troubled parts of the world, the group engaged in prayer, the singing of hymns and chanting of psalms.



# WRITING THE NEW COLLEGE GRACE

James Whitbourn, Honorary Research Fellow, St Stephen's House

When Reginald H. Adams' book *The College Graces of Oxford and Cambridge* gets its next edition, it will require an extra double page spread. At the instigation of Steven Martin (former ordinand and music director), St Stephen's House now has its own Latin grace. Written by Nigel Palmer, who also studied at the College, it has been created in both full-length and shortened versions, and I was thrilled to be invited to set the words to music.

A quick flick through the book of college graces shows that ours is by no means the longest: many colleges in the two universities are in serious danger of seeing the whole meal go cold while their graces are read although a handful go to the other extreme with the two-word grace 'benedictus benedicat'.


Our grace, though, makes a good claim to be among the most epic in nature. It does much more than merely giving thanks for bountiful providence. Our collegiate body finds itself joining with its patron in seeing the heavens open and beholding the vision of the glorious body of Our Lord, as can be seen in the text on the right.

It soon became clear that my setting would need to reflect not only this epic quality but also the distinctive characteristics of the college. Given the medieval revivalist qualities that permeate not only Bodley's buildings for the Society of St John the Evangelist but also the influential work of the Oxford Movement on which modern Anglo-Catholicism is based, there is more than a hint of medieval revival about the music too. The 'Cantus' voice begins as a rhythmicised plainchant.

It sits above a voice part known as the 'tenor', which sounds a repeating rhythmic pattern: the so-called isorhythmic device much loved in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Eventually, it builds to a series of choral Amens which embellish the music used for the word 'gloriosi'. It happens that ours is one of the few colleges in which dinner is served in a room possessing an organ (most large-scale dinners take place in our wonderful church), so there is even an optional part for that.

The grace can be performed by all combinations of male and female voices, accompanied or unaccompanied. ♣

## The Grace (with translation by Nigel Palmer)



*Gratias  
agimus tibi,  
Domine Jesu  
Christe, qui  
propter salutem nostram gaudium tua magna  
misericordia nobis dedisti. Da nobis gratiam ut  
non modo huius mundi res consideremur sed  
quoque cum Sancto Stephano patrono nostro  
semper conspiciamur caelos apertos et gloriosi  
corporis tui visionem, qui vivis et regnas in  
saecula saeculorum. Amen*

We give thanks, Lord Jesus Christ, to you who, for our health, have given us joy through your great mercy. Give us grace that we may not only look to the things of this world, but also with Saint Stephen our patron we may always see the heavens open, and the vision of your glorious body, who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen



Icon of St Stephen, commissioned by the student body as a leaving gift for outgoing Vice Principal Fr Damian Feeney



**"This is the heart of priesthood, its rich privilege – to go again and again to the altar, to invoke the Spirit and so reveal Christ And to find the means by which people... may be touched by his very real presence in the world... there is no task, no job, no life, quite like this one." Fr Damian Feeney, May 2015**

# FAREWELL TO FATHER DAMIAN FEENEY

VICE PRINCIPAL,  
ST STEPHEN'S HOUSE,  
2009–2015

At the end of Hilary term 2015, St Stephen's House Vice Principal and Charles Marriott Director of Pastoral Studies, Fr Damian Feeney, left to join the Diocese of Lichfield.

Fr Damian's position situated him at the heart of the life and work of the College, and his pastoral care and influence manifested itself though all his work; from admissions to placements, management to mentoring, and daily meals to community celebrations.

He welcomed new students each year with an open house at his family's Moberly Close home, and remained present and available to students and their families throughout their time here and beyond.

Fr Damian spent his first year at St Stephen's House on his own whilst his wife, Fiona, was finishing her headship post at two schools and his children Rebecca, Patrick and Eleanor continued their studies.

A year later, the family, including dogs, Charles and Patch, cat, Smudge, joined him. "I have always enjoyed college life here, especially the way the community has taken the family into their hearts. It says a lot about St Stephen's House. The children have always felt really welcome here".

Fr Damian notes close ties between his work at St Stephen's House and his parenting. "What we all really need is encouragement." When his children face life challenges, they need a dad to say a gentle word. Students need to hear the same thing.

His colleagues observe that Fr Damian's gifts to the College extend beyond his care for students to his strong solidarity with and work on behalf of the staff. The House Council and the staff appreciate his work on behalf of the College in the Church of England and the wider community of East Oxford has benefited from his many community initiatives, such as the Passion Play of 2012.

But Fr Damian remains typically humble: "I've been very conscious of my own lack of academic qualifications. I had not been a student at Oxford, nor had I read theology as my first degree, but as part of my later formation process. But no one at the College ever made me feel inferior".

Instead, St Stephen's House encouraged him to expand his ministry for the greater church, resulting in Fr Damian writing for church publications and spending sabbatical time in South Australia and in Germany helping dioceses developing plans for growth.

During his six years at the St Stephen's House, Fr Damian says he has learned many things, perhaps most typically highlighting that "I've also learned not to take myself too seriously. I'm all for having a good time, for laughing. It's not appropriate in all circumstances, but much of the time it can help, a lot!". He will be remembered for his laughter, his warmth, and his dedication to all of the ways that theological education helps the church grow.

On the future of St Stephen's House, Fr Damian's hopes focus on the importance of the Church of England attending to what the College offers. "The place of the residential seminary needs to be

"I have been captured by his combination of passion for the gospel, and his pastoral gifts and sensitivity: a passion for mission, for getting 'out there' and witnessing to Christ in all places, with the greatest seriousness and yet an equal dedication to having fun."

*Former student, Fr Oliver Petter, St Michael's Camden Town*

"His is easy to talk to, a good listener. He drew the rest of the community into the hospitality he demonstrated. He taught us by his example how to respond to people in need of care."

*Mary Fisher, SSH student*

"I received so much from Fr Damian in my formation for the priesthood. He has the 'pastor's heart' about which he taught so clearly and passionately, always proving his principles in the care and encouragement he gave to the members of the House. His passionate insistence that the vulnerable should be at the centre of priestly ministry, and that holiness grows through ordinary acts of service, made a deep impression on me."

*Former student, the Revd Doctor Dominic Keech*

reaffirmed. The recent Ministry Division Inspection Report recognised the distinctive contribution the House has to make, as an Oxford Movement response and as part of The University. The question the Church of England should be asking now is 'How do we make more of this resource to help the church?'

In conclusion, he notes of his experience at the College, "a good friend once told me, 'whatever else happens, you will always have the fact that you were Vice Principal of St Stephen's House'. It's been a privilege, especially to have the chance to work with students at the individual level. Six years later, it is time to move on." ♥

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[Dr Margaret B. Adam teaches ethics at SSH](#)

[Fr Damian is now the vicar of the Parish of the Most Holy Trinity, Ettingshall, Wolverhampton, and Mission Advisor to the Catholic Parishes of the Diocese of Lichfield. When Fiona finishes her headship in Great Milton, she will begin new headship in Wolverhampton. Eleanor and Patrick are now at university, and Rebecca is a Pastoral Assistant in Camden. Dogs Charles and Patch have departed, and a new dog, Noot, carries on the Feeney family Jack Russell tradition.](#)



# THE COWLEY FATHERS

**In 2014, the trustees of the Fellowship of St John the Evangelist launched an international research project into the history of the Cowley Fathers, the monastic community that occupied the present College buildings before St Stephen's House moved from Norham Gardens in 1980. It is being directed by Dr Serenhedd James, an Honorary Research Fellow at St Stephen's House, who explains more about the project.**

I have felt an affinity with the Cowley Fathers since my first association with St Stephen's House, nearly fifteen years ago. In fact, it would be impossible for anyone who has passed through the College since 1980 not to feel one.

The growth of the College since its move from Norham Gardens means that its recent history is inextricably interwoven with that of the English province of Richard Meux Benson's Society of St John the Evangelist (SSJE), whose buildings we now occupy. The SSJE was the first enduring religious community for men in the Church of England (CofE), and its history is an important strand of the history of the Catholic movement: both in its restrained second-generation days from 1866, and in the later period that John Betjeman described as having been a time when the Catholic faith in the CofE was "taught and fanned to a golden blaze".

At home – and apart from their ascetic life and daily round of prayer – the Cowley Fathers led missions, published books on various topics, and ran residential retreats for clergy and laymen. With their cassocks and shovel-hats they were a familiar sight in Oxford, and were in great demand as confessors and spiritual directors: Betjeman and C.S. Lewis were among their penitents. In its colonial work the English

province collaborated with several women's orders – most notably with the All Saints Sisters of the Poor, their near neighbours on Leopold Street; with the Community of St Mary the Virgin at Wantage; and with that of St John the Baptist at Clewer – to run hospitals and schools.

The signs of the former life of the College are everywhere. The recent acoustic work in the refectory, for example, became necessary because it was not built as a room designed for talking. Many people reading this will remember having to strain to hear their neighbours in the convivial din of a Guest Night Dinner; but the monks' meals were silent, with a reading read from a lectern that occupied the alcove where the fire door now is. Other development plans have involved digging out the original blueprints of the New Mission House (the part of the building that we call "King"), copies of which now adorn my office wall, thanks to the Bursar.



Father Benson

The most lasting and poignant memory of the College's former inhabitants is, however, in the College Chapel. There, behind the stalls where the members of the community kneel for corporate prayer twice a day, is inscribed the almost entire necrology of the members of the order. I say "almost", because I am not quite sure that it is complete – something that will be put right in due course. However, to anyone who takes the time to read the names, it gives an idea of how far-flung the work of SSJE was. Daughter houses were established in Scotland and London, and then in the United States, South Africa, and India. An independent American province was erected in 1914, which went on to found other houses in Canada, Japan, and Korea.

The archives of the English province of SSJE are now cared for by Lambeth Palace; but my work has also taken me to the United States, where I was delighted to be able to spend some time with Br Geoffrey Tristram SSJE and the American brethren at Cambridge, MA. I hope to return to the States next year, and also to travel to Johannesburg and Cape Town to view material there. In the fullness of time the work will be turned into a book: the first historical study of this remarkable order since Peter Anson's *Call of the Cloister*.

Fr Benson would recognise some of the aspects of the life of the College today: particularly its daily round of work and worship, prayer and study, and its deep rootedness in the Catholic faith. He would deplore the sofas in the Common Room, however, as his Rule forbade the brethren from sitting on them. Heaven only knows what he would have to say to the Principal about the chandelier. ♥





# A NEW FUNDRAISING FOCUS

## Why give to St Stephen's House?

St Stephen's House is committed to the pursuit of excellence in everything it does: the formation of priests in the Catholic tradition of the Church of England, and broader student education through its role as a Permanent Private Hall of the University of Oxford.

The House Council and the leadership team have succeeded in overcoming a series of challenges over recent years, including addressing issues associated with ageing and listed buildings, the modernisation of College facilities and accommodation, and smoothing out unpredictability in funding for students.

The College now has a clear business plan and sound financials, but unlike many colleges within the University of Oxford, lacks major funds or a wealthy alumni base.

St Stephen's House is committed to securing the future work and tradition of the College over years to come, and we need your help to do so.

Fundraising at the College has taken on fresh focus recently, with the launch of a new appeal aimed at securing a recurring future income for St Stephen's House.

Following consultation and discussion, the House Council elected to focus its immediate fundraising efforts on a new Endowment Appeal to provide the College with a regular and stable income for years to come.

The aim of the Endowment appeal is to raise £2.5 million, which will be invested to generate an income of approximately £100,000 each year for the College.

Crucially, this source of income will enable the House Council, Principal and Bursar and to allocate money freely to the areas of greatest need within the College, as opposed to other forms of giving, which whilst vital, are often tied to specific areas, such as student bursaries or the funding of teaching posts.

It is anticipated that the income from the Endowment fund will concentrate on three key areas: Buildings, Students and Teaching.

As well as appealing to alumni and 'friends' of the College, we will also be exploring a range of other avenues, including charitable Trusts and Foundations. In addition, a variety of initiatives will be launched in support of the Endowment Appeal throughout 2016, so do keep an eye on the website for more information. ♥

➡ Please see the rear cover of this newsletter for ways you can support St Stephen's House.

# AN ORDINAND IN NEW YORK



Central Park in blossom



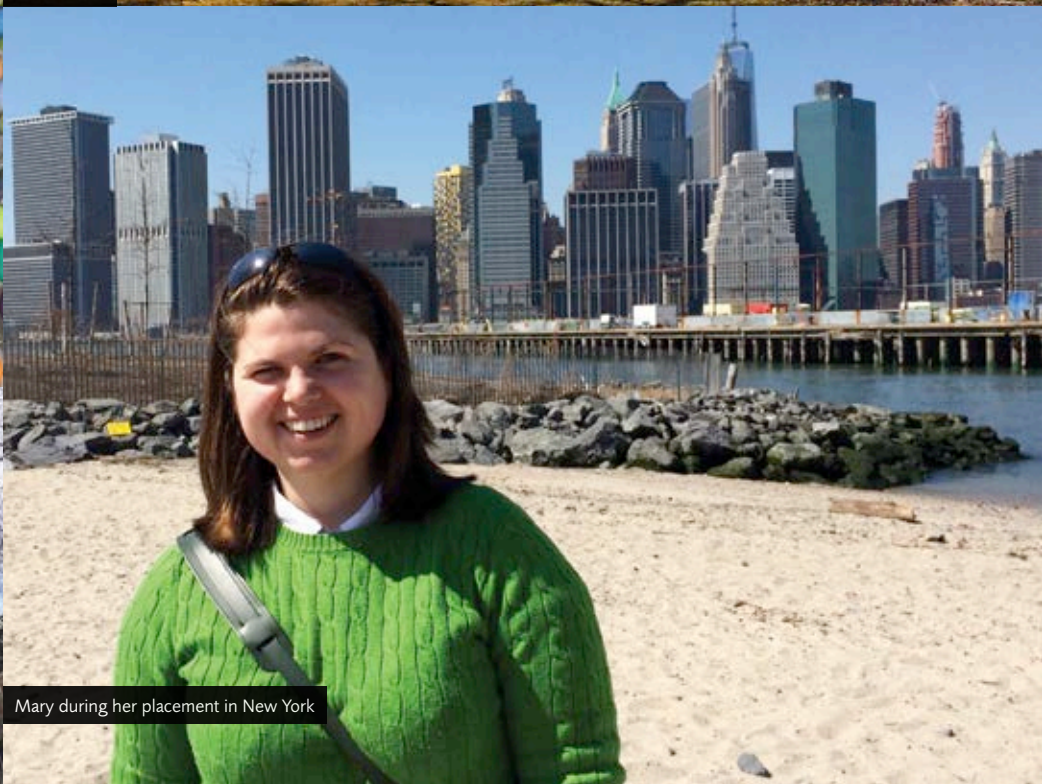
Central Park



Dyed eggs for Easter at St Barth's, Midtown



The Episcopal Church of St John the Divine



Mary during her placement in New York

**For three weeks during the Easter vacation, ordinand Mary Fisher was on placement in New York City. She spent two weeks in The Church of St Matthew and St Timothy in Upper Westside and a week at St Barth's, Midtown, assisting with their outreach programmes.**

### **Why did you choose this particular placement and what were you hoping to get out of it?**

Having spent a month on placement at St James, Piccadilly, UK, in the summer of 2014, I observed how a busy city centre church serves its community in a place where two very different lifestyles clash, that of the poorest in society and the wealthiest

I was curious to see how a similar city reached out to their community elsewhere and so I arranged this placement through some contacts with the Diocese in New York City, who suggested two rather different churches that do some interesting things.

One, in Upper Westside (St Matthew and St Timothy), runs a soup kitchen on Sundays and a basketball programme for the children in the area to help get them off the rather unpleasant (and often dangerous) streets after school. This church was bilingual (Spanish and English), not particularly wealthy, or home to a large congregation or team running it, but nevertheless found time and some money to help feed the hungry and support the young people in the area.

St Barth's in Midtown was a rather different set-up: It is a much larger church with a huge team of priests and support staff. This church's outreach included operating soup kitchens, a 'choice food pantry' (similar to a food bank), and a women's night shelter with a team of around 70 volunteers, some from the church and others from volunteering groups.

### **Describe what you did during the placement?**

A wide range of things! I served at Mass, painted church walls, preached on Good Friday, prepared & distributed food for the homeless, I also dyed 250 Easter eggs, slept in a night shelter, met parishioners, played basketball, helped people navigate their way round the choice food pantry and took part in all the liturgies that Holy Week involves.

### **Any particular highlights?**

One of the things I enjoyed most was dying Easter eggs with the children at St Matthew and St Timothy's church. It allowed me a chance to speak with them and hear their stories and ask them what they thought Easter was about and why we were dying eggs at all.

### **And the low points or challenges?**

Speaking no Spanish at all in the first church was a real challenge on occasions, but I usually managed to smile at the ladies who were talking at me in Spanish and I think we understood each other.

One of the main challenges was being so close to terrible poverty in what I think must be one of the most capitalist cities in the world. At the women's night shelter there were seven women, five of whom were in a process to be housed, whilst the other two (ladies in their seventies) were not. I had to let these two women go back out on to the street at 6am on a wet, windy and cold day; it felt incredibly unjust

### **What was the most uplifting aspect of your trip?**

I was greatly struck by the sense of community among the homeless, they would help each other and ask after people they had not seen for a while as well as take food to them. They had nothing, yet somehow shared what they did have, which was in stark contrast to those in the buildings around them.

### **Is there anything in particular will you take forward from this placement, and if so what and how?**

It would be the fact that there is hope to be found everywhere and there is always something that you can do to help others and support your community. Wherever my priesthood takes me I hope I will be able to listen to what is not said and discern the needs and gifts of the community I find myself in. ♥

# AN INDEPENDENT JOURNEY TO ST STEPHEN'S HOUSE



Martin in Afghanistan in 2010, deploying by United States Black Hawk helicopter

Independent student Martin Gliniecki is a 52 year-old British Army officer. He is studying for a DPhil in theology at St Stephen's House, researching an area of Just War theory: 'A Christian response to discrimination in asymmetric warfare'.

His recent military appointments have included time spent within Defence Intelligence in London, a tour in Iraq as Chief of Operations in the NATO headquarters and Commanding Officer of the Army School of Ammunition, where all of the UK's bomb disposal operators were trained until recently.

In 2011, Martin completed a ten month tour of Afghanistan as the Chief of Staff, Counter-Improvised Explosive Device Branch, in General Petraeus' HQ International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Most recently, he moved to Australia on an exchange posting as Directing Staff, Capability and Technology Management College, Australian

Defence Force Academy where, as a Fellow of the University of New South Wales, Martin taught engineering relating to military weapons, vehicles, equipment and logistics.

Martin's academic background includes bachelors degrees in mathematics (Manchester) and theology (Queen's Belfast) and masters level degrees in Defence Technology (Cranfield) and Social Sciences (Kings College London).

Martin is a Chartered Engineer, has completed Advanced Staff College training at the UK Defence Academy, and is also a qualified a bomb disposal officer.

He is married to Susan, a bank manager, and has two sons: Alexander, 24, who is currently living in Australia but due to return home early next year in order to fulfil his desire to become an army officer, and Christopher, 22, who works in the hospitality industry in Basingstoke.



Martin with US Chaplain Calvin Dixon, whilst serving in Afghanistan



Martin and his family at an Investiture at Buckingham Palace for the award of the Queen's Gallantry Medal, June 2006

### **Martin describes his route to St Stephen's House...**

"I was baptised into the Church of England although more by custom than a deeply held religious belief by my parents. It was only later in life that I came to faith myself, in my early to mid-30s. Since then, my faith has grown although it has been occasionally challenging (similar to the stock exchange is how I try and explain it – fluctuating but always trending upwards over time).

"It took me some years to find my vocation, a period that included much research as well as individual and collective prayer.

"In order to discover more of my faith I read theology part-time at Queen's University, Belfast, between 2002 and 2008, which assisted in my understanding and also my discernment in what I once believed was a call to the priesthood. In 2009, I was sponsored by the UK Bishop to the Armed Forces to attend a Bishops Advisory Panel,

however I was not recommended for Ordination training, which at the time was a devastating blow. It did, however, strengthen my resolve, as I continued my army career and commenced further studies, ultimately culminating with me becoming a DPhil candidate here at St Stephen's House in 2011.

"I had originally become aware of St Stephen's House when I was seeking selection for ordination training – my own faith is aligned closely with the traditions at the College. So when I later applied to do research at The University of Oxford, it seemed the natural choice to reside here when I was accepted.

"I have greatly enjoyed and welcomed the opportunities to develop educationally and spiritually during my time here and look forward to continuing to do so until my research is complete, which will be just prior to my retirement from the Army in a few years' time." ♥



Iolanthe – Oxford University Gilbert & Sullivan Society



Ian Anderson plays Jethro Tull



# SJE ARTS: FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH INTO 2016



Gwilym Simcock Quartet & Orchestra of St John's

Many of you may already be aware of the improvements made to our magnificent church over recent years, and its bright future as a concert venue alongside its integral role in worship at the College. As the SJE Arts 2015 International Piano Series comes to a close, here we look back at the transformation of the beautiful church of St John the Evangelist, and some of the highlights of the SJE Arts programme in 2016.

It was 1980 when St Stephen's House moved from North Oxford to its present site, the Cowley Fathers' monastic complex on Marston Street. A spacious and architecturally significant site, many of the buildings were in a state of disrepair. Latterly, the Fathers had struggled with upkeep and, in particular, the magnificent G.F. Bodley designed Grade I listed church was in a sad condition: the roof leaked, the original painted ceilings were damaged, the heating no longer fit for purpose. Mass on Sundays was a punishingly cold experience!



Kerry Ellis &amp; Brian May

It required vision to look beyond this: to see how the church could have new life breathed into it, how opening the doors to a wider audience might help support the upkeep, while all the time maintaining the primary purpose as a place of worship.

Fortunately, vision was in plentiful supply. Playing on the church's two particular assets, a superb acoustic and the capacity to seat 500 people, a bold decision was taken to create what Oxford had always lacked – a mid-sized concert venue.

Basic repairs were done, under-floor heating installed, the non-original pews replaced with comfortable chairs and after a lot of hard work, SJE Arts launched in December 2011 for a joyful inaugural performance by the European Union Baroque Orchestra.

Almost immediately, word spread and bookings started: twenty in the first full year, fifty in the second, then seventy and in 2015 around ninety filling the diary – almost as many as is possible, allowing for the College's programme of worship and other special events.

As more and more concerts took place, increasing improvements became possible: both north and south aisles were re-roofed and insulated, the lighting upgraded and staging added. In 2012 the jewel in the crown of SJE Arts, a four year old Steinway D concert grand piano, was sourced in Granada, Spain and purchased with the kind assistance of The Wolfson Foundation. This superb instrument is now the centrepiece for the SJE Arts International Piano Series, entering its third season in 2016.

The Piano Series was devised with a specific aim: to showcase a mix of the very best performers alongside rising stars, and especially to offer the young and talented a helping hand. In 2015, the internationally renowned pianist John Lill performed Beethoven to a thrilled audience, and one of the most exciting young pianists in the world today, 21 year old Benjamin Grosvenor also featured.

2016 promises the fullest programme yet with performances by two of the greats, Angela Hewitt and Imogen Cooper, along with rapidly rising stars Freddy Kempf and Javier Perianes, as well as the exceptional Japanese talent Maki Sekiya, and an appearance by Martin James Bartlett, winner of the BBC Young Musician of the Year Award 2014.

From the start, SJE Arts has offered an incredible variety: music ranging from the rock group Jethro Tull to a *capella* with The Sixteen, poetry readings by the likes of Carol Ann Duffy and Roger McGough and lectures, including one on the Physics of Time from the wildly popular Professor Brian Cox.

2016 is set to be no exception. The diary is already crammed with highlights including a visit from the charismatic Norwegian jazz pianist Tord Gustavssen, a St John Passion and Handel's *Dixit Dominus*, performances by the Barbican and Leonore Piano Trios, an appearance from renowned harpsichordist 'Trevor Pinnock and Friends' and some fascinating collaborations between the Orchestra of St John's and celebrities like Jonny Greenwood of Radiohead, the actors Joanna Lumley and Tom Courtenay.

Arguably, one of the most positive aspects of SJE Arts for those involved in its running, is the public's reaction. The church has come to be seen as a valued part of the community, a welcoming place where people can be assured to find an excellent music and arts programme and friendly faces.

Work continues, both to develop SJE Art's profile in Oxford



Jonny Greenwood &amp; London Contemporary Orchestra

and beyond, and to keep up with the constant maintenance costs and challenges that such an old and historic building presents. But one thing is for sure; SJE Arts goes from strength to strength, and has breathed new life into this beautiful and special place. ♥

By Sally Doyle

Why not come and discover SJE Arts for yourself? For a full programme of events, visit [www.sje-oxford.org](http://www.sje-oxford.org). Discounted tickets are available for alumni.

# DESTINATION NASHOTAH

Final-year ordinand student Jamie Gater recently undertook an exchange visit to American theological seminary Nashotah House, Wisconsin. The visit followed a covenant signed between SSH and Nashotah House in 2012, which aimed to strengthen the bonds between the two seminaries, and provide a framework for the exchange of teaching, students and mutual encouragement.

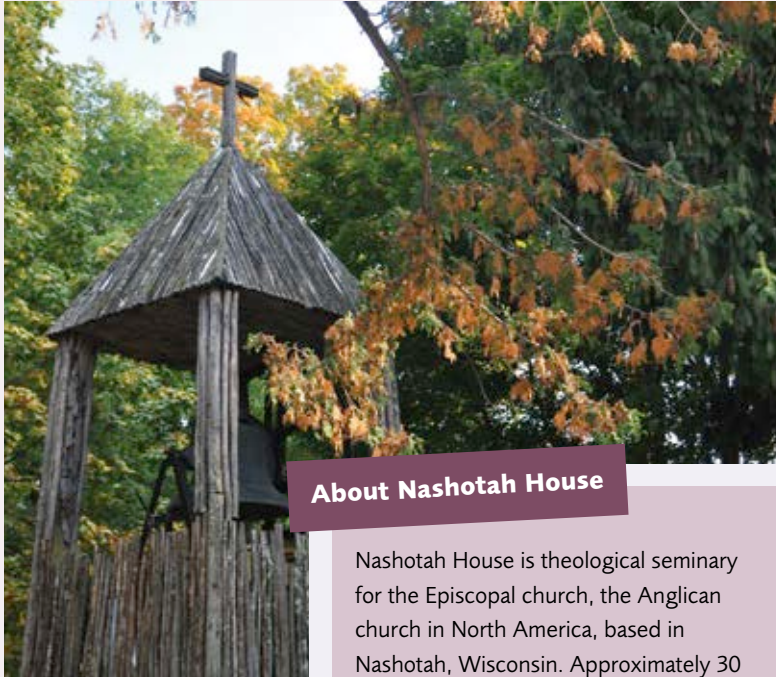
Here, Jamie describes his experiences of the seven-week placement, which took place in the autumn of 2014.

“ Following an almost four thousand mile journey from Oxford, I was given just 20 minutes upon arrival to Nashotah House to freshen up before being taken out for dinner by Bishop Salmon, the Dean and President, along with some students and their families.

But from this initial welcome I knew that Nashotah was a place that shared the St Stephen's House belief of the importance of hospitality, and over the coming days I came to know the community of seminarians from all over the USA as I studied and worshipped alongside them.







### About Nashotah House

Nashotah House is theological seminary for the Episcopal church, the Anglican church in North America, based in Nashotah, Wisconsin. Approximately 30 miles from Milwaukee and set amidst 365 acres on the banks of Lake Nashotah, the seminary was founded in 1842 and received its official charter in 1847. The Rev Steven A. Peay, Ph.D. is the current Dean and President of Nashotah House.



During the seven weeks of my placement that followed, the classical program of courses which were offered drew yet more parallels with St Stephen's House, as did the focus on the daily recitation of offices and celebration of the mass.

A typical day began with Morning Prayer and the Holy Communion, always with a superb sermon from one of the staff. We would then proceed to breakfast before lectures began: I was fortunate enough to take classes in liturgy, homiletics, parish ministry, as well as trying my hand at Greek, having studied Hebrew in the UK. After classes was lunch, followed by free afternoons to complete academic work, spend in the Library, or go canoeing on Nashotah Lake. We would conclude the working day with evensong before making plans for the evening.

It's difficult to pick just one highlight from my time at Nashotah, there were so many: The beauty of the campus, the free access to canoes in order to explore Nashotah Lake, the well appointed library and high quality worship. For me, however, the real highlight was meeting a community, both students and staff, who shared an outlook on the importance of catholic tradition and theology in the Anglican Communion.

My visit to Nashotah House gave me many things which I will take forward into my ministry, not least the great number of new relationships I have formed. Many will be concerned for the unity of the church, and I have experienced the way in which, even reaching out within our own communion, bonds can be formed which will enrich ministries and demonstrate the unity for which Christ prayed.

Hopefully there will now be a steady stream of students flying back and forth across the Atlantic for many years to come. Certainly given the huge support I received from the staff at St Stephen's House and Father Robin Ward in particular, I can see the strong relationship that now exists between the two great colleges going from strength to strength, and offering many more students what was, for me, a hugely enriching experience.

Happily, I was able to repay the kindness shown to me during my visit, when MDiv. student Jason Terhune from Nashotah House visited St Stephen's House in early 2015. ”

With many thanks to The Cleaver Trust, who supported Jamie's visit by paying his return airfare.

- Fact File -

## THE CENTRE FOR MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN STUDIES, OXFORD



- **Location:** The Song School, St John the Evangelist Church, St Stephen's House, 109A Iffley Road, Oxford, OX4 1EH. Tel: 01865 613 440.
- **Key contact:** Dr John Chesworth, Fellow. John is also Honorary Research Fellow at St Stephen's House, currently Research Officer on the *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History 1500-1900* project.
- **About:** Established in 2008, the Centre for Muslim-Christian Studies (CMCS) aims to see Muslim-Christian relationships transformed through shared academic study and by following the example of Jesus. It equips leaders, resources scholars and disseminates and develops Biblically-based thinking at the Muslim-Christian interface through teaching, research and public education.
- **Examples of the day-to-day work of the CMCS:** CMCS offers weekly term-time research seminars. Team members, as members of the Faculty of Theology and Religions, give tutorials to undergraduates on behalf of the university. Each team member is also working on their own research areas, on aspects of the Muslim-Christian interface. The team also provide

guidance and tutorials to those preparing to work in countries where an understanding and appreciation of the interfaith aspects of the life and culture are important to their role. For example, the team has been advising someone preparing to work in the Gambia.

- **How does CMCS currently work with SSH?** Dr John Chesworth organises the annual 'Understanding Islam' course for SSH, supported by other members of the CMCS team. He also advises students and staff on Islam and Christian-Muslim relations. In addition, CMCS Research Fellow Shabbir Akhtar, an Islamic Philosopher, has Associate Research status with SSH.
- **How can SSH students and alumni make use of the CMCS?** All students can attend seminars and make use of the specialist library. Ordinand alumni could also spend time at the CMCS doing guided reading to help them gain greater understanding of the increasingly mixed faith communities in which they serve as priests. This could be for a few days or as part of a sabbatical. Individuals are welcome to call in at the Centre or arrange an appointment with a team member to

discuss questions on the Muslim-Christian interface.

- **Examples of other events:** The Qur'an and Bible group meets monthly, starting with a meal. A Muslim and a Christian each introduce the theme using their own scriptures. Recent themes have included the Noah narrative, Cain and Abel. The pattern is modelled on Scriptural Reasoning.
- **Other resources available:** The CMCS library, situated in the Holy Spirit chapel of St John the Evangelist church, is a specialist collection, with material not readily available elsewhere in Oxford. As well as a wide range of books and pamphlets, it holds the archives of several missionary societies that work in the Middle East and North Africa.
- **Final note:** This August the CMCS ran its first Muslim-Christian Summer School, gathering together students from Islamic and Christian colleges for shared study, with the aim of helping to remove misperceptions of the 'other' and enabling them to gain greater mutual understanding and building mutual respect. ♥

# WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

In each issue of SSH news, we catch up with a St Stephen's House (SSH) alumnus to find out what they have gone on to do after leaving the College, and their memories of studying at SSH.

**Name:** Vicky Oladejo

**Age:** 27

**Studies undertaken at SSH:** PGCE: Religious Studies and Citizenship

**Year of graduation:** 2010

**Undergraduate degree:** University of Kent: BA Religious Studies

**Where do you live now:** London

**Current job/role title:** Teacher of Religious Studies and English at Thames Christian College

## Describe a typical day

I arrive at around 7.30am, for an 8am start. We have a staff meeting every morning, and registration begins at 8.30am. Lessons last for one hour, with six in a day starting from 8.40am, finishing at 3.40pm. From the moment I walk into school, it's non-stop and incredibly intense.

## What have you done in between leaving SSH and arriving at your current role?

Previous to this role, I worked in a well-known Independent girls school in Wimbledon, and prior to that, I was doing private tutoring for the rich and famous in the leafier parts of London.

## What is your fondest memory of SSH?

The exquisite afternoon teas, and the weekend breakfasts!



## And do you have any amusing memories from your time at SSH?

Coming from an Evangelical Christian background, and having fairly strong Protestant convictions, I simply couldn't believe my eyes, ears, or the smell when I visited the College church for the first time!

## Do you have a particular place or item in the College that holds special memories?

Due to our early starts and intense terms, it was always very special when the PGCE students in the College were all in the kitchen at the same time sharing food and memories together. It didn't happen often, but was cherished when it did.

## How did your time at SSH lead you to what you're doing today?

It gave me the crucial qualification! As well as very happy memories. ♥

# OBITUARY

## Jeremy Suter (SSH 2012–2013)

His paperwork said Jeremy, but we all knew him as 'Jez' and it wasn't long before he was making a huge impact on the College community. Having studied geography at Swansea, Jez came to the College as a PGCE student and threw himself into all aspects of college life from the start, becoming the PGCE rep to the Common Room within his first couple of weeks.

Jez was often in the Common Room, busy working on his planning for school, although his real motivation for rushing back from school had more to do with getting a piece of cake before it had all been eaten. It wasn't just cake that made the Common Room a natural place for Jez to be; he was sociable, happy and fun. His own Christian faith meant he was just as comfortable in the company of the ordinands with their theological debates as he was with his fellow PGCE students.



It's fair to say that Jez loved life, and if he knew how to work hard, he certainly knew how to play hard too. The driving force behind many good nights out in Oxford, he was also a keen sportsman, cricket being his real passion. And yet he would be willing to drop all of that for the sake of a friend in need, and for that reason, he became such a good friend to many in the College, and a very popular member of the College community.

Jez completed his studies and began teaching at Dr Challoner's Grammar School, Amersham, where he showed huge promise for an outstanding career in the classroom.

On October 12th 2014, Jeremy had surgery on a brain tumour which had been undiscovered until he was taken ill that weekend. He didn't make it, and died at Leeds General Infirmary. May he rest in Peace. 🕯

Jamie Gater



# RESTORING THE CHAPEL ORGAN

Dr John Rowntree

Being invited to visit and consider the provenance and advise regarding the organ in the College Chapel was intriguing. At first sight the organ was not inspiring but, beneath its crude coat of white paint, its plastic keys and worn key and stop-action, it was possible to discern an English chamber organ of interest

The case clearly dated from early to mid-19th century. The first clues as to its origins were the initials DG on the bellows weights. The only known organ-builder with those initials in the 19th century was Daniel Gray, c1811–1881.

When the organ was being dismantled, prior to being sent to Slovenia for restoration by Skrabl, a pencil inscription was found behind the music desk:

*Erected for use  
Saturday Oct 26  
1860 by D Gray of  
Ely Place, St Georges  
Road South (wark).  
Completed Oct  
29 Tue.*

Frustratingly it was not clear where the organ was erected nor whether this was its first installation. A pencil inscription inside the soundboard

beginning: "Daniel Gray built this organ..." confirmed the builder. The remainder of the inscription remains disappointingly undecipherable. Further inscriptions state the organ was moved from St Stephen's House, Norham Gardens, to the present Chapel on July 1st 1980 by T. Harris, of Percy Daniel, Clevedon. The origins of the organ prior to it being in St Stephen's House remain unknown.

The organ has now, thanks to an anonymous donor, been painstakingly restored to full working order by Skrabl, the plastic keys replaced, the wind supply put in good order, the pipework, soundboard, and tracker mechanisms repaired, and the foot blowing brought back into use. Examination of the case showed that the original organ had been stained in the traditional manner, akin to mahogany, and the console brackets and pillar capitals had been gilded. This finish, with gilded dummy pipes, has been restored.

There were indications that the organ might have had a pedal-board of perhaps twelve or seventeen notes – not uncommon in the early to mid 19th-century. After discussion it was decided to provide the organ with a pedal-board in period-style but extend its range to twenty-nine notes, the maximum possible within the dimensions of the organ case. The result is an instrument of visual charm and musical vitality, which will serve St Stephen's House for many years to come. ♣

## Chapel organ specification

### Manual

Stopped Diapason Bass.....	8'
Stopped Diapason Treble.....	8'
Dulciana.....	8' Bass from Stopped Diapason
Principal .....	4'
Fifteenth .....	2'
Pedals coupled to Manual	

### Compass

Manual.....	GG, AA, BB-flat, BB, C - to f'''
Pedal.....	GG, AA, C - d'

# THE PRINCIPAL'S PERSPECTIVE



**"One must work in solitude as a man who opens a clearing in virgin forest, sustained by the unique hope that somewhere in its depths, others are working to the same end." – Ernst Jünger**

Delivering theological education in the Church of England often feels just like this. Once again the College finds itself trying to anticipate and digest the contents of a new report, Resourcing Ministerial Education, that seems to call into question both the funding and the aims of university based formation for the priesthood. This is perhaps not an unusual situation for us to be in: the theological colleges were founded not as an initiative of the bishops, although individual bishops were often prime movers at particular colleges, as Edward King of Lincoln was here. They remain independent charities, with their own priorities and their own ethos, and this from time to time makes for tension with the priorities set by the House of Bishops, the General Synod and the Ministry Division. This is such a time.

Of course the Report is only part of a much wider review of the work of the Church of England that has at its heart a timely and realistic appreciation that we cannot go on as we are. Decline in lay involvement, vocations to the priesthood and giving, demonstrated with ruthless clarity by the relatively recent innovation of accurate published statistics, mean no institution that claims to train priests effectively can do so without rigorous appraisal of its work from both within and without. I am

delighted that this year we received a verdict of Full Confidence from the Inspection Team that came to assess our work, and I encourage all our readers to look at the report in full on the Ministry Division website. It is a credit to the industry of all the staff here and the commitment and diligence of the student body.

But the case for residential training and rigorous full-time study of theology remains a vital one, and if we are to make it well then we need to be frank about how it can be sustained into the future. This year twenty candidates from the college have been ordained deacon, our largest cohort for many years, among whom are several who gained first class degrees and others who were given the opportunity to study in a university setting that would not otherwise have been possible. Half of the candidates are under thirty, at a time when the average age of a stipendiary curate is now about forty five. But this is expensive.

We are very fortunate to have attracted generous benefactors to support our work over the past decade. If our work is to continue we will need to plan for a time in the near future when the colleges have to co-operate with the Ministry Division in a way that acknowledges the current model of funding cannot be sustained, particularly

if the cost of university education continues to rise and the projected target of increasing ordinand numbers by 50% is achieved. We are confident that we can continue to provide the best possible formation for the priesthood in the Catholic tradition in the Church of England. But it will need the continuing support of all who value that model of formation: old members, benefactors, parishes and trusts, to ensure that the work will go on.

In the midst of this it is a great pleasure to report that there are now one hundred and forty two teachers who have completed their PGCE at the college over the past ten years. This has been a wonderful enhancement of our institutional life, and I would like to thank them for everything that they have contributed to the life of the college over that time. It is ironic that much of their teaching in the University Education Department is carried out in our old buildings in Norham Gardens. Graduate students in theology, Byzantine studies, Education and even Japanese come year by year to the college to undertake the burgeoning number of Masters' courses now offered by the University, and it is good for us to be refreshed by their different intellectual and social contributions and to support them in their work. ♥

# 2015 EXAMINATION HIGHLIGHTS & LEAVERS INFORMATION

## Leavers' examination highlights

### BTh in Applied Theology

Lee Clark (First Class)

Tom Wintle (First Class)

### Certificate for Theology Graduates

Jarred Mercer (Distinction)

### MPhil Theology

Alex McCarron (Distinction)

### MPhil Islamic Studies and History

Elizabeth Perry (Distinction, selected to work in the Civil Service Fast Stream in London)

## Other examination highlights

### Final Honour School in Theology

Toby Boutle (First Class)

## Independent leavers

### PGDip Theology

Jiamin Ye (Summer internship in Shanghai, China with Saatchi & Saatchi, after summer working on a programme in Tanzania, with Art in Tanzania & UNICEF. Planning to go back to academia in a few years for PhD)

### MSt Late Antique and Byzantine Studies

Andrew Williams

## PGCE Leavers 2015

The following students have successfully completed their PGCE course this year.

- Muhib Anis
- Roisin Callanan
- Abi Cottingham (Teaching post at Cokethorpe School Oxfordshire)
- Ryan Ettenfield
- Edwin Garavito
- Elisa Girle
- Anzel (Borgel) Greenaway

- Philip Legg (Teacher of physics at Lord Williams's School, Thame)
- Michelle McCarthy
- Nicola Meyer
- Basil Strang
- Grace Trevan (Teacher of RE and SEN at St Crispin's School, Wokingham)

## Ordinand Leavers 2015

The following SSH leavers were made Deacons this year, listed alongside are their new title parishes.

- Murray Aldridge-Collins (Holy Trinity & St Peter's, Ilfracombe with Bittadon, Exeter)
- Lee Clark (St Gabriel, Pimlico, London)
- Alex Garner (St Alphage, Hendon, London)
- Jamie Gater (St Margaret, Ifield, Chichester)
- Sean Gilbert (Christ Church & St Mary Magdalen & St Peter & St Paul, St Leonards-on-Sea, Chichester)
- Steven Martin (St Eustachius Tavistock, St Paul's, Gulworthy, and Christchurch and St Michael de Rupe, Brent Tor, Exeter)
- Damien Mason (St Mary & Christ Church, Hendon, London)
- Jarred Mercer (St Mary Magdalen, Oxford, Oxford)
- Edward Morrison (St Wilfrid, Cantley, York)
- Michael Payne (St Botolph, Northfleet with St Mark's, Rosherville, and All Saints, Perry Street Rochester)
- Matthew Robinson (St John the Baptist, Sevenoaks, Rochester)
- Christine Spencer (St Mary, Storrington, Chichester)
- Dominique Turnham (Dereham and District Team Ministry, Norwich)
- Benjamin Weitzmann (St John's, Boxmoor, St Francis, Hammerfield, and St Stephen's Chaulden, St Albans)
- Guy Willis (St Alban the Martyr Holborn with St Peter Saffron Hill, London)

- Tom Wintle (St Mary the Virgin, Nuneaton, and St Mary & St John, Camp Hill, Coventry)
- Adam Wogan (St Martin-on-the-Hill and St Michael and All Angels, and St Saviour's with All Saints, Scarborough, York)
- Jonathon Wright (St Mary, St Thomas, All Saints Whitchurch, Llandaff)
- Fr Fabrizio Pesce has been appointed to serve at St Peter's, Acton Green, London
- Nicholas Smith will defer ordination for a year

## Ordinand Leavers 2014

The following SSH alumni were ordained Priest this year, and are listed alongside their title parishes.

- The Revd Christopher Brading (Parish Church of St Margaret, Swinton)
- The Revd Emily Davis (née Gent) (Parish Church of St Michael, Bishop's Stortford)
- The Revd Daniel Howard (Parish Church of St Columba, Anfield)
- The Revd Justin Hutcherson (Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, Corringham)
- The Revd Dr Michael Lakey (Abbey Church of St Peter and Paul, Dorchester on Thames)
- The Revd Kyle McNeil (Parish Church of St Mary, Cockerton)
- The Revd Anthony Murley (Parish Church of All Saints, Small Heath)
- The Revd Stephen Niechcial (Parish Church of St John, Sidcup)
- The Revd Oliver Petter (Parish Church of St Michael, Camden Town)
- The Revd Andreas Wenzel (Parish Church of St Peter and St Leonard, Horbury)
- The Revd Alice Whalley (Parish Church of St Andrew, Moulsecoomb) 



Hot air balloon ascending over the Church on a bright September morning

## HOW TO SUPPORT ST STEPHEN'S HOUSE

### **Regular gift**

If you would like to make a regular donation, please instruct your bank to make a regular (monthly, quarterly etc.) payment to:

*Account Name:* The Society of St Stephen's House

*Account Number:* 74542834

*Bank Sort Code:* 60 16 06

*Name and address of our bank:*

NatWest Bank plc, 189 Cowley Road, Oxford, OX4 1UY

### **Single gift**

If you would like to make a one-off donation, please send a cheque made payable to 'St Stephen's House' to:

FREPOST, St Stephen's House, 16 Marston Street,  
Oxford, OX4 1JX

Please do alert us to your gift via email ([bursar@ssho.ox.ac.uk](mailto:bursar@ssho.ox.ac.uk)) or post (freepost address above).

**Thank you for your kind support of St Stephen's House**

[WWW.SSHO.OX.AC.UK](http://WWW.SSHO.OX.AC.UK)