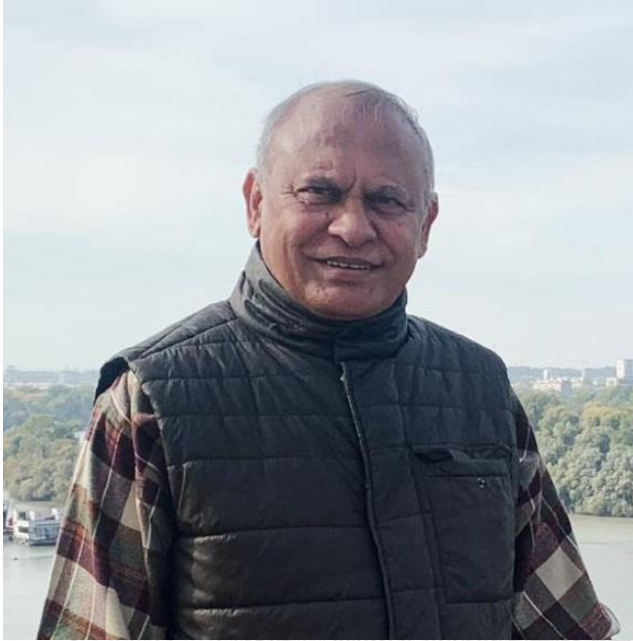


St. Andrew's Anglican Church, Moscow

Autumn 2025 Newsletter

A message from the chaplain:



This newsletter should have come to you in the month of September. However, in view of some serious financial and administrative flaws we have had to expel the person previously responsible for producing the quarterly Newsletter.

Let me first of all thank all our friends, particularly the Russian Orthodox Church in Moscow, the Russia Company in the UK, Bishop Robert and Archdeacon Leslie for their support during this unprecedented situation at St. Andrews Moscow. I thank God for the congregation of St Andrews, who has faced with resilience the intimidation and threats from a handful of members of the Religious Organization, who have illegitimately taken control of the administration and finances of the church.

This organization has hacked the church website and WhatsApp group and have used the same to scandalise and publish entirely untruthful information about the church leadership. This group has also tried to prevent the appointed Chaplain from getting a visa to return to Russia, as a way of controlling the functioning of St. Andrew's. However, this has been counterproductive as our team of lay leaders and the congregation have stood firm against the wrong.

An Extraordinary General Meeting of the congregation has elected Ephraim Sserunkuma as Chair and Kamilla Murashova as the Secretary of Religious Organization of St. Andrews Anglican Church, Moscow. Of course, this has to go through Ministry of Justice and appropriate legal process to remove the existing illegally appointed chair of the RO.

I am grateful to our Warden Nicolette Kirk and our Treasurer Suresh Rose who despite threats and verbal abuse have faced this hostile group with courage and integrity.

However, in midst of all these negatives, I am delighted that our Lay Worship Team, the Choir and servers' team have sustained our worship life and Anglican identity at St. Andrews Church in Moscow. We will soon publish the profound homilies shared by our Lay Worship Leaders.

During Advent the core message is of Hope. In our Zoom Bible Study we are focusing on the theme "God is Working While we wait – For God is Working behind the scenes". In the midst of all kinds of struggles in our parish, in our personal and in our community life, the Advent of Jesus offers assurance of God's Hope, Peace, Joy and Love.

I wish you all a happy Advent Season and a Joyful Christmas.

Arun John

Chaplain, Area Dean of Russia and Apokrisiarios of the Archbishop of Canterbury to the Russian Orthodox Church in Moscow.

New 'RO' Leadership team

At the Extraordinary General Meeting on 2nd November, the following people were elected to office:



Ephraim Sserunkuma – Chairman

Ephraim is originally from Uganda, but has now settled in Moscow. He has been a founding member and mentor for our Youth Group, as well as serving on the Church Council and acting as Secretary to the Council.



Kamilla Murashova – Secretary

Kamilla is a trained nurse, who specialises in caring for the terminally ill. She is a key member of the Altar party and worship leader team, as well as liaising and working with our local charity partners.

A message from the churchwarden



The past few months have not been easy at St. Andrew's, but it has been heartening to see how the congregation has rallied in the face of provocation and has worked together to maintain not just our regular services, but also to continue our social outreach efforts.

We have been greatly blessed by Canon Arun's constant encouragement and his continued support. We look forward to having him back with us in person soon.

Lay worship team

Our team of lay worship leaders has been key in maintaining our schedule of Sunday and mid-week services.

Dmitry



Nadia



Giles



Liz



Precious



Lilly



Nicolette



Kamilla



Ephraim



Evgenia



Mike and Nicolette are just coming to the end of the first module of their lay readership training course. Despite lectures running until after midnight Moscow time, it has been a hugely stimulating process and they are both looking forward to their next module on pastoral care.

Mike



Bishop's visits!

We have been blessed with two visits from Bishop Robert and Archdeacon Leslie in just six weeks. Bishop Robert's first visit at the end of September gave the opportunity to confirm twelve candidates and to receive one member of the congregation into the Church of England.



During that visit, Bishop Robert and Archdeacon Leslie were also invited to a meeting at the Department of External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate with Archimandrite Philaret to discuss matters of interest between the Orthodox Church and the Church of England, as well as current issues at St. Andrew's.



On his second visit, Bishop Robert met with Metropolitan Antony, who presented him with an icon of the Resurrection.



The principal reason for Bishop Robert's second visit was to attend the Extraordinary General Meeting on 2nd November. However, having received numerous requests after the All Saints' Sunday service, the Bishop held an impromptu baptism service in the afternoon. The candidates ranged in age from 19 – 91! Metropolitan Antony's icon is on the baptismal table on the right.



Special services



Our Remembrance Sunday service was well attended with guests from numerous diplomatic missions. The address was given by the British Ambassador, HE Nigel Casey, CMG, MVO.

Our Safeguarding Sunday service was followed by a Bible study on 1 John 3: 16-24, which proved so popular that it ran to a second week!



Advent Sunday



As ever, we marked the start of Advent by having one of the younger members of our congregation light the first candle on the Advent wreath.

Choir robes



Many thanks to our organist, Dmitry Maksimenko, for getting the first batch of our new choir robes prepared for our choristers. We look forward to using them for all special services in the future.

Social Outreach



Our Harvest-Advent appeal collected items for the Zaozerny refuge, which is part of the Noah's House charity.



Noah's House supports the elderly, the disabled and women with young children, helping them not only materially, but in giving them a new sense of purpose by enabling those who are capable of working to participate in the maintenance and upkeep of the centre, as well as engaging in various fund-raising projects. The refuge includes a smallholding where they keep rabbits, pigs and goats, helping their residents to learn to care for themselves by caring for the animals.



“Lavochka”



This year our “Lavochka” second-hand clothes store has raised over \$700 for the Moscow Protestant Chaplaincy social outreach programmes.

Although due to current circumstances, we are having to take a short break from operations, we very much hope to start the New Year with a large traditional Jumble Sale to raise our profile with the wider community.

Pub quizzes

Our regular pub quizzes in aid of Mary’s Meals continue to be a huge success, bringing in significant funds for Mary’s Meals (www.marysmeals.org), a charity which provides nourishing school meals to children in the developing world and helps them improve their futures by staying in full-time education. So far this year, we have raised enough money to feed nearly 65 children for a whole year.



Christmas Santa Appeal

Every year, Sara Stobbart, who leads our Sunday School and children's ministry, organizes deliveries of presents to children in hospitals, hospices and orphanages throughout Moscow. This Autumn, the monies raised at our monthly Simple Soup lunches have been used to purchase more gifts and to help spread the love of Christ this festive season.



Just a small portion of this year's gifts...



Bible studies



As a “thank you” to the volunteers who help with the clearing up after coffee on Sundays, Kamilla has initiated a Russian-language Bible study. From a small start, they now have 10-12 people attending regularly.



During Advent, Canon Arun is also leading an online Bible study on the theme of “God is Working While we wait – For God is Working behind the scenes”.

Archdeaconry Synod – Vienna, 9th-12th October

This year's synod was attended by our Archdeaconry Synod representatives, Liz Bearman and Precious Nwodo and by our churchwarden, Nicolette Kirk.



Liz and Precious with the British Ambassador to Austria, HE Lindsay Skoll CMG, who was formerly DHM in Moscow.

The synod was expertly hosted by our colleagues from Christ Church Vienna, with lots of opportunities for learning, fellowship and worship, as well as the chance to see something of the Austrian capital. It was a particular joy to see Thamarai and Christina (centre right below) who have been instrumental in maintaining services at Christ Church, Kyiv, as well as Peter (back row centre) from our sister congregation in St. Petersburg



Sadly, this year marks the retirement of our former Archdeacon, Canon Patrick Curran, who has visited Moscow on several occasions, so it was good to be able to say our farewells in person.