

A FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS

December 15, 2024



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

WELCOME TO ST. MARTIN'S

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.

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

Prayer 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.

NOTICES

- *St. Martin's is a gun-free Campus.*
 - *To use a hearing assisted device, see one of our ushers.*
 - *St. Martin's asks that anyone coming into a worship service not bring oversized or large backpacks.*
 - *Please silence all cell phones when entering The Church and also refrain from texting.*
- Thank you for being respectful of God and others as we spend time together in worship.*



** indicates when latecomers may be seated so as not to disturb other worshippers.*

A FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS

VOLUNTARY "Noel in G"

Claude D'aquin

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

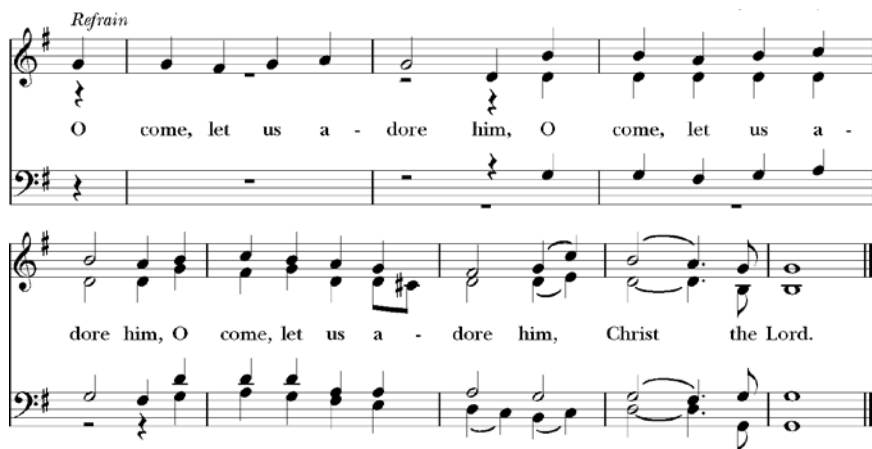
HYMN IN PROCESSION (*stand*) (*sung by all*)

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 See how the shep - herds, sum - moned to his cra - dle,
 5 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 leav - ing their flocks, draw nigh to gaze;
 5 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 we too will thith - er bend our joy - ful foot - steps;
 5 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.

Please be seated.

THE BIDDING PRAYERS *(stand)*

The 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)*

Officiant and People

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.

Please be seated.

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

Genesis 3:8-15 – *Read by Asher Ray, Master Acolyte*

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.”

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN *(stand) (sung by all)*



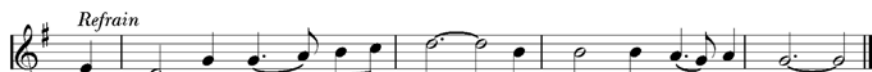
1 Pre - pare the way, O Zi - on, your Christ is draw - ing near!
 2 He brings God's rule, O Zi - on; he comes from heaven a - bove.
 3 Fling wide your gates, O Zi - on; your Sa - vior's rule em - brace.



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 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: *Beredet väg för Herran*, melody from *Then Svenska Psalmboken*, 1697; Copyright: Words: © 1982, Charles P. Price.

Please be seated.

LESSON II: GOD ESTABLISHES A COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM

Genesis 22:15-18 – *Read by Roslyn Costales, Youth Choir*

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.”

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN *(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:
 yon - 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).

Please be seated.

LESSON III: THE PROPHET ISAIAH FORETELLS THE BIRTH OF THE MESSIAH

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7 – *Read by Jay Karahan, Adult Choir*

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.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

HYMN *(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 and
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 as the sound - ing joy.
found, as, far as the curse is found.
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

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

Please be seated.

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

Isaiah 11:1-3a, 4a, 6-9 – *Read by Samantha Hutchison, Altar Guild President*

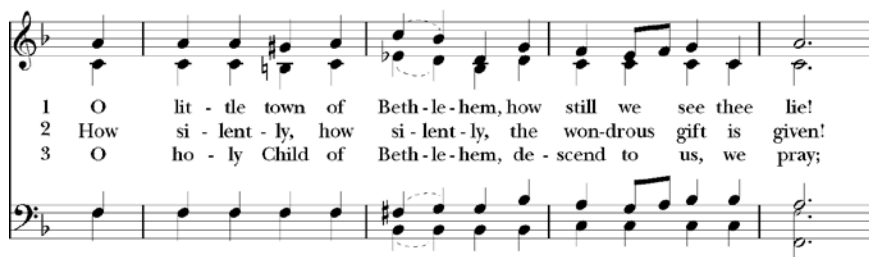
A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. 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.

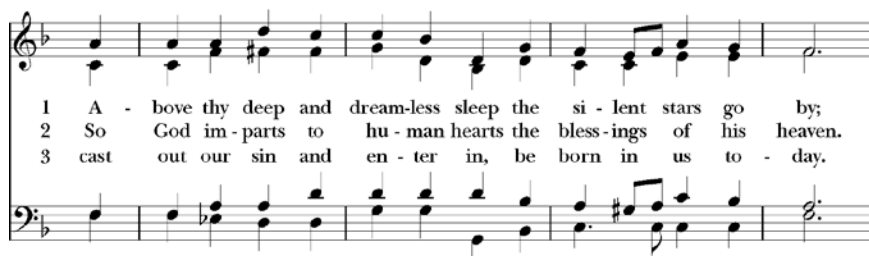
Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

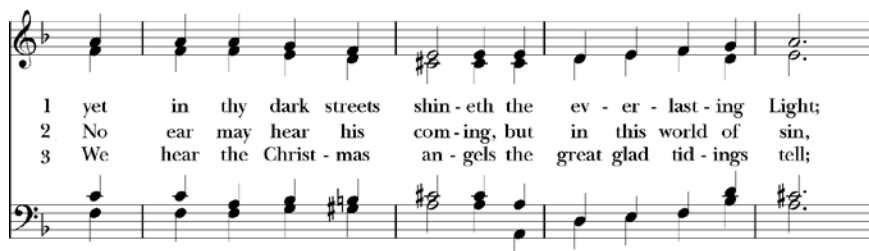
H Y M N *(stand) (sung by all)*



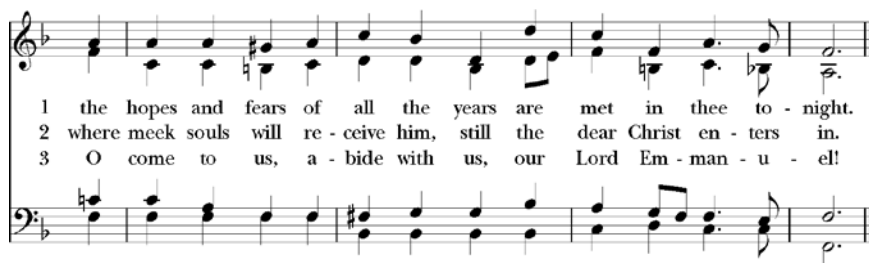
1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!
 2 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, the won - drous gift is given!
 3 O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;



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).

Please be seated.

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

Luke 1:26-38 – *Read by Samuel Gonzales, Lay Eucharistic Minister*

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.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM “Advent Blessing”

Kris Crunk

Youth Choir of St. Martin’s

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 – Read by Ann McMeans, Daughters of the King President

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.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN *(stand) (sung by all)*

1 It came up - on days 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 shall 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



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

Please be seated.

LESSON VII: ANGELS ANNOUNCE TO THE SHEPHERDS THE BIRTH OF THE SAVIOR

Luke 2:8-16 – *Read by John Sutherland, Vestry Usher Representative*

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.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM “Little Lamb”
Joel Phillips

Little Lamb, who made thee? Gave thee life, and bid thee feed by the stream
and o’er the mead; gave thee clothing of delight, softest clothing, woolly,
bright; who gave thee such a tender voice, making all the vales rejoice? Little
Lamb, Little Lamb, dost thou know who made thee? Little Lamb, I’ll tell
thee; He is called by thy name, for he calls himself a Lamb. He is meek, and
he is mild; he became a little child. I, a child, and thou a lamb, we are called
by his name. Little Lamb, God bless thee!

Text: William Blake (1757-1827). Music: Joel Phillips. © 1998 by G. Schirmer, Inc.

LESSON VIII: WISE MEN FIND THE CHRIST
CHILD AND WORSHIP HIM

Matthew 2:1-11 – *Read by Courtney Schilling, Vestry*

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.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

HYMN *(stand) (sung by all)*

Unison or harmony

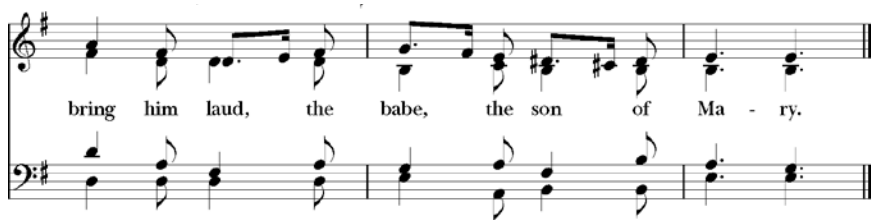
1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on
 2 Why lies he in, such mean es - tate where
 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh, come,

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



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

Please be seated.

LESSON IX: JOHN UNFOLDS THE MYSTERY OF THE INCARNATION

John 1:1-14 – Read by the Rev. John D. Sundara

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.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

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

THE PEACE *(stand)*

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

People: And with thy spirit.

The people greet one another

Please be seated.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please see page 23 for classes and events.

THE OFFERTORY

ANTHEM "Love Came Down at Christmas"
Leo Sowerby

Love came down at Christmas, Love all lovely, Love divine. Love was born at Christmas, Stars and Angels gave the sign. Worship we the Godhead, Love incarnate, Love divine; Worship we our Jesus, But wherewith for sacred sign? Love shall be our token, Love be yours and love be mine; Love to God and all men, Love for plea and gift and sign.

Text: Christina Rossetti; Music: Leo Sowerby. Copyright 1935, renewed 1963.

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



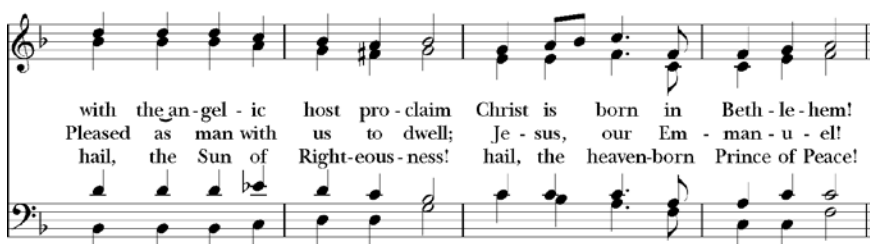
1 Hark! the her-ald an - gels sing glo - ry to the new-born King!
 2 Christ, by high-est heaven a - dored; Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord;
 3 Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,



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. Alleluias are omitted during the season of Advent.

People: Thanks be to God.

VOLUNTARY “Noel in A”
by Claude D’aquin

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

RECOGNITIONS



BIRTHS

Nov. 6 Eloise Jennifer Gazis
Daughter of Anna and Yiannis Gazis
Granddaughter of Dana and Bob Parkey

To mark any occasion with altar flower dedications, visit bit.ly/smecaltarflowers or contact Rebekah Maddux El-Hakam at relhakam@smec.org.

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:

Bobbie Adams	Martha Marks
Carolyn Alban	Bill Maynard
Harvey Altmann	Tom McDade
Edith Avery	Janet McDaniel
Shelly Bain	Patricia McDonald
Cory Blackman	Adams McHenry
Jennifer Broussard	Megan Palsa
Gary Browning	Dan Pate
Helen Paige Buck	Ophelia Pujol
Delondra Citrano	Phyllis Reinhardt
Sammy A. Citrano III	Monica Rivera
Gail Davis	Helen and Jim Shaffer
Paul Davison	Caroline Shanahan
Bobby de Sosa	Clif Shoemake
Linda de Sosa	Fran Gardner Shores
Charlotte Dion	Grantland Wagner
Ross Dunn	MaeJoyce Wagner
Connie Dyer	Margaret Watson
Stacey and John Elliott	Mary Watters
Charles Flores	Stephen Wedemeyer
Catherine Gonzales	Eric Zoerb
Nancy Gore	Dave
The Rev. Alex Graham	Elizabeth and Scott
Shea Guinn	Harold
Bette Haidusek	Henry
Cassidy Haidusek	Laura
Cathy Haidusek	Lynne
Jean Hatton	Sharon
Nancy Haywood	Wayne
Wendy Hurt	
Clare Jan	
Mary and Jim Jennings	
Dick Kilday	
Searcy Kracke	
Mary Tyler Labhart	
Tom Lamb	
The Rev. Peter Larson	
Bruce Michael Lee	
Nancy Liles	
Patrick Maehs	

Please be advised that the weeks after Easter and All Saints' Day, this list will be completely redone. To add or remove someone on the Continuing Prayers list, please contact Valerie Rivera at 713-985-3817 or vriviera@smec.org.

CONTINUING PRAYERS

Prayers for those on Active Military Duty in the Armed Forces:

Lt. Col. Julian Benton	1st Lt. Alex Mullen
1LT. Tom Cadwallender	PFC. Parris F. Owen
1LT. Yonatan Cadwallender	SrA James W. Peoples
1st LCDR Casey Gainer	Lt. Paul Piana
LCDR Bradley Hoffman	Lt. Col. Thomas C. Plant
LTC Wesley J. Hunnell	PO1 Brian Powell
1st Lt. Stephen A. Jeckovich	Sgt. Joel Rowell
Capt. Blake J. Kidd	PO Evan Tomlin
Capt. Jack Mullen	

Please be advised that each year the week after Veterans Day, this list will be completely redone. To add or remove someone on the Military Service Prayers list, please contact Valerie Rivera at 713-985-3817 or vriviera@smec.org.

OTHER WORSHIP SERVICES



9:15 a.m. • Parish Life Center

The Family Table service with Holy Eucharist combines contemporary worship music with traditional liturgy and is designed for families with young children.



11:15 a.m. • Parish Life Center

The Riverway Contemporary Service is both Anglican and modern, offering the Holy Eucharist in a relaxed service with contemporary music.

WEDNESDAY SERVICES

Holy Eucharist Services
7 a.m., noon and 6 p.m. • Christ Chapel

OSL Healing Prayer Service
First Wednesday of the month
5 p.m. • Parish Life Center
Online at bit.ly/oslservice

THIS SUNDAY

✦ ADULTS

8+

Discuss the lectionary readings of the day following the 8 a.m. service.

8:55 a.m. • Chapel Reception Hall

THEOLOGY FOR LIFE with the Rev. Wesley Arning and Ryan Presley
“Come, Lord Jesus: The Meaning of Advent”

The Wayside Podcast hosts this series based on Advent themes.

10:15 a.m. • Bagby Parish Hall

✦ STUDENT MINISTRIES

SUNDAY GET-TOGETHERS

Students in grades 6–12 spend time in fellowship and discuss the Scriptures shared in worship.

10:15 a.m. • Student Life Center

✦ CHILDREN’S MINISTRIES

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION AND OUTREACH

Families and children are invited to celebrate the season and prepare shoeboxes for our Seafarers Outreach Project.

10:15 a.m. • Children’s Life Center

CHILDCARE

Available during all morning services for six-weeks through three-year-olds.

8 a.m. • Children’s Life Center

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



*To view all our Christian education options,
scan the QR code or visit **bit.ly/smecedu**.*

THIS WEEK AT ST. MARTIN'S

DECEMBER 16-21, 2024

ALL ADULTS

Saintly Stitchers *Monday, 10 a.m. • Activity Center, Upper Hall East*
Saintly Stitchers fill St. Martin's with pew kneelers and other gifts for worship spaces.

Prayer Shawl Ministry *Tuesday, 9 a.m. • Activity Center, Family Room*
Knit and crochet shawls to be released for those in need of prayer.

Blanket Ladies *Wednesday, 10 a.m. • Activity Center, Family Room*
Make receiving blankets for newborn infants at local charity hospitals.

Parish Choir *Thursday, 11:30 a.m. or 7 p.m. • The Music Center, Rehearsal Hall*
Sing a variety of traditional music in service to the Lord and our congregation.

MEN

Men of St. Martin's *Thursday • 7 a.m. • Bagby Parish Hall*
This mens' group meets for fellowship, mutual support and Bible study.

STUDENTS

Life Groups Christmas Party *Wednesday, 6 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 the meal.

EVENTS



*To view all our upcoming events, scan the QR code or visit **bit.ly/smecevents**.*

The background of the poster is a dark blue night sky filled with stars. In the foreground, there is a dark silhouette of a forest of evergreen trees.

Taizé

PRAYER SERVICE

SUNDAY, DEC. 15

5 p.m. • Christ Chapel

Taizé Prayer is a quiet and meditative time of sung prayer, listening and quiet reflection based upon the style of worship of the Taizé Community in France which has drawn hundreds of thousands of visitors for over half a century.

Come and join us whether you are drawn to silence or just in need of quiet or seeking time of prayer with others.

Contact: Rebekah Maddux El-Hakam • relhakam@smec.org • 713-830-4146

The background of the poster is a dark blue night sky with a large, bright full moon. Below the moon, there is a silhouette of a reindeer pulling a sleigh with Santa Claus. At the bottom, there is a silhouette of a city skyline with several houses.

Christmas Crash

SUNDAY, DEC. 15

5 – 8 p.m. • Student Life Center

Admission is one dozen cookies, which will be donated to ReVision, a program for Houston at-risk youth.

Middle and high school students are encouraged to bring a friend for a fantastic night of games, contests, dinner, treats and prizes. Wear a tacky Christmas sweater, reindeer antlers or a festive Christmas outfit. There will be plenty of fun, including our traditional white elephant gift exchange!

Contact: Florence Ritchie • fritchie@smec.org • 713-985-3843

PARTICIPATE IN STEWARDSHIP!

Pray and ask for God's guidance on how to respond to His generosity. **PROMISE!** Make a financial commitment that helps St. Martin's plan. We cannot fulfill our programs without the support of our Parish Family.



Contact Ashley Pratka: apratka@smec.org | 346-335-8658

PLEDGE TODAY

Scan this QR Code to make
your 2025 pledge today - Online!



WE
believe



The Giving Tree



CHRISTMAS CARD PROGRAM

The Giving Tree is a branch of St. Martin's Outreach Ministries, offering Parishioners and the surrounding community the opportunity to honor a loved one on a special occasion through a heartfelt gift that empowers a worthy organization while touching hearts and changing lives.

Order cards at

bit.ly/christmasgivingtree.

Deadline to order is Monday, Dec. 16.

Contact :Tracee Tindol | outreach@smec.org | 713-985-3811



Get in the
**HOLIDAY
SPIRIT**
DONATE BLOOD!

Monday, Dec. 16
9 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
Activity Center, Game Room



Visit bit.ly/smecblooddrive to
book your appointment today!



Receive a **holiday stocking stuffer** as a
token to helping patients in our local
hospitals! (while supplies last)



Gulf Coast Regional
Blood Center

Contact: Victoria Wilson
events@smec.org • 713-985-3838



LITERATURE

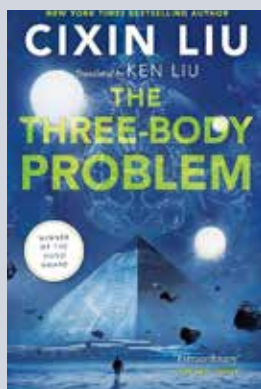
EVENING GROUP

Tuesday, Dec. 17 | 7-8:30 p.m.
Children's Life Center, Room 109 and
Via Zoom | bit.ly/faithinliteveningzoom

While operating within the framework of Christian theology, Faith in Literature seeks to ascertain in our reading how all good literature, if even by its omission, deals with and reflects themes of faith.

This month, we discuss "Three Body Problem" by Cixin Liu.

Contact: Amanda DeViney • adeviney@smec.org • 713-830-4110



ACTIVITY CENTER

*The Activity Center will end fitness and art classes on **Friday, Dec. 20** for the Christmas holiday. All activities will resume on **Monday, Jan. 6**.*

The Activity Center track and weight room will be open during Campus business hours.



Contact: Victoria Wilson
events@smec.org • 713-985-3835

Cocoa & Carols



SUNDAY, DEC. 22

10:15 a.m. • Children's Life Center

All the children's Sunday School classes will gather for a fun-filled morning to celebrate Jesus' coming. Children will hear a Christmas story, sing Christmas songs and enjoy hot chocolate and a treat.

Contact: Ashley Monachelli
amonachelli@smec.org • 713-985-3816





ST. MARTIN'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

CHRISTMAS

AT ST. MARTIN'S

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES | Tuesday, Dec. 24

Family Table Services 9:15 a.m. • *Parish Life Center*

Holy Eucharist, family-friendly.

11 a.m. * • *The Church (No Eucharist)*

Music and Nativity Liturgy.

Traditional Services 1, 3:30*, 6 and 8:30 p.m. • *The Church*

Holy Eucharist; festive music by the Parish Choir, Gloria Dei Organ, brass and timpani.

**These services will be livestreamed*

Riverway Contemporary Service

6:30 p.m. • *Parish Life Center*

Holy Eucharist; carols sing-along begins at 6 p.m.

Childcare will be provided for six-week-old infants through 3-year-olds at the 9:15 and 11 a.m. services as well as the 1, 3:30, and 6 p.m. services.

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE | Wednesday, Dec. 25

11 a.m. • *The Church*

Holy Eucharist; traditional service with hymns, anthems and the Parish Choir.

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS SERVICES | Sunday, Dec. 29

8, 9 and 11:15 a.m. • *The Church*

9:15 a.m. *Family Table* • *Parish Life Center*

11:15 a.m. *Riverway* • *Parish Life Center*

Holy Eucharist; no evening service due to Christmas holidays.



FEAST OF LIGHTS

ACOLYTE DINNER CELEBRATION

SUNDAY, JAN. 5 • 4 P.M. • BAGBY PARISH HALL

After the event, all acolytes will walk to The Church to prepare for the Feast of Lights service.

Acolytes who serve in Family Table and The Church and their families are invited to attend a dinner in recognition of their contributions to enhancing our worship services. We will celebrate our graduating seniors and spring acolyte promotions.

All who plan to attend the special event are requested to sign up at bit.ly/acolytedinner.

Contact: Florence Ritchie • fritchier@smec.org • 713-985-3843

A Change of Heart



Every woman has at least one thing in common with her mother-in-law: both love the same man. Women are invited to this study group focused on the mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationship.

Wednesdays | Jan. 8 – Feb. 26
Student Life Center, Upstairs Lounge

Each class is limited to the first 20 who register.

Registration details for both Morning and Afternoon Sessions can be found at bit.ly/smecachangeofheart

Contact: Graham Neuhaus • geneuhaus@aol.com

MEMBERSHIP

If you are visiting today, please fill out a Welcome Card from the pew rack to place in the offering plate or complete it online by scanning the QR code or visiting **bit.ly/smecvisitors**. Please introduce yourself to one of our Clergy and we will be in touch to let you know more about our Parish Family.



Seeking membership in a parish is a very important step and it is our goal to support your understanding of our Parish, its ministries and your place in the life of St. Martin's. Our membership process begins by attending one of our quarterly Membership 101 classes.

Contact: Kathy Johnson • 713-985-3834 • kjohnson@smec.org

ST. MARTIN'S IS HERE FOR YOU

For general questions, contact the Reception Desk at 713-621-3040 during business hours (8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday–Friday).

For pastoral concerns during business hours, contact 713-985-3817 or pastoralcare@smec.org.

For pastoral emergencies after hours and weekends, call 713-621-3040 and follow the prompts to reach the priest on call.

For prayer requests, contact the prayer request line at 713-830-4124 or Valerie Rivera at 713-985-3817 or vriviera@smec.org.

For death notifications and funerals, contact Cyndy Ensign at 713-985-3808 or censign@smec.org.

OUR STAFF AND VESTRY

SUNDAY PROGRAM STAFF

Dr. David Henning

Director of Music and Parish Organist
dhenning@smec.org

Mr. Keith Lathrom

Choral Director of the Adult Choir
klathrom@smec.org

Ms. Hannah Cen

Associate Organist
hcen@smec.org

Ms. Carole Nelson

Coordinator of Children's Music Ministries
cnelson@smec.org

Mr. Tyler (TD) Davis

Interim Director of Student Ministries
tdavis@smec.org

Mrs. Ashley Monachelli

Director of Children's Ministry
amonachelli@smec.org

Mrs. Kathy Johnson

Director of Membership
kjohnson@smec.org

Mrs. Barbara Piana

Verger and Worship Coordinator
bpiana@smec.org

ST. MARTIN'S VESTRY

Vestry Executive Committee

Mr. Dan Meyer, *Senior Warden*
Mr. Ryan LaRue, *Junior Warden*
Mrs. Nancy Bynon, *Missions Chair*
Ms. Sherrie Perkins, *Treasurer*
Mr. Logan Walters, *Clerk*
Mr. Tommy Ford, *Past Senior Warden*
Mr. Bob Heston, Jr., *Parish Stewardship Chair*
Mr. Andy Harvin, *Chancellor**

Vestry Members

Mr. Scott Anderson
Mrs. Summer Craig
Mrs. Elizabeth Dukes
Mr. Will Hedges
The Hon. Edith Jones
Mr. David Leonard
Mrs. Susan McConn
Mr. Roy Nichol
Mrs. Courtney Schilling
Mr. Milton West

Associate Members

The Hon. James A. Baker, III, *Special Counsel to the Vestry**
Mr. David Harvin, *Senior Council Representative 2023-2025*
Mrs. Beth Reeves, *Senior Council Representative 2023-2025*
Ms. Samantha Hutchison, *Altar Guild President 2024-2025*
Mrs. Shelly Newton, *ECW President 2024-2025*
Mr. Perry Ruthven, *Men of St. Martin's President 2023-2025*
Mr. John Sutherland, *Usher Representative 2024-2026*

**Denotes Associate Vestry filled at the discretion of the Rector.*



Mr. Logan Walters
Vestry Representative

OUR CLERGY

Jesus, The Christ *The Head of This Church*



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



The Rev. R. Wesley Arning
*Associate for Riverway and
Discipleship Ministries*
rwarning@smec.org



The Rev. John D. Sundara
Vicar for Worship and Evangelism
jsundara@smec.org



The Rev. Naomi B. Sundara
Chaplain to the Preschool
nsundara@smec.org



The Rev. Lisa R. Neilson
Vicar for Pastoral Care
lneilson@smec.org



The Rev. Elizabeth A. Miller
Pastoral Assistant
emiller@smec.org



The Rev. Alex D. Graham III
*Associate for Children and
Family Ministries*
agraham@smec.org



The Rev. John R. Bentley, Jr.
Pastoral Associate
jbentley@smec.org



The Rev. Dr. Jordan Hylden
Associate for Christian Education
jhylden@smec.org



The Rev. Gill B. Keyworth
Deacon
gkeyworth@smec.org



The Rev. Sharron L. Cox
*Associate for Spiritual Formation and
Pastoral Ministries*
scox@smec.org



The Rev. Gregory W. Cross
Curate
gcross@smec.org

PRAYER FOR THE SEARCH FOR ST. MARTIN'S FIFTH RECTOR

Heavenly Father,

As a community of believers, we come together in prayer seeking Your guidance as St. Martin's Episcopal Church continues the search for our fifth rector. May we be blessed with Your Holy Spirit's wisdom and discernment. We especially ask that You guide the hearts and minds of the Search Committee who will be deeply involved in this choice. Lord Jesus, shepherd Your flock with tender care and love. Give us patience as we wait, trusting in Your gracious provision. Guide us, Oh Lord, as we navigate this season of change, knowing that You are with us every step of the way. Our fervent prayer is that You will be done.

With humble expectations, we pray this prayer in Jesus name, who we joyfully serve and love. Amen.

WE INVITE YOU TO
KEEP THIS BOOKLET
FOR REFERENCE.

*717 Sage Road
Houston, TX 77056
713-621-3040*

SMEC.ORG

