

## REPORTS FOR THE AGM Saturday, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2024

### **ACOLYTES**

We haven't had any acolytes for a long time. We have kids at Church, but they are too young for this role. We are still positive and hope to find a group of teenagers who would be interested in serving the Lord through this important task.

Looking forward to hearing from young adults who would like to help. Training is available.

*Valeria Eiseman & Bettina Gies*

**ADULT FORMATION IN 2023** comprised the following activities:

#### **Book Discussion Groups**

A small group of intrepid students, meeting by Zoom on Wednesday evenings, worked through C.S. Lewis' philosophical work *Miracles*. This was supplemented by real-world examples of document miracles from Craig Keener's book *Miracles Today*. The group completed the book at the end of March 2023.

A larger group began a series of meetings on alternating Sundays after church to discuss shorter books. The first two books were taken from C.S. Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia*. The first book, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, was completed in March 2023. After taking a break, the group continued in October with the second book, *The Magician's Nephew*, and completed it in January 2024.

#### **Wednesday Bible Study**

Most Wednesdays at 11.00 am a group meets via Zoom for worship and to talk about the lessons for the upcoming Sunday.

#### **Adult Forums**

On January 15 at the first forum of 2023, St. Augustine's delegates gave a report on the 2022 Convocation Convention: What is Convention? What did we learn/take away? What are the consequences for St. Augustine's?

Tim Hawken held a very informative adult forum on June 25 on the history of Anglican music. The forum was very well attended.

Zoe Cross held an engaging adult forum on October 29 in which she discussed "overcoming rejection." The key to this is faith and preparedness to ask clarifying questions of the rejecter. The forum was very informative and well attended.

Fr. Chris led a discussion on November 26 regarding the situation in Israel and Gaza. It was well attended, and numerous diverging views were respectfully presented.

#### **Lenten Course**

Fr. Chris led a Lenten course by Zoom on Amy-Jill Levine's book *The Difficult Words of Jesus*. Prof. Levine is a Jewish New Testament scholar and has taught at a number of Christian seminaries.

#### **Adult Formation Survey**

A lengthy adult formation survey was prepared and conducted in August and September to determine what topics members were interested in as well as what delivery formats and dates/times were good for them. We received responses from 17 parishioners and will use them to plan future offerings.

*Greg Rampinelli*

### **ALTAR GUILD**

The Altar Guild has seven members: Zoe Cross, Kay Hollis, Diana Mrongrowius, Jeanne Nelson, Esther Onwubuariri, Grace Osagioduwa Eribo and Valerie Roecker.

If possible, the Altar Guild members are scheduled to work in pairs on a weekly basis. Under the priest's direction, we are responsible for making the preparations for all the church services. Our tasks include the care of the linens, vestments, sacred vessels and candles. We are also responsible for ordering the hosts, wine, candles, linens, vestments, the advent wreath and the palm crosses.

The Altar Guild has no reserve funds so we have to rely on memorial contributions or donations to meet any needs. There is a list of items which could be given by members of

the congregation as a suitable memorial or thanksgiving. These items range in price and if you would like information, please contact Valerie Roecker. Finally, I would like to thank all the Altar Guild members for their devoted work „behind the scene“, for always being prepared to step in and support each other, and for helping to enhance the services at St. Augustine´s.

*Valerie Röcker*

### **BOOK SALE**

The English Book Sale was open to the public on 45 Saturdays in 2023 (February 4<sup>th</sup> until December 16<sup>th</sup>, closed on Coronation Day May 6<sup>th</sup>) and generated an income of 1162,70 € plus an additional 81,93 € with sales to online store Momox totalling 1244,63 €. Our team consisted of the following participants: Helen Centner, Miriam Mirak-Weissbach, Barbara Müller-Grant, Karin Payne-Stern, Elke Schmidt, Christine Spethmann and Elke Vogel.

To promote our sales, besides the online video and beach flags, we now have new A6 flyers presented in the flyer stand at the back of the church.

At the Christmas bazaar the whole Book Sale team were present during the day. We were both upstairs in front of the altar and downstairs in the undercroft. We were able to increase our income and didn't have to transport so many books upstairs.

We would like to draw your attention to the storage of the beach flags. We realise they are bulky but they are used on a weekly basis. We ask for some consideration in handling them.

Christine has already had to repair one flag. Please do not place other objects on either the beach flags or the sandbags. Our gratitude to Gerhard who sets them up every Saturday.

Your support either as customers and/or with your donations of English language paperbacks is highly appreciated.

Preferably no hard bound books as we have neither the strength nor the facilities to store them.

*Karin Payne-Stern & Christine Spethmann*

### **CHALICE BEARERS**

We have had a successful year in that we have reinstated having two called to this ministry there is always room for you! Speak to Rev. Chris or myself if you are interested.

*Robert Ramsay*

### **CHOIR**

The choir served another busy year at supporting our services of worship through music.

Predictable choices of repertoire were carefully chosen throughout the liturgical year.

Services such as Epiphany, the high point of Holy week, the celebration of Harvest festival and the entirety of Advent including the traditional service of the Nine Lessons and carols, enabled us to sing some well-known favourites. It also allowed for some newer choices of anthems, such as a work by John Rutter. The choir numbers have steadily risen over this time, and it's been a pleasure in welcoming some additional voice types. Evensong services were sung in the months of January, April, September (The Night of the Churches) and October. Thanks to suggestions made by Tim Hawken, our organist, we have steadily grown and further extended our repertoire of Canticle settings used for Evensong within the year. Composer Charles Villiers Stanford's works have contributed to much of this. During the year the choir was involved in some extra services such as a wedding celebration, and some funerals. Our regular Sunday morning service on the 15th October, we welcomed a visiting choir from Wooddale USA who took part in the service. Anyone interested in singing in St. Augustine's weekly services, our choir rehearsals are every Monday evening at 7:pm - 9:pm. Sunday morning at 9:30am before the service commencing at 10:am. Much gratitude and appreciation must be acknowledged to all of the choir members for a year of splendid work and continued commitment. My sincere thanks and grateful recognition to Tim Hawken for his energetic and continued support as organist.

*Ivan Williams.*

## **COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS PLAN**

### **Objectives**

1. To communicate to members of congregation and "friends of St. Augustine's" in a timely and comprehensive way, i.e. in English and German language.
2. To advertise keep congregation and general public updated on upcoming services, fine arts events, etc.
3. To spread the Good News of God in Christ (Evangelism)
4. To facilitate and enhance ecumenical and inter-faith cooperation by mutual information.
5. To keep and maintain an open channel of communication with The Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe

### **1. Target Groups**

- a. Congregation
- b. Former members
- c. Friends of St. Augustine's (including German-speakers)
- d. "Seekers" – people looking for a church, for particular "services" (weddings, funerals), for answers ....
- e. General public (concerts, fundraising, venue for events)
- f. Ecumenical and inter-faith partners

### **2. Messages**

- a. Our Mission Statement: "Our mission is to fulfil our promises to Jesus Christ through word and deed by proclaiming his love to all.
- b. Our ministry is to all people, regardless of their cultural, national, ethnic, or religious background, who seek fellowship in the baptism of Jesus Christ.
- c. We are a worshiping community, family-friendly, a place where you can find spiritual guidance and explore questions of faith, an opportunity to help with your talent, and/or a way to support others.

### **3. Media**

- a. Email announcements: weekly news and updates per email
- b. Bulletin: weekly service bulletin with announcements and week ahead
- c. Website: ongoing; mid-term information
- d. Facebook: ongoing; immediate information
- e. Print Media: Press releases, Articles in newspapers, magazines
- f. Notice Board: general information, upcoming events
- g. Other (e.g. AFN Radio, flyers, posters, pamphlets, etc.)
- h. Continued Outreach activities: Teestube, Hildastift, Refugees in Wiesbaden, Youth Group, etc.
- i. Arbeitsgemeinschaft Christlicher Kirchen in Deutschland (ACK)
- j. Maintain Public Relations with public community: e.g. Presse Club Wiesbaden, Tourist Office, Twin-city organisations (City of Wiesbaden, Tunbridge Wells), Frauenförderverein (Women's Clubs), other Churches / Choir organisations

### **4. Evaluating Success**

- a. Feedback from congregation, visitors, etc.
- b. Number of visitors to events
- c. Financial profits from events
- d. Evaluation and follow-up on Newcomers' form: "How did you hear about us/find us?"
- e. Evaluation and follow-up on registered "interested" parties.

*Madeline Bohr*

## **ECUMENICAL RELATIONS**

Just a little info for those not so familiar with our ecumenical ties in the city: In the ACK, the „Arbeitsgemeinschaft christlicher Kirchen“ (Council of Christian Churches) in Wiesbaden, we hold meetings with delegates from 17 churches in order to get to know and learn from each

other, but also to be heard as Christians who come from very different traditions but are united in the desire to follow Christ and to help shape society as believers. The annual service for the World day of prayer was the first ecumenical event in 2023. It took place at St. Bonifatius and the liturgy was prepared by women in Taiwan. By the way, what looks just like a one-off event to most of us is a continuous international effort to make women's voices heard. There are committees all over the world who work on this all-year round! This work involves a lot of theological input, but can also highly be political – as we can see in the case of the 2024 material which was created by women in Palestine, long before the dramatic events of 7 October 2023 and the ensuing war.

On the Saturday after Pentecost the ACK "Geist-reich" event took the shape of an ecumenical service this year. It was a lovely summery day with an open-air setting and a beautiful liturgy with lots of creative ideas and musical contributions, among others from our own choir (thank you, Ivan and all!). There was also a load of food that could have fed many more people!

At the Night of the Churches 2023, St. Augustine's turned into an ecumenical centre. Visitors were invited to share what their dreams of church look like – many did so, writing on colourful cardboard clouds and giving us much food for thought. A special highlight were two interactive performances by the "fastforward-theatre" from Marburg who improvised hilarious and at the same time meaningful scenes to do with faith and church and life in general. Framed by our popular evensong at the beginning and the official central compline at the end it was another successful Night of the Churches!

Unfortunately, a scheduled excursion to the Jewish Museum in Frankfurt (planned by the ACK) had to be cancelled for lack of participants – which is a shame. We suspect that the date, just one week after the Night of the Churches, was a contributing factor.

At our November meeting (hosted by us at St. Augustine's) we were happy to receive the New Apostolic Church as full members into the ACK. In the past 7 years while they were still guests, a strong relationship has developed with these faithful Christians who are very committed to the ecumenical movement.

I am happy to report that 2023 saw a return of the Christmas Eve service at Wiesbaden train station – led by our own priest and clergy from the Roman Catholic, Protestant and Old-Catholic churches in Wiesbaden. After three years absence it was just as popular as before the pandemic. About a hundred people stopped and appreciated the music, prayers and readings!

2023 also brought a new priest to our Old-Catholic sister church in the Platter Straße – if you have not met Lech Kowalewski and his family yet, the next joint service (which we hold twice a year) will be a good opportunity to say hello.

Since we took our Anglican worship across the Rhine into Mainz 4 years ago, we have also been part of a group of churches holding a weekly prayer for peace at St. Christof's, the small sanctuary where we celebrate Eucharist once a month now – another ecumenical activity worth its while.

As always, I have tried to give you a little glimpse of how refreshing, enriching and exciting it can be to get together with brothers and sisters of other denominations. And how important it is to be part of the wider Christian community in this city. So, if you haven't yet, do consider joining in with our ecumenical activities – and please pray for us. Thank you!

*Dorothee Dziewas*

## ENDOWMENT FUND COMMITTEE

- For those of you new to St Augustine's: What is the Endowment Fund?
- It was originally set up in 1999 and amended in 2005. The main purpose of the EF is:
- „...to provide a vehicle for receiving and managing assets received from individuals or organizations for acquisition, construction, preservation and maintenance of the church building ...“
- Put simply, it is a dedicated savings account to finance the preservation and maintenance costs of the building. Without it we would not have been able to start our renovation project, as the first € 50K were provided by the EF after a vote was taken at the 2015 AGM to use some of the funds accordingly.
- **Anyone can donate, pledge or bequest to the EF at any time.**
- If you're re-drafting your Will any time soon – remember the EF!
- Our long-term goal – given a different investment climate - is to increase our savings to such an extent that the interest accrued is enough to finance a large part of the church's outgoing expenses. However, given the current interest rates this remains an unrealistic goal.
- EF assets on 31.12.2023 (overview):
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	Endowment Fund	
01.01.2023	€ 57.605,21	Balance Account (Dt. Bank 62 € 27.636,21 Investment € 29.970,00)
	€780,00	Donations/Designated Pledge/Bequests
	€2.400,00	Contribution from Operating Account (long term savings)
	€150,33	Investment Income
	- € 5.000,00	Early release for roof repairs Oct 2023
31.12.2023	€55.935,74	Balance Account (Dt. Bank 62 € 25.965,74 and Investment € 29.970,00)

- € 30.000,00 was deposited in 2022 in investment funds (market value is currently only €26.875,27, but will hopefully improve over the long-term)
- The Endowment Fund Committee agreed to an early release of € 5000 to be used specifically for roof repairs to be carried out in October 2023. The Vestry voted in favour of this early release. This decision will be formalized at the AGM 2024 (see agenda).
- The balance (€ 25.965,74) is in a separate Deutsche Bank EF-designated account.
- Important: checks and controls. The EF is safeguarded by the vestry, the EF committee and ultimately the parish voting members.
- The vestry has a say in how the interest on the savings is spent, saved, or re-invested.
- It requires as 2/3 majority vote at the AGM to spend any money held in the EF. This safeguards the money from any quick, rash decisions being taken.

The Endowment Fund Committee members as of the AGM 2024 include:

- Rev. Christopher Easthill
- Tim Hawken – Treasurer (non-voting member)
- Peter Hellbach
- DuWayne Bredvik
- Susan Pinnells

At each monthly Vestry meeting Peter Hellbach has updated us on the progress of our long-term investment. In addition, the monthly financial statements presented to Vestry show ongoing deposits/donations into the Endowment Fund account. We will continue to review investment performance on a regular basis.

Bank Account (Deutsche Bank BIC: DEUTDEDB510)

Endowment Fund: DE21 5107 0024 0033 8020 01

*Susan Pinnells*

## **FINE ARTS**

The concert schedule for 2023 was an extremely busy but successful year. Our scheduled concerts, combined with visiting artists and groups who rented the church for a performance, virtually left no more available dates for anything else. Our calendar was full. The year commenced with a concert performed by St. Augustine's very own choir titled "A Joyful Noise". This was a one-off concert idea, with the aim to lift the audience's spirits out of the Winter doldrums, the choir's way of being able to contribute to the continued running expenditure of the building, and above all, be entertaining. With a beautifully balanced programme supported by soloists within St. Augustine's community, an excellent result was achieved by all.

Early February we hosted a concert performed by the Mainzer Medizinerorchester. Two weeks later was a Premier exhibition of "Im Licht der göttlichen Liebe" The 6th of May the church was available with an open invitation to the public wishing to attend, and view the live coverage of the Coronation of King Charles III. Following the live to air ceremony, a delicious luncheon and beverages were served to help mark this memorable day in history.

The month of May was the beginning of another exciting series of Lunchtime Concerts so generously offered and performed by Concert Pianist, Erika LeRoux, titled "Erika and friends". The series, similar to that of previous years, was on the third Wednesday of each month, and consisted of five concerts in total with the final performance in September. Her first performance on 17th May Erika played Solo. This was a fantastic performance to commence the series. The 18th, saw a performance given by Harmonie Universelle. On June 21st was Erika's second concert. Supporting the programme was Cellist, guest artist. Konstantin Pointer: Her July concert was Solo piano. August was her fourth concert, and finished the series in September with guests, Robert Crowe: Male Soprano and Tim Hawken, Tenor.

Mid October, a concert given by Australian Soprano Emma Pearson who was revisiting Wiesbaden drew in a sizable audience. Audience members remembered Emma's many superb performances as a singer when she previously resided in Wiesbaden. The end of October we welcomed the Derby Cathedral Choir from the U:K. Their beautiful choral works and traditional anthems were received with great enthusiasm by audience members. The beginning of November, a concert performed by students from the Wiesbaden (MSA) Music School Academy, presented a programme titled "Bach to Beatles". Our annual Messiah performance with choir, Orchestra and Soloist took place on the 25th. Beginning December an outside booking of artists performed a programme titled "It might be Christmas"

My sincere thanks to Erika for her amazing and flawless performances, her continued support and organisation of friends and artistes for her entire Lunch Time series spanning five concerts. Much thanks and gratitude to Madeline Bohr for her impeccable forward planning of schedules prior to each concert. Lastly, but not least, many thanks to all the people who managed to volunteer throughout the year for any of the concerts, no matter how small or large the task might have been, front door entrance, welcoming audience guests, beverage table or anything behind the scenes. My sincere thank you to each and every one of you.

*Ivan Williams.*

## **FLOWER GUILD**

The flower guild had been going steady in 2023 what with faithful ladies continuing to render their services to beautifying our altar space and gardens.

Flower ladies were and are currently: Jill Cross, Barbara Müller-Grant, Colleen Grigel, Jeanne Nelson, Audrey Shankles, and me (Nina Scheicher). We always invite new flower decorators, also with no experience of flower decorating but have not had much success in

garnering another volunteer in 2023. ('Flower Gentlemen') are, of course, gladly welcome too.

Bettina Gies (Garden & Grounds) has kindly taken over the flower dedication and decorations for Candlemas, choosing hellebore perennials and flowering bulbs to decorate the altar and later to plant into our flower beds. We aim to stick to the liturgical colours as whenever possible and remain faithful to the tradition of red poinsettias on Christmas and Madonna Lilies on Easter.

Flower dedications have been steady but could be increased, possibly by better communications to the many newcomers we have fortunately seen coming to St. Augustine's in the recent year.

I continue to serve in this capacity with pleasure. Budget permitting, it is my aim to purchase at least two new insertable pots for the wrought iron stands, to replace the two that have broken from 'wear and tear' over the last decade.

*Nina Scheicher*

### **HOSPITALITY**

The Hospitality Committee is responsible for St. A's coffee hour after Sunday worship, as well as assisting with other social events involving food and beverages. We think that opportunities to socialize and interact with people is an important aspect of what it means to be part of the Body of Christ and vital to the well-being of our church community.

Committee coordinators are Bettina Gies, Barbara Mueller-Grant, Marci Warner and Linda Bredvik. They are assisted by several greatly appreciated volunteers but would also welcome more. Ways to help include bringing refreshments (sweet or savory) for coffee hour or hosting an entire coffee hour (including set up and clean up). One area we need the most volunteers is helping with clean up after events.

If you are interested in helping, please see one of us or you can sign up using this link to our Google doc.

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1oVh9u\\_vHgLDBkP3hyf1E4cSBxr3rFAzPOrFzrWAAKyY/edit#gid=0](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1oVh9u_vHgLDBkP3hyf1E4cSBxr3rFAzPOrFzrWAAKyY/edit#gid=0)

### **KAFFEEKLATSCH**

Kaffeeklatsch, a fun time of socializing and sharing good food, is equal parts outreach and hospitality. Since its inception several years ago (thanks to Jim and Elaine White and John and Roxane Richards), it has served as a beacon, drawing people to St. Augustine's. Every other Saturday morning from May through August, we set up tables in front of the church and offer freshly prepared homemade baked goods and coffee and tea to the community on a donation basis. The church is open, and visitors are welcome to come in and take a look.

Some visitors are merely passing by on their way to or from the markets, while others come to sit and chat with friends old and new. As a volunteer or team member, you'll experience it as a wonderful way to get to know other church members and have conversations that go far beyond the usual coffee hour exchanges. It's a chance to reach out to people passing by and draw them into our community, to feel good about presenting our church in a positive light, and to have a hand in ensuring the church's financial well-being. If you would like to be a regular part of the team, or just help out occasionally, please speak to.

*John or Roxane Richards, or to Marci or John Warner.*

### **NEARLY NEW**

The Nearly New fund raising for the church which opens once a week on Saturdays from 11:00am to 14:00pm is still in progress and has accumulated very good regular customers. Our team, that is Diana Mrongowius, Lilian Schmidt and myself, are keen to establish a very special atmosphere of openness to everybody and adventure shopping which reflected itself in very good sales this year. We are hoping for another good year to come and anybody wanting to help is of course very welcome.

*Anna Altvater*

## **OUTREACH**

The Outreach Committee is made up of Helen Centner, Deborah Cole, Fleur Donecker, Wolf-Dieter Donecker, Dorothee Dzewas, Fr Chris Easthill and Justice Onuoha. We have a budget of €2,500 which is incremented by donations for various projects. We meet every two-three months to discuss how best to distribute this money as well as plan outreach events.

At the moment we support:

- The Teestube which is part of the German protestant church's work for the homeless. We provide and help with two breakfasts each year as well as a brunch on Christmas Eve. On Christmas Eve there is always a short service including carol singing. We try to chat to the visitors at the Teestube, not always easy because of language difficulties!
- Refugees: Our four Pakistanis who are now well integrated into German life but still have to struggle with German bureaucracy. They have received financial support for their legal costs.
- Romania: We have been supporting Father Ionel in Harsova, Romania for many years now. We have helped build their Parish house and are now supporting their heating project for their church. At Christmas time we send shoeboxes full of good things children need. These are distributed by Pater Ionel and are gratefully received.
- Malawi: We have supported first Hilfe für Malawi and now Malawihilfe which incorporates Hilfe für Malawi. Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world and needs just about everything! Malawihilfe is run very efficiently by Brigitte Winter in Gelnhausen who knows how to make the most of grants from the German government.

On the recommendation of our Bishop, we have also provided financial assistance to a hospital in GAZA to help with the purchase of medicines and medical equipment.

This year we are working on new projects concerning German lessons and art classes for mothers and children for the more recent refugees from Ukraine and Afghanistan with a possible grant from the Convocation.

*Deborah Cole & Fleur Donecker*

## **STAMPS FOR BETHEL**

Thank you all to those who bothered to put stamps in the small box at the back of the church. Bethel is a home for the handicapped in Bielefeld, in case anyone is new to our church & doesn't know. They have a workshop where they process the stamps & can sell them & help the finances. When I have enough stamps, I send them off in a big envelope. Thanks to Internet, not half so often nowadays.

*Jill Cross*

## **SUNDAY SCHOOL**

St Augustine's offers Sunday School classes in the Undercroft on a regular basis with breaks to observe the Christmas, Easter, and summer vacations. Our team is headed by Roxane Richards and her helpers currently include Audrey Shankles, Barbara Müller-Grant, Candice Carter, Hilde Rowe, Larissa Niehoff, Priscilla Adenuga, Susan Pinnells. However, we always welcome anyone who would like to join the team, as each meeting requires TWO teachers to be present, primarily to comply with safeguarding requirements. The safety and well-being of our children is a top priority, and all Sunday School teachers undergo safeguarding training before working with the children. Each week is a surprise at Sunday School! We're never quite sure how many children will attend or what the age range will be, so a certain amount of improvisation is called for. Some weeks we have 12 children, some weeks just one child, but we always have a lesson and activities ready whatever the situation. The children learn to



find the reading in the Bible and so become familiar with the Old and New Testaments. Those children that can read have a chance to read in turn. English is not necessarily the first language of our Sunday School children, so we make allowances for language differences. Children of all backgrounds are made very welcome in our group. In addition to the Bible reading and short discussion of the meaning of the text, we usually have a craft activity based on the Bible text, coloring pages for the younger children who cannot yet read, word searches and crosswords based on the day's text for the older children. We practice the Lord's Prayer and often have an additional prayer relevant to the Bible message. At certain times of the year, we include craft activities based on Advent, Christmas, Easter, Mother's Day, etc. One special activity we were particularly proud of was the wall poster that the children created for The Season of Creation last September. This was done over a period of 5 weeks, all our attendees and teachers helping to make it varied and successful. Take a look, the poster is downstairs in the Undercroft. If you are interested in what happens each Sunday with our children, why not come down to the Undercroft and sit in on a session. Sunday School lasts about 30 to 25 mins and the children rejoin their parents at the Peace and for Communion. Anyone on the team would be happy to answer questions if you are unsure of what is required. At this point I'd like to thank the parents that send their children to Sunday School, this is an important way forward for our youngsters to learn about our Christian faith in a welcoming and safe environment.

*Susan Pinnells & Roxane Richards*

### **USHER REPORT**

The St. Augustine Usher Team has provided reliable support of the Church services in 2023/24, welcoming congregation members, guests, and newcomers warmly as well as running the usher routine.

**Farewells:** Jim White as well as Mike Kaloostian returned to the United States. We thank Jim and Mike for their dedicated service and wish them all the best for the future.

**New members:** We welcome Renate Reif and Maria Heita for volunteering as a new Ushers. Thank you for joining the team!

**Status:** The current Usher Team presents itself as follows:

1. Priscilla Adenuga
2. Helen Centner
3. Eric Dillenberger
4. Bettina Gies
5. Maria Heita
6. Peter Hellbach
7. Joe Kroll
8. Barbara Mueller-Grant
9. Stephen Niedermeier
10. Marian Oshyra
11. Renate Reif
12. Victoria Scheicher
13. Sabine Schubert
14. Stella Uwakwem

Staffing of the Usher Team is adequate for supporting the regular Services. However, volunteers are always welcome to join, especially in order to cover the more service intensive Christmas and Easter periods.

No financials to report.

Sincere thanks to the entire Usher Team for their dedicated service over the past 12 months.

*Peter Hellbach*

## **WEBSITE**

The website is regularly updated, so if you haven't checked it recently, please do so at [www.staugustines.de](http://www.staugustines.de). This year, Stefan Ehmann took over from Linda Bredvik as Website editor. I would like to thank Linda for all her hard work and welcome Stefan. Editorially, much has changed but technically, I have largely been concerned with keeping the various website elements updated.

*Robert Ramsay*

## **WOMEN OF THE CHURCH**

The Women of the Church meet on a regular basis for events of cultural awareness and fellowship. Unfortunately, we have not really restarted this group after COVID, though we are optimistic and hopeful that we can resume our programme in the course of 2024. In 2023 we were able to host an enjoyable baby shower for Helena Thomson (Hawken).

Please let me know if you would like to help plan and organise events. It is your participation, ideas, wishes and hosting of events that make this programme successful!

*Heidi Grau-Easthill, Coordinator*



## **YOUTH GROUPS**

PRAISE THE LORD! Our church is growing steadily, and more and more families are joining the church. That means our youth groups are growing. Now we just need more participation from the church members to help organize and mentor our youth. The Youth Groups provide a chance for the youth to meet regularly and make friends. Last week, as I suddenly fell ill, the scavenger hunt had to be postponed, because we just didn't have enough support to make it happen. This was, I'm sure, disappointing for the youth and families that were looking forward to it. In addition, we need a Sr. and a Jr. Youth group and that cannot be done without more help. Please get in touch with Chris, Greg Rampinelli, myself or Steve Niedermeier if you would like to help with the youth group(s), even if you can only help once in a while. This means older church members, young adults, parents, but also the youth themselves.

The Junior Youth group (ages 9-12) and the Senior Youth (ages 13-18) need role models and mentors as well as a chance to meet, have fun, talk and be themselves as well as learn about community, theology and mission.

Activities in 2023-24:

- March 2023: Sr. Youth trip to Paris for the 100 Year celebration
- April: Start of Book discussion group (Lion Witch and the Wardrobe – Narnia collection from C. S. Lewis)
- Easter Hunt for St. A's Kids

Lion Witch and Wardrobe Movie viewing  
Confirmation class overnight in Bingen

- May: Youth Across Europe Ascension weekend (Jr. Youth) in Rome, Italy
- June: Youth and Family picnic
- September: Youth and families - Wiesbaden clean-up --cleaning up trash around the church and in the park across the street.
- October: Book discussion started for the Magicians Nephew (Book 1 of Narnia collection)
- Pumpkin Carving and painting (Family event)
- November: Helping with the "Children's Corner" at the Christmas Bazaar (Sr. Youth and parents)
- December : Fixing the Paper Bag Pageant costumes (Jr. and Sr. Youth)
- January 2024 : Ice skating
- February: Shrove Tues., Coffee hour and games.
- March : Scavenger hunt, (postponed until April) Easter egg hunt (I need volunteers!!!!)
- April: Scavenger hunt
- May: **Juniors across Europe and Youth across Europe in Frankfurt.**
- **Ascension weekend (May 9-12) Fun and Fellowship and Frankfurt, please sign up!**

**IMPORTANT:**

It is very important for our children as well as the church if the youth come regularly, then we have a much better chance at positively influencing their Christian lives and in turn, their future. That is why I am calling on all parents to do their best to come regularly. Then the youth have a chance to make friends, and the Sunday School teachers can stick to the curriculum:

*Deborah Cole*