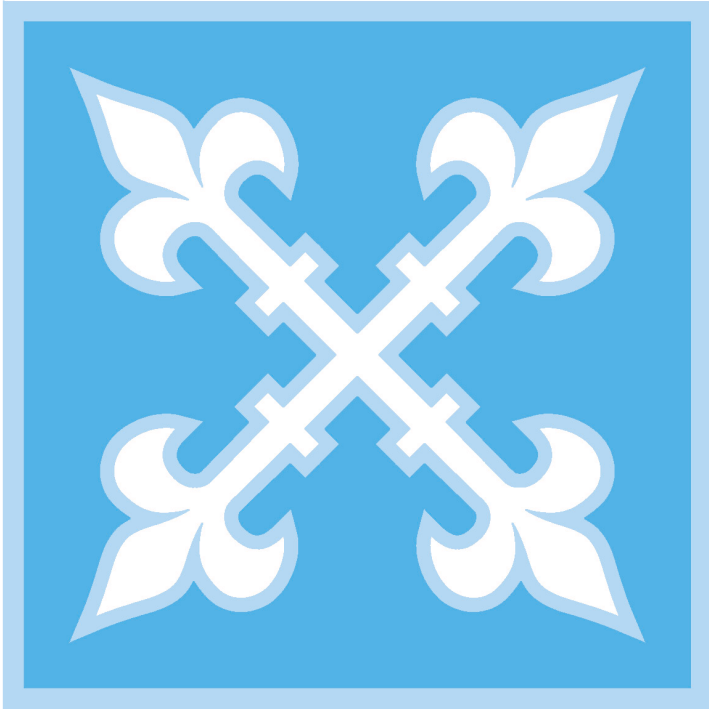


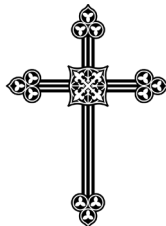
A FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS

December 12, 2021



OUR MISSION

To bring by the power of the Holy Spirit as many people as possible to know, love, and serve God as revealed through Jesus Christ; and to be transformed into spiritually renewed disciples of Jesus who know, love and serve one another and the world.



ST. MARTIN'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

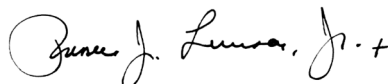
FROM THE RECTOR

IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD,
JESUS CHRIST, WELCOME.

Jesus' first words to His earliest disciples were very simple, "Come, follow Me..." (Matthew 4:19) It was a gentle invitation to take seriously the wonderful journey of faith found in Christ. For more than 2,000 years, people of all ages have responded to that invitation through a personal decision to follow Jesus Christ in a community of prayer, study and service. St. Martin's is just such a place.

St. Martin's is a member Church in the Diocese of Texas, The Episcopal Church in the United States of America and the greater worldwide Anglican Communion consisting of more than 77 million people. Our Parish Church considers it a tremendous honor to be a place where men, women, youth and children can grow in their personal relationship with our Lord, come to know and use their own spiritual gifts, and discover a personal ministry to be expressed both in the Church, the greater Houston area and beyond.

I want to personally invite you to participate in our worship services and as many of our activities and ministries as your own commitments and time will allow.



The Rev. Dr. Russell J. Levenson, Jr., Rector

Prayers Before Worship

O Lord, we thank You that You have called us as members of Your family into this beautiful house of God. Grant that here we may feel Your presence and the beauty of Your peace, and that, as we return to our homes and work, we may sense Your guiding hand and loving care and be used in the service of our neighbors, our nation and the world, and all You send our way, through Him Who came not to condemn the world but to save it, Your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. ***Amen.***

Please continue to take CORONA virus precautions. We encourage all who visit our campus to be fully vaccinated. If not vaccinated, we request you wear a mask while on our campus; or continue to participate in the variety of virtual offerings for worship, education and fellowship. Please note that anyone not abiding by these recommendations is doing so at his or her own risk. Thank you for your cooperation.

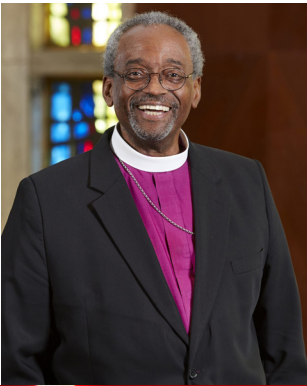
NOTICE: St. Martin's is a gun-free campus.

WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS WEEK AT ST. MARTIN'S

December 12

All Adults Sunday

with Presiding Bishop Michael Curry



10:15 a.m. – The Church

All adult Sunday School classes will meet with the Most Rev. Michael Curry, Presiding Bishop and Primate of the Episcopal Church, for the Sunday School hour.

8+, Theology for Life, Life in Christ, Family Life Class and Seekers will resume next Sunday, Dec. 19.

*For more information about Adult Christian Education,
email Katwana Coleman at kcoleman@stmartinsepiscopal.org.*

DECEMBER 13-18

Adults

Saintly Stitchers

Monday, Dec. 13

10 a.m.-noon | Activity Center, Upper Hall East



Saintly Stitchers fill St. Martin's with pew kneelers and other gifts for worship spaces.

For more information, contact the Rev. Lisa Neilson at Ineilson@stmartinsepiscopal.org.

Education for Ministry

Tuesday, Dec. 14

6:30-8:30 p.m. | Welcome Center



EfM is a challenging and affirming four-year study developed and administered by the University of the South's School of Theology. For more information, contact the Rev. Dr. Suse McBay at smcbay@stmartinsepiscopal.org.

Church Tours

Wednesday, Dec. 15

10:30-11:45 a.m. | The Church



The Church will be open for visitors with a formal tour at 10:45 a.m. To schedule a group tour, please contact the Docent Line at 713-830-4117. For more information, contact the Rev. Sharron Cox at scox@stmartinsepiscopal.org.

St. Clare's Needlepoint Guild

Wednesday, Dec. 15

Noon-3 p.m. | Activity Center, Upper Hall East



St. Clare's Guild undertakes a variety of needlepoint projects in worship spaces and for outreach programs. For more information, contact the Rev. Lisa Neilson at Ineilson@stmartinsepiscopal.org.

OSL Healing Ministry Study Group

Wednesday, Dec. 15

4:30-6 p.m. | Chapel Reception Hall and via Zoom



Learn and grow in the practice of prayer for healing, with an opportunity to train as a licensed OSL prayer minister. For more information, contact the Rev. Dr. Suse McBay at smcbay@stmartinsepiscopal.org.

St. Martin's 20s & 30s

Wednesday, Dec. 15

7-9 p.m. | Welcome Center



Join this group of singles and couples without children for a weekly dinner followed by a discussion about the lives and work of great theologians. For more information, contact the Rev. Wesley Arning at rwarning@stmartinsepiscopal.org.

Parish Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, Dec. 16

7-9 p.m. | Choir Rehearsal Hall



Sing a variety of traditional music in service to the Lord and our congregation. For more information, contact the Rev. Dr. Chad Martin at cmartin@stmartinsepiscopal.org.

Sterling's Market

Saturday, Dec. 18 | Rain or Shine

9 a.m.-noon | Corner of Woodway and Sage



The mission of the Sterling's Market at St. Martin's Episcopal Church is to glorify God through sharing the Gospel and the bounties of the earth with Parishioners, neighbors and visitors. For more information and to volunteer, contact info@sterlingsmarket.org.

Men

Dads' Bible Study

Thursday, Dec. 16

8-9 a.m. | Welcome Center



Join dads with children of all ages for coffee, fellowship and Bible study. No registration is necessary to attend the discussions. For more information, contact the Rev. Wesley Arning at rwarning@stmartinsepiscopal.org.

Women

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Tuesday, Dec. 14

9-11:30 a.m. | Activity Center, Family Room



Knit and crochet shawls to be blessed for those in need of prayer. For more information, contact the Rev. Lisa Neilson at Ineilson@stmartinseiscopal.org.

Blanket Ladies

Wednesday, Dec. 15

10-11:30 a.m. | Activity Center, Family Room



Make receiving blankets for newborn infants at local charity hospitals. For more information, contact the Rev. Lisa Neilson at Ineilson@stmartinseiscopal.org.

7-1-7 Students

Life Groups

Wednesday, Dec. 15

6:30–8 p.m. | Student Life Center



Students in grades 6-12 connect with their peers for fun activities and great discussions about faith and life. Please bring \$5 to cover the cost of dinner. For more information, contact the Rev. Jane Ferguson at jferguson@stmartinseiscopal.org.

A FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS

The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols originated with an Order drawn up by E. W. Benson, later Archbishop of Canterbury, for Christmas Eve 1880, at 10 p.m. in the wooden shed which then served as his Cathedral in Truro. A.C. Benson recalled: "My father arranged from ancient sources a little service for Christmas Eve: nine carols and nine tiny lessons." The suggestion had come from G.M.S. Walpole, later Bishop of Edinburgh. The present form of the Festival was first held on Christmas Eve 1918 in King's College Chapel, Cambridge, and planned by Eric Milner-White, Dean. Since 1963, a shorter and more informal service has also been presented on television. The BBC programs, and the long playing records of the service, have encouraged countless churches throughout the world to adapt the Festival. Milner-White, however, warned any who might be tempted to substitute more carols for the lessons: "Its liturgical order and pattern is the strength of the service; the main theme is the development of the loving purpose of God from the Creation to the Incarnation through the windows and words of the Bible: the scriptures, not the carols, are the backbone."

...from service leaflet, King's College Chapel

VOLUNTARIES

"Carol of the Bells" by Mykola Leontovych
"Coventry Carol" arr. by Don Gillis

The Officiant greets the People. Following the greeting, all stand.

HYMN IN PROCESSION (stand) (sung by all)

1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant, O
 2 God from God, Light from Light e - ter - nal,
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;

1 come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
 2 lo! he ab - hors not the Vir - gin's womb;
 3 sing, all ye ci - ti - zens of heaven a - bove;
 4 Je - sus, to thee be glo - ry given;

1 come, and be - hold him, born the King of an - gels;
 2 on - ly - be - got - ten Son of the Fa - ther;
 3 glo - ry to God, glo - ry in the high - est;
 4 Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing;

Refrain

O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a -

dore him, O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord.

Words: John Francis Wade (1711–1786); tr. Frederick Oakeley (1802–1880) and others; Music: *Adeste fideles*, present form of melody att. John Francis Wade (1711–1786); harm. *The English Hymnal*, 1906.

THE BIDDING PRAYERS *(stand)*

Officiant

Beloved in Christ, in this season of Advent, let it be our care and delight to hear again the message of the Angels, and in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, and the Babe lying in a manger.

Let us read and mark in Holy Scripture the tale of the loving purposes of God from the first days of our disobedience unto the glorious Redemption brought us by his holy Child; and let us celebrate the yearly remembrance of his birth with hymns and songs of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of his whole world; for peace and goodwill over all the earth; for the mission and unity of the Church for which he died, and especially in this country and within this city.

And because this of all things would rejoice his heart, let us at this time remember in his name the poor and the helpless; the hungry and the oppressed; the sick and those who mourn; the lonely and the unloved; the aged and the little children; and all those who know not the Lord Jesus, or who love him not, or who by sin have grieved his heart of love.

Lastly, let us remember before God his pure and lowly Mother, and all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore and in a greater light, that multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in this Lord Jesus, we for evermore are one.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the throne of heaven, in the words which Christ himself hath taught us, devoutly kneeling:

THE LORD'S PRAYER *(kneel)*

People and Officiant

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Officiant: The glory of the Lord shall be revealed.

People: And all flesh shall see the salvation of our God.

All: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

LESSON I: ADAM AND EVE REBEL AGAINST
GOD AND ARE CAST OUT OF THE GARDEN OF
EDEN *(sit)*

Genesis 3:8-15

They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate." Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate." The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel." *The Word of the Lord.*

People: Thanks be to God.

HYMN (stand) (sung by all)



1 Pre - pare the way, O Zi - on, your Christ is draw - ing near!
2 He brings God's rule, O Zi - on; he comes from heaven a - bove.
3 Fling wide your gates, O Zi - on; your Sa - vior's rule em - brace.



Let ev - ery hill and val - ley a lev - el way ap - pear.
His rule is peace and free - dom, and jus - tice, truth, and love.
His tid - ings of sal - va - tion pro - claim in ev - ery place.



Greet One who comes in glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry.
Lift high your praise re - sound - ing, for grace and joy a - bound - ing.
All lands will bow be - fore him, their voice - es will a - dore him.



Oh, blest is Christ that came in God's most ho - ly name.

Words: Frans Mikael Franzen (1772–1847); tr. composite; adapt. Charles P. Price (b. 1920); Music: *Bereden vög für Herran*, melody from *Then Swenska Psalmboken*, 1697; Copyright: Words: © 1982, Charles P. Price.

LESSON II: GOD ESTABLISHES A COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM (sit)

Genesis 22:15-18

The angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven, and said, “By myself I have sworn, says the Lord: Because you have done this, and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will indeed bless you, and I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of their enemies, and by your offspring shall all the nations of the earth gain blessing for themselves, because you have obeyed my voice.”

The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

H Y M N *(stand) (sung by all)*

1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er
 2 Shep - herds in the field a - bid - ing, watch - ing o'er your
 3 Saints be - fore the al - tar bend - ing, watch - ing long in

all the earth; ye, who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry,
 flocks by night, God with you is now re - sid - ing;
 hope and fear, sud - den - ly the Lord, de - scend - ing,

Refrain

now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:
 you - der shines the in - fant Light: come and wor - ship,
 in his tem - ple shall ap - pear:

come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new - born King.

Words: James Montgomery (1771–1854), alt.; Music: *Regent Square*, Henry Thomas Smart (1813–1879).

LESSON III: THE PROPHET ISAIAH FORETELLS
THE BIRTH OF THE MESSIAH *(sit)*

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shined. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.
The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

H Y M N *(stand) (sung by all)*

1 Joy to the world! the Lord is come: let earth re -
2 Joy to the world! the Sa - vior reigns; let us our
*3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in -
4 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the

ceive her King; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room, and
songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains, re -
fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings flow far
na - tions prove the glo - ries of his right - eous - ness, and

heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture
peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
as the curse is found, far as the curse is
won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his

sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
found, far as the curse is found.
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

Words: Isaac Watts; Music: *Antioch*, G.F. Händel.

LESSON IV: THE ONE WHO IS TO RULE ISRAEL WILL BE BORN IN THE VILLAGE OF BETHLEHEM (sit)

Isaiah 11:1–3a, 4a, 6–9

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like

the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.
The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

H Y M N (*stand*) (*sung by all*)

1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!
 2 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, the won - drous gift is given!
 3 O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;

1 A - bove thy deep and dream - less sleep the si - lent stars go by;
 2 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heaven.
 3 cast out our sin and en - ter in, be born in us to - day.

1 yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing Light;
 2 No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of sin,
 3 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad tid - ings tell;

1 the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.
 2 where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.
 3 O come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Em - man - u - el!

Words: Phillips Brooks (1835–1893); Music: *St. Louis*, Lewis H. Redner (1831–1908).

LESSON V: THE ANGEL GABRIEL ANNOUNCES
TO THE VIRGIN MARY THAT SHE WILL BEAR THE
SON OF THE MOST HIGH *(sit)*

Luke 1:26–38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her. *The Word of the Lord.*

People: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM “Advent Blessing”

Kris Crunk

St. Martin's Youth Choir

Bless all you sons and daughters who await the coming child; the only Son, the Promised One. Who comes to us born in a stable. Bless all the children of the light, with their brilliant faces. Lift high your candles, show the night; that Christ overcomes the darkness. Alleluia. The light of Light overshadows. Brighter than the things of earth, Son of God, humble birth. Bless all who worship in this place, the coming breath of heaven. The One whose life and death becomes salvation to the nations. Alleluia. The light of Light overshadows. Brighter than the things of earth, Son of God, humble birth. Alleluia.

Text: Randy Cox and Kris Crunk. Music: Kris Crunk. © 2012 Choristers Guild.

LESSON VI: JESUS IS BORN TO THE VIRGIN MARY

Luke 2:1, 3–7

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.
The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

H Y M N (stand) (sung by all)

1 It came up - on the mid - night clear, that
2 For lo! the days are haste - ning on, by

glo - rious song of old, from an - gels bend - ing
pro - phets seen of old, when with the ev - er -

near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
cir - cling years shall come the time fore - told,

“Peace on the earth, good will to men, from
when peace shall o - ver all the earth its

heaven’s all - gra - cious King.” The world in sol - emn
an - cient splen - dors fling, and all the world give

The musical score consists of six systems, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor). The tempo and style are indicated as 'stand' and 'sung by all'. The lyrics are arranged in two parts, with the first part starting on the first line and the second part starting on the second line. The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line with chords and some melodic movement in the right hand.

still - ness lay to hear the an - gels sing.
back the song which now the an - gels sing.

Words: E.H. Sears; Music: *Carol*, R.S. Willis.

LESSON VII: ANGELS ANNOUNCE TO THE SHEPHERDS THE BIRTH OF THE SAVIOR (*sit*) Luke 2:8–16

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!” When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. *The Word of the Lord.*

People: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM“Adam Lay Ybounden”
Boris Ord

Adam lay ybounden, bounden in a bond; four thousand winter thought he not too long. And all was for an apple, an apple that he took, as clerkes finden written in their book. Ne had the apple taken been, the apple taken been, Ne had never our lady abeen heavené queen. Blessed be the time that apple taken was, therefore we moun singen, *Deo gracias!*

Words: anon. 15th century. Music: Boris Ord. © 1957, Novello & Co. Ltd.

LESSON VIII: WISE MEN FIND THE CHRIST
CHILD AND WORSHIP HIM
Matthew 2:1–11

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: ‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.’” Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child

was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. *The Word of the Lord.*

People: Thanks be to God.

H Y M N (*stand*) (*sung by all*)

Unison or harmony

1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on
 2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where
 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh, come,

Ma - ry's lap is sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet with
 ox and ass are feed - ing? Good Chris - tian, fear: for
 peas - ant, king, to own him; the King of kings sal -

an - thems sweet, while shep - herds watch are keep - ing?
 sin - ners here, the si - lent Word is plead - ing.
 va - tion brings, let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.

Refrain

This, this is Christ the King, whom shep - herds

guard and an - gels sing; haste, haste to
bring him laud, the babe, the son of Ma - ry.

Words: W. C. Dix; Music: Greensleeves, English Melody.

LESSON IX: JOHN UNFOLDS THE MYSTERY OF THE INCARNATION *(sit)*

John 1:1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the

will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.
The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

THE HOMILY The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry
Presiding Bishop and Primate of The Episcopal Church

ANTHEM "Ding Dong, Merrily on High"
Charles Wood

Ding dong! Merrily on high in heav'n the bells are ringing:
Ding dong! Verily the sky is riv'n with angels singing. *Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!* E'en so here below, below, let steeple bells be swungen, And *io, io, io*, by priest and people sungen. *Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!* Pray you, dutifully prime your matin chime, ye ringers; May you beautifully rime your evetime song, ye singers. *Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!*

Text: G.R. Woodward.

THE PEACE (*stand*)

Officiant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: **And with thy spirit.**

The people greet one another

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please be seated.



ST. MARTIN'S WELCOMES PRESIDING BISHOP MICHAEL CURRY



Presiding Bishop Curry is the Chief Pastor and serves as President and Chief Executive Officer, and as Chair of the Executive Council of The Episcopal Church. He was installed as the 17th Presiding Bishop and Primate of The Episcopal Church on Nov. 1, 2015. He was elected to a nine-year term and was confirmed at the 78th General Convention of The Episcopal Church in Salt Lake City, Utah, on June 27, 2015.

The descendant of enslaved Africans brought to North America by way of the trans-Atlantic slave routes, Presiding Bishop Curry was born in Chicago, Ill. Presiding Bishop Curry's father was an Episcopal priest and his mother was a devout Episcopalian. She died at a young age and Presiding Bishop Curry, along with his sister, were raised by their father and grandmother. His father, mother and grandmother grounded him in Christian beliefs and practices through their example and their teachings.

Presiding Bishop Curry attended public schools in Buffalo, N.Y., and learned about social activism through his father's leadership and his own dedication to righting a broken world.

Presiding Bishop Curry graduated with high honors from Hobart College in Geneva, N.Y., in 1975. He received a Master of Divinity degree in 1978 from Yale University Divinity School in New Haven, Conn. He has furthered his education with

continued study at The College of Preachers, Princeton Theological Seminary, Wake Forest University, the Ecumenical Institute at St. Mary's Seminary, and the Institute of Christian Jewish Studies.

In 2018, his sermon for the Royal Wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle drew world-wide attention as he urged Christians to put love at the center of their spiritual and political lives—including the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Junior.

He has written five books: "Love is the Way: Holding on to Hope in Troubling Times" (2020); "The Power of Love" (2018); "Following the Way of Jesus: Church's Teachings in a Changing World" (2017); "Songs My Grandma Sang" (2015); and "Crazy Christians: A Call to Follow Jesus" (2013).



STUDENT MINISTRIES **CONFIRMATION** PARENT MEETING

Sunday, Dec. 12 • 12:30 p.m. • Student Life Center

Parents of students 8th grade and above are encouraged to attend this informational meeting about Confirmation for their children at St. Martin's.

Spring Confirmation Retreat • Jan. 22-23, 2022 • Camp Allen

**Sunday Confirmation Classes • Jan. 30-March 6, 2022
12:30-2 p.m. • Student Life Center**

**Visit bit.ly/studentconfirmation2022 to register.
Registration closes Jan. 10, 2022.**



The Giving Tree

The Giving Tree Christmas Card Program

Celebrate the holiday season with family and friends by making a donation in their honor to your favorite ministry.

Forms due to St. Martin's Episcopal Church by mail, fax or email by **Monday, December 13.**

Place orders at www.StMartinsEpiscopal.org. A variety of artwork covers are available. Cards will be personalized and mailed to designated recipients.

For more information, contact Outreach at
outreach@stmartinsepiscopal.org.

ST. MARTIN'S
OUTREACH
MINISTRIES



Kids' Meals with Men of St. Martin's

Tuesday, Dec. 14 | 5 p.m.
Parish Life Center Kitchen

Come prepare sandwiches with Men of St. Martin's. Kids' Meals provides and distributes nutritious lunches to hungry preschool children throughout Houston. For more information about Kids' Meals, visit kidsmealshouston.org.

Contact outreach@stmartinsepiscopal.org for more information.



Faith
in
LITERATURE

EVENING GROUP

Tuesday, Dec. 14
7-8:30 p.m.

Children's Life Center, Room 109

The Faith in Literature group explores, discusses and makes relevant connections between faith and works of fiction, past and present. While operating within the framework of Christian theology, we seek to ascertain in our reading how all good literature, if even by its omission, deals with and reflects themes of faith.

For more information, contact **Katwana Coleman** at **713-830-4110**
or kcoleman@stmartinsepiscopal.org.



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MARKET



*Unique treasures from local
farmers and artisans!*

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 18
9 A.M.–NOON
CORNER OF WOODWAY AND SAGE

RAIN OR SHINE

*The mission of the Sterling's Market at St. Martin's
Episcopal Church is to glorify God through sharing
the Gospel and the bounties of the earth
with Parishioners, neighbors and visitors.*

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**STERLING'S MARKET
WILL BE CLOSED FOR THE
HOLIDAYS ON DECEMBER 25
AND JANUARY 1.**



HOUSTON BOYCHOIR



CONCERT



Saturday
December 18
4 p.m.
The Church



Choristers & Youth Choir *Christmas Program*

Sunday, December 19
9:15 a.m. - Family Table Service
Parish Life Center

Come and sing along to some of your favorite traditional carols and hear the telling of the Christmas Story.

Christian Education at St. Martin's

We invite you to join us for Sunday School next week, Dec. 19.



8+ with the Rev. Sharron L. Cox 8:55-9:25 a.m. | Chapel Reception Hall

This class is a Clergy-led coffee and discussion following the 8 a.m. service. Each class focuses on one of the lectionary readings for the day.



Theology for Life with Professor Craig Evans *How Reliable are Gospels?*

10:15-11 a.m. | Bagby Parish Hall

This class features a series of Biblical, theological and historical topics that engage the mind and heart in worship of God and living a life of faith.



Life in Christ with Dr. David Peterson *The Meaning of Incarnation*

10:15-11 a.m. | Chapel Reception Hall

The class will look at what it means to be a disciple of Christ in the present age, from who Christ is to the message He shared and how we might follow Him today.



Family Life Class *Breakfast Club*

10:15-10:45 a.m. | At the Crosswalk

This is a slightly shorter class for parents of younger families that meets after the Family Table service three times a month—twice for class and once for a breakfast social.



Seekers with the Rev. Nick Dyke 10:15-11 a.m. | Activity Center, Aerobics Room

This class is for more senior parishioners for fellowship and lectionary-based Bible study.



Episcopal Youth Community 10:15-11 a.m. | Student Life Center

Grades 6-12 are welcome to join Student Ministries for coffee, lemonade, donuts and conversation about the Scriptures shared in worship.



Children's Sunday School 10:15-11 a.m. | Children's Life Center

We have engaging lessons, curriculum and content for both preschool and elementary school. Childcare is available during all morning services for infants through four-year-olds as well.

GIVE BLOOD

St. Martin's Episcopal Church

Blood Drive

Monday, Dec. 20 | 9 a.m.-3 p.m. | Bagby Parish Hall

FREE COVID-19 Antibody Test with Donation

Appointments are required to donate during this time. Please go online to schedule at bit.ly/smeclblooddrive or contact Victoria Tidwell at Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center: 832-602-9350 or vtidwell@giveblood.org

EAT. DRINK. BRING I.D.



Sunday, December 26

First Sunday after Christmas Day

8 and 9 a.m. – Worship services,
The Church – Holy Eucharist
The 9 a.m. service will be livestreamed.

No Sunday School on Sunday December 26

In observance of Christmas.

Office Closures for St. Martin's Episcopal Church

December 27 and 28 - Closed • December 31 - Close at Noon • January 3 - Closed



Christmas Services

Friday, December 24

Christmas Eve

11 a.m. – Family service with pageantry for families,
The Church – No Eucharist
This service will be livestreamed

1, 5:50, 6 and 8:50 p.m. – Traditional services,
The Church – Holy Eucharist
These services will be livestreamed

The Parish Choir, Gloria Dei Organ, and brass and tympani
provide the perfect setting for the celebration
of our Lord's birth.

New Contemporary Service

6:50 p.m. – Riverway, Contemporary service,
Parish Life Center – Holy Eucharist

Saturday, December 25

Christmas Day: The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ

11 a.m. – Worship service,
The Church – Holy Eucharist
Parish Choir and Gloria Dei Organ

7 Night Cruise Aboard the Quantum of the Seas

Join St. Martin's Episcopal Church
Alaska Glacier Cruise

June 13-20, 2022

with The Rev. Dr. Russ Levenson



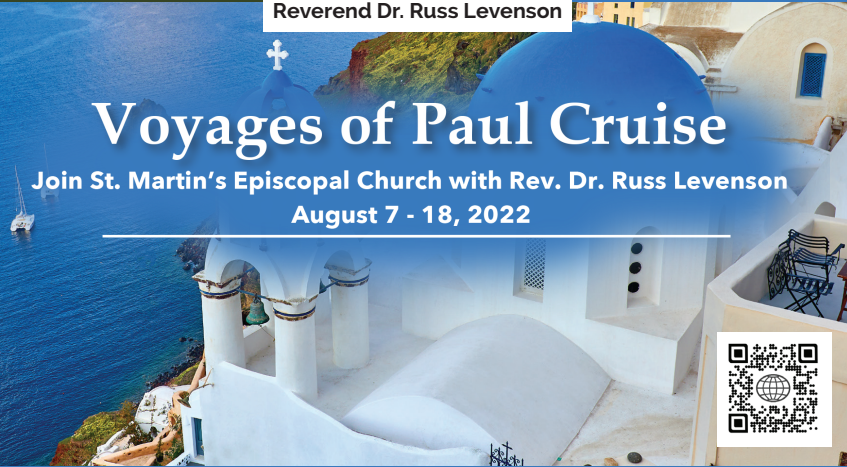
Guest Speaker on both cruises



Reverend Dr. Russ Levenson

Voyages of Paul Cruise

Join St. Martin's Episcopal Church with Rev. Dr. Russ Levenson
August 7 - 18, 2022



11 Nights Aboard the Celebrity Constellation



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A Very Special Lenten Retreat *Icon Writing* with Teresa Harrison



March 7-11

Monday through Friday

8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The class meets from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Friday.



St. Martin's will host renowned instructor Teresa Harrison for a five-day course in the ancient technique of icon writing.

Participants will write their own icons using acrylic paint and gold leaf, a medium that resembles the traditional egg tempera.

Registration fee of \$495 includes all art supplies, but students will need to bring a small desk lamp and an apron or smock.

Registration is now open <https://bit.ly/iconography2021>



ST. MARTIN'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Great = IS THY = Faithfulness

STEWARDSHIP 2022

MAKE YOUR PLEDGE NOW

WAYS TO GIVE



TEXT: Text SMEC to 73256

ONLINE: stmartinsepiscopal.org/giving

MAIL: St. Martin's Episcopal Church,
717 Sage Road, Houston, TX 77056

REQUESTS: Contact: Director of
Parish Stewardship, Ashley Pratka at
apratka@stmartinsepiscopal.org
or 346-335-8658

TRANSFER OF ASSETS: Pledging
and setting up a recurring gift online
helps you and the church budget.

LEARN MORE AT: STMARTINSEPISCOPAL.ORG/GIVING

THE OFFERTORY

ANTHEM“God Rest You Merry Gentlemen”
Mark Sirett

God rest you merry, gentlemen, let nothing you dismay, for Jesus Christ our Saviour was born upon this day, to save us from Satan’s power when we were gone astray: *O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tidings of comfort and joy.* In Bethlehem in Israel, this blessed babe was born, and laid within a manger upon this blessed morn; the which his mother Mary did nothing take in scorn: *O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tidings of comfort and joy.* From God our heavenly Father a blessed angel came, and unto certain shepherds brought tidings of the same, how that in Bethlehem was born the Son of God by name: *O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tidings of comfort and joy.* The shepherds at those tidings rejoiced much in mind, and left their flocks a feeding In tempest, storm, and wind, and went to Bethlehem straight-way this blessed babe to find: *O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tidings of comfort and joy.* But when to Bethlehem they came, where at this infant lay, they found him in a manger, where oxen feed on hay; his mother Mary kneeling unto the Lord did pray: *O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tidings of comfort and joy.* Now to the Lord sing praises, all you within this place and with true love and brotherhood each other now embrace; this holy tide of Christmas all others doth deface: *O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tidings of comfort and joy.*

Oxford University Press 2011 Mark Sirett asserted his right under the Copyright, Designs, and Patents Act, 1988; OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, MUSIC DEPARTMENT, GREAT CLARENDON STREET, OXFORD OX; 6DP.

DOXOLOGY WITH ALLELUIAS

(stand) (sung by all) *Lasst uns erfreuen*

Praise God from whom all bless - ings flow. Praise him all crea - tures here be -
low. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise him a -
bove ye heaven - ly host. Praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.
Refrain
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

Words: Thomas Ken (1637-1711); Music: *Lasst uns erfreuen*, melody from *Auserlesene Catholische Geistliche Kirchengeseng*, 1623; adapt. Ralph Vaughan William (1872-1958).

THE PRAYERS *(kneel)*

THE FINAL COLLECT

Almighty God, who hast poured upon us the new light of thine incarnate Word: Grant that the same light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE BLESSING

All stand.

HYMN IN PROCESSION

1 Hark! the her-ald an - gels sing glo - ry to the new-born King!
 2 Christ, by high-est heaven a - dored; Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord;
 3 Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,

Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!
 late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of the Vir - gin's womb.
 born to raise us from the earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, join the tri-umph of the skies;
 Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail the in-car-nate De - i - ty.
 Risen with heal-ing in his wings, light and life to all he brings,

with the an - gel - ic host pro - claim Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!
 Pleased as man with us to dwell; Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el!
 hail, the Sun of Right - eous - ness! hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace!

Refrain

Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing glo - ry to the new-born King!

Words: Charles Wesley (1707–1788), alt.; Music: Mendelssohn, Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847);
 adapt. William H. Cummings (1831–1915).

THE DISMISSAL

A Minister says the dismissal

People: Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

VOLUNTARY “Fanfare” by Charles Lang

Personal prayers are available at the west Side Chapel after this service.

YEAR-END CONTRIBUTIONS

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requires that, in order to be tax deductible for 2021, cash, check or credit card contributions to St. Martin’s Episcopal Church must be received by the church or postmarked by the United States Postal Service no later than Friday, Dec. 31. **This includes payment of your 2021 pledge, prepayment of your 2022 pledge and payment of your *Building for the Ages* pledge.** The Finance staff is required to check the post office cancellation dates on all receipts in early January to ensure our legal compliance to this rule.



For more information, contact Debbie Hutchison at 713-985-3803 or dhutchison@stmartinsepiscopal.org.

SERMON NOTES

RECOGNITIONS



FLOWERS GIVEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD

In thanksgiving for the ministry of our Presiding Bishop,
the Most Rev. Michael B. Curry

To mark a special occasion with an altar flower dedication, visit
bit.ly/ChurchFlowers or contact Barbara Piana at 713-830-4116.

CONTINUING PRAYERS

Individuals are included on the *Continuing Prayers* list for numerous reasons, some of which may include recovery from illness, thanksgiving or need for support for special ministry and mission. In addition to praying for participants in cancer support groups, the Alzheimer's Caregiver's Support Group and The Gathering, this week please pray for the following:

Shelly Bain	Wayne Hollis	Helen and Jim Shaffer
Jack Beeson	Debra Ibarra Mayfield	Clif Shoemake
Missy Belote	Brittney Jacobson	Richard Smith
Anne Berry	John Jamail	Bob Spencer
Alli Blackman	Shirlee Jamail	Jim Stokes
Cory Blackman	Helen Joyner	Aaron Strong
Grace Blake	Muriel Kearby Albaral	Susan Strother
John and Dianne Brock III	Paige Laird	Paul Stumpff
Jane Cabes	Amy Lee	Nancy Talbot
Elinor Christian	Stan Leong	Paul Therrien
Higdon Compton, Jr.	Shawn Levenson	Bart Tomlinson
Beth Costa	Nancy Liles	H. Michael Tyson
Gail Davis	Martha Ann Linden	Randy Vander Naillen
Mac Davis	Roberta Lloyd	Becky Wareing
Sue Davis	Ryan Logan	Charles Warren
Tommy W. Davis	Jaclyn Manning	Mary Waters
Louis DelHomme	Jo Nell Marshall	Derry Wilkens
Bobby deSosa	Jeffrey Martinson	James Wilkerson
Betty DeVerter	BD McAndrew	Eric Zoerb
Chase Dixon	Michelle McStravick	Ben
Nancy Doss	Hal Means	Betsey
Jim Easterling	Len Menefee	Elizabeth
Stacey Elliott	Benice Nwabueze	Henry
E.J. Farhood	Judy and Jay O'Connor	Jane
Matt Fryar	Jim Paddock	Kathryn
Brad Gallion	Troy Phillips	Laura
Dee Gilbert	Jimmy Prentice	Lorrie
Max Goodloe	Ophelia Pujol	Marilyn
Hollis, McKay and	Barbara Quackenbush	Mark
Rand Grace	Rocky Robinson	Matthew
Gladys Halbouty	Robert Rosales	Oran
Tish Hale	Larry S.	Patsy
Tom Harrington	David and Clare Sackllah	RC
Walesk Harvey	Essa Sackllah	Sally
Elizabeth Hill	Tracy and Jimmy Sackllah	Thomas
Mollie Hill	Brady Samuelson	Victor and Barbara
Jeff Holden	Jim Sanitato	Woody
Elizabeth Holderfield	Ellie Schilling	

Please be advised that we will be updating the Continuing Prayers list twice a year in the weeks before Easter and All Saints' Day. Names will remain on the prayer list for six months. To put someone on the Continuing Prayers list, please contact Valerie Rivera at 713-985-3817 or vriviera@stmartinsepiscopal.org.

CONTINUING PRAYERS

Names we have received of those in the Armed Forces:

SSgt Clint Bahme	LCDR Bradley Ryan	2nd Lt. Alex Mullen
Lt. Col. Julian Benton	Hoffman	Lt. Holly E. Pace
1st Lt. Benjamin Brown	Capt. Cody Horr	Lt. Paul Piana
Lt. Col. Chris Davis	Maj. Wesley J. Hunnell	LCMR David A. Pilko
Wesley Dodd	Dallas Wayne Hunter	Maj. Thomas Cook Plant
James Drury III	Staton Jobe	PO1 Brian Matthew Powell
James Eilers	Lt. Cmdr. Kory Krebs	PFC Joel Rowell
Major Parker Firestone	Krystal Martinez	Maj. Christian Schleider
Capt. Dom Flatt	PV2 Wills Masterson	1st Lt. Grant Suter
Nathan Fordice	1st Lt. Ben Matthews	1st Lt. Luke Voss
1st Lt. Will Golinkin	1st Lt. Jack Mullen	

ST. MARTIN'S IS HERE FOR YOU! GOD LOVES YOU!

General Questions

Contact the Reception Desk at 713-621-3040.

Prayer Requests

Contact the Prayer Request Line at 713-830-4124,
or Valerie Rivera at 713-985-3817 or
vrivera@stmartinsepiscopal.org.

After Hours Emergencies

Call 713-621-3040 and press 2 to reach the Priest on Call.

Death Notifications and Funerals

Contact Cyndy Ensign at 713-985-3808 or
censign@stmartinsepiscopal.org.

OUR STAFF AND VESTRY

SUNDAY PROGRAM STAFF

Dr. David Henning

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Mr. Kevin Riehle

Choral Director of Adult Choir
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Ms. Carole Nelson

Coordinator of Children's Music Ministries
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Mrs. Kathy Johnson

Director of Membership
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Mrs. Holli Kight

Lay Minister for Children's Christian Education
hkight@stmartinsepiscopal.org

Mrs. Amanda Shockley

Director of Student Ministries
ashockley@stmartinsepiscopal.org

ST. MARTIN'S VESTRY

Vestry Executive Committee

Mr. Jim Hibbert, *Senior Warden*

Mr. Titus Harris III, *Junior Warden*

Mrs. Anya McInnis, *Missions Chair*

Mr. Matt Anderson, *Treasurer*

Mrs. Diane Campbell, *Clerk*

Mr. Culver Stedman, *Past Senior Warden*

Mr. Bob Heston, Jr., *Parish Stewardship Chair*

Mr. Andy Harvin, *Chancellor**

Vestry Members

Mrs. Michelle Bain

Mr. Tommy Ford

Mrs. Whitney Gormley

Mrs. Casey Hedges

Mr. Matt Mogas

Mr. Robert Paddock

Mr. Bob Parkey

Mr. Gib Surles

The Hon. John Wooldridge

Associate Members

The Hon. James A. Baker, III, *Special Counsel to the Vestry**

Mr. Bill Frazer, *Senior Council Representative 2021-2022*

Mr. Will Williams, Jr., *Senior Council Representative 2021-2022*

Mrs. Therese Moore, *Altar Guild President 2021-2022*

Mrs. Dana Parkey, *ECW President 2021-2022*

Mr. Joe Lopez, *Men of St. Martin's President 2019-2022*

Mr. Michael Weaber, *Usher Representative 2021-2022*

**Chancellor and Special Counsel are associate positions, filled at the discretion of the Rector.*



Mr. Culver Stedman
Vestry Person

OUR CLERGY

Jesus, The Christ
The Head of This Church



The Rev. Dr. Russell J. Levenson, Jr.
Rector
lthough@stmartinseiscopal.org



The Rev. Sharron L. Cox
Associate for Outreach, Pastoral Care and Women's Ministries
scox@stmartinseiscopal.org



The Rev. Martin J. Bastian
Vice-Rector
mbastian@stmartinseiscopal.org



The Rev. R. Wesley Arning
Associate for Young Adults and Small Group Ministry
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The Rev. Dr. Chad T. Martin
Vicar
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The Rev. John R. Bentley, Jr.
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The Rev. Dr. Susannah E. McBay, Ph.D.
Associate for Christian Education, Prayer Ministries and the Riverway
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The Rev. James (Jim) E. Cunningham
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The Rev. Alex D. Graham III
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The Rev. Nicolas (Nick) R. D. Dyke
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The Rev. Lisa R. Neilson
Associate for Pastoral Care and Women's Ministries
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The Rev. Richard (Dick) H. Elwood
Pastoral Associate
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The Rev. Jane P. Ferguson
Associate for Family and Student Ministries
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The Rev. Gillian (Gill) B. Keyworth
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The Rev. Robert E. Wareing
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