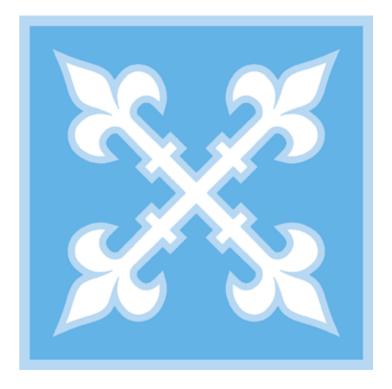
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 22, 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

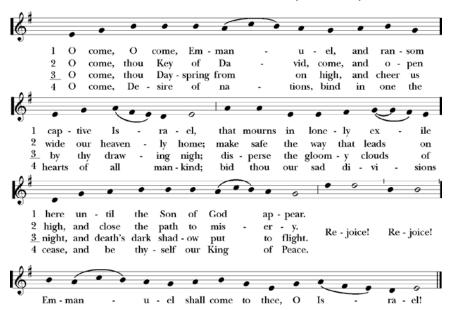
- St. Martin's is a gun-free Campus.
- To use a hearing assisted device, see one of our ushers.
- St. Martin's asks that anyone coming into a worship service not bring oversized or large backpacks.
- Please silence all cell phones when entering The Church and also refrain from texting. Thank you for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

HOLY EUCHARIST

Holy Eucharist at 8 a.m. is a spoken service. Musical pieces in this booklet will be skipped or replaced by spoken liturgy, as noted.

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



Words: Latin, ca. 9th cent.; ver. Hymnal 1940, alt.; Music: Veni, veni, Emmanuel, plainsong, Mode 1, Processionale, 15th cent.; adapt. Thomas Helmore (1811–1890); acc. Richard Proulx (b. 1937); Public Domain.

Celebrant:Bless the Lord who forgiveth all our sins.People:His mercy endureth for ever.

THE COLLECT FOR PURITY

The Celebrant says

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

KY R I E

(8 a.m.)

Celebrant: Lord, have mercy upon us.

People: Christ, have mercy upon us.

Celebrant: Lord, have mercy upon us.

(9 a.m., 11:15 a.m. and 6 p.m.)



John Merbecke, 1549. Copyright © 1940, 1943, 1961. The Church Pension Fund.

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: And with thy spirit.

Celebrant: Let us pray. (kneel)

The Celebrant says the Collect

Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

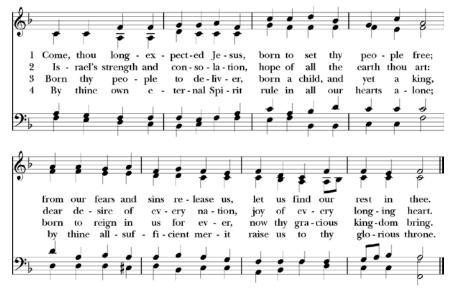
Please be seated.

THE LESSONPsalm 80:1-7		
1	Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; *	
	shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.	
2	In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, *	
	stir up your strength and come to help us.	
3	Restore us, O God of hosts; *	
	show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.	
4	O Lord God of hosts, *	
	how long will you be angered	
	despite the prayers of your people?	

- 5 You have fed them with the bread of tears; * you have given them bowls of tears to drink.
- 6 You have made us the derision of our neighbors, * and our enemies laugh us to scorn.
- 7 Restore us, O God of hosts; * show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.
- Reader: The Word of the Lord.
- People: Thanks be to God.

All stand.

HYMN 66 (vs. 1-2)..... "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus"



Words: Charles Wesley (1707–1788); Music: Stuttgart, melody from Psalmodia Sacra, oder And Schtige und Schöne Gesange, 1715; adapt. and harm. William Henry Havergal (1793–1870), alt.

Deacon:The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.**People:**Glory be to thee, O Lord.

THE GOSPELLuke 1:39-55

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.

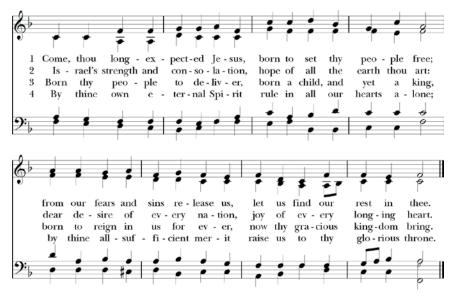
When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." And Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord,		
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,		
for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.		
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;		
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,		
and holy is his name.		
His mercy is for those who fear him		
from generation to generation.		
He has shown strength with his arm;		
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.		
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,		
and lifted up the lowly;		
he has filled the hungry with good things,		
and sent the rich away empty.		
He has helped his servant Israel,		
in remembrance of his mercy,		
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,		
to Abraham and to his descendants forever."		
n: The Gospel of the Lord.		

- Deacon: The Gospel of the Lord.
- People: Praise be to thee, O Christ.

The remaining lectionary for the day is on page 22.

HYMN 66 (vs. 3-4)..... "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus"



Words: Charles Wesley (1707–1788); Music: Stuttgart, melody from Psalmodia Sacra, oder And Schtige und Schöne Gesange, 1715; adapt. and harm. William Henry Havergal (1793–1870), alt.

Please be seated.

THE SERMON The Rev. Sharron L. Cox

THE NICENE CREED (stand)

Celebrant and People I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible; And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried; and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father, and he shall come again, with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end. And I believe in the Holy Ghost the Lord, and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified; who spake by the Prophets. And I believe one holy catholic and apostolic Church; I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

(kneel) (responsively)

Let us pray for the Church and for the world.

Grant, Almighty God, that all who confess thy Name may be united in thy truth, live together in thy love, and reveal thy glory to the world. Lord, in thy mercy

Hear our prayer.

Guide the people of this land, and of all the nations, in the ways of justice and peace; that we may honor one another and serve the common good. Lord, in thy mercy

Hear our prayer.

Give us all a reverence for the earth as thy own creation, that we may use its resources rightly in the service of others and to thy honor and glory. Lord, in thy mercy

Hear our prayer.

Bless all whose lives are closely linked with ours, especially __, and grant that we may serve Christ in them, and love one another as he loves us. Lord, in thy mercy

Hear our prayer.

Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit, especially those in the hospital ___; and give them courage and hope in their troubles, and bring them the joy of thy salvation. Lord, in thy mercy

Hear our prayer.

We commend to thy mercy all who have died, that thy will for them may be fulfilled, especially __; and we give thee thanks for their lives and pray for their loved ones left behind. Lord, in thy mercy

Hear our prayer.

Let us pray for our own needs and those of others.

We pray for the nomination of the 106th Archbishop of Canterbury; Sean, our Presiding Bishop; Andy, Jeff, Kai, Hector and Brian, our bishops; the Clergy of this Parish; in the Anglican Communion cycle of prayer, for Church of the Province of Uganda; for persecuted Christians; for all bishops, priests and deacons. For Joe, our President, Donald, our President-elect, Greg, our Governor, John, our Mayor, and the Congress and the Courts; for all who serve in our armed forces and their families; for an end to war and conflict; for all the blessings of this life , especially those remembered today with Altar flowers, ____.

I invite your own prayers and intercessions.

A period of silence, during which people may add their own petitions quietly or in the privacy of their hearts.

Celebrant adds a concluding Collect

Hasten, O Father, the coming of thy kingdom; and grant that we thy servants, who now live by faith, may with joy behold thy Son at his coming in glorious majesty; even Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Advocate. **Amen.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Minister says

Let us humbly confess our sins unto Almighty God.

A moment of silence is observed.

Minister and People

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against thee in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved thee with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of thy Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in thy will, and walk in thy ways, to the glory of thy Name. Amen.

Celebrant stands and says

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all those who with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**.

THE PEACE (stand)

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you. **People:** And with thy spirit.

Please be seated.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Please see page 23 for classes and events.

THE OFFERTORY

My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior. For he hath regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden. For behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath magnified me, and Holy is His Name. And his mercy is on them that fear him throughout all generations. He hath showed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble and meek. He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away. He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel, as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed for ever. 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.

AT THE PRESENTATION

(8 a.m. only in place of sung Doxology)Celebrant: All things come of thee, O Lord;People: And of thine own have we given thee.



Words: Isaac Watts (1674–1748), para. of Psalm 117. St. 3, Thomas Ken (1637–1711); Music: Old 100th, melody from Pseaumes octante trois de David, 1551, alt.; harm. after Louis Bourgeois (1510?–1561?).

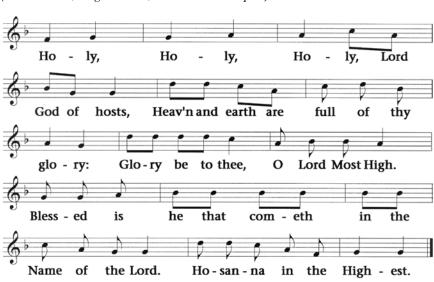
THE GREAT THANKSGIVING (stand)

Celebrant:	The Lord be with you.
People:	And with thy spirit.
Celebrant:	Lift up your hearts.
People:	We lift them up unto the Lord.
Celebrant:	Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.
People:	It is meet and right so to do.

It is very meet, right and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God.

Because thou didst send thy beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to make us heirs in him of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing.

Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name; evermore praising thee, and saying,



SANCTUS AND BENEDICTUS

(said at 8 a.m., sung at 9 a.m., 11:15 a.m. and 6 p.m.)

The Celebrant continues (kneel)

All glory be to thee, O Lord our God, for that thou didst create heaven and earth, and didst make us in thine own image; and, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to take our nature upon him, and to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption. He made there a full and perfect sacrifice for the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.

For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks to thee, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

John Merbecke, 1549. Copyright © 1940, 1943, 1961. The Church Pension Fund.

Likewise, after supper, he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink this, all of you; for this is my Blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me."

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, we thy people do celebrate and make, with these thy holy gifts which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; and looking for his coming again with power and great glory.

And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us, and, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, to bless and sanctify these gifts of bread and wine, that they may be unto us the Body and Blood of thy dearly-beloved Son Jesus Christ.

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, whereby we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies. Grant, we beseech thee, that all who partake of this Holy Communion may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, and be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction; and also that we and all thy whole Church may be made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord;

By whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. **AMEN**.

And now, as our Savior Christ hath taught us, we are bold to say,

THE LORD'S PRAYER

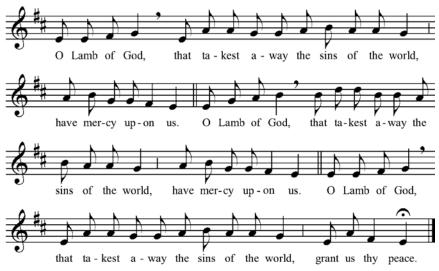
Celebrant and People

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.

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept.

(said at 8 a.m., sung at 9 a.m. and 6 p.m.)



John Merbecke, 1549. Copyright © 1940, 1943, 1961. The Church Pension Fund.

Then may be said by the Celebrant and People PRAYER OF HUMBLE ACCESS

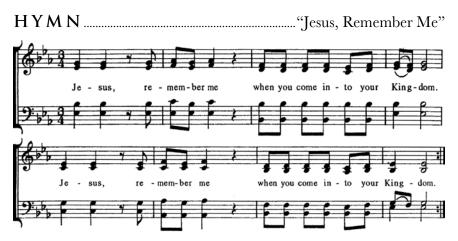
We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

The Celebrant says the Invitation.

All Christians who have been baptized with water and in the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and are permitted to receive Holy Communion in their own church are welcome to do so on this occasion. If you do not wish to receive one or both Elements, cross your arms over your chest and the Clergy will give you a blessing. Please tell the Clergy administering Communion if you wish to receive a gluten-free wafer.

Softly a light is stealing, sweetly a maiden sings, ever wakeful, ever wistful, watching faithfully, thankfully, tenderly her King of kings. My soul doth magnify, doth magnify the Lord: and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. Mary her song to Jesus softly, serenely sings: 'I will love you, I will serve you, make my lullaby glorify, magnify my King of kings.' Lullaby, lullaby, lullaby.

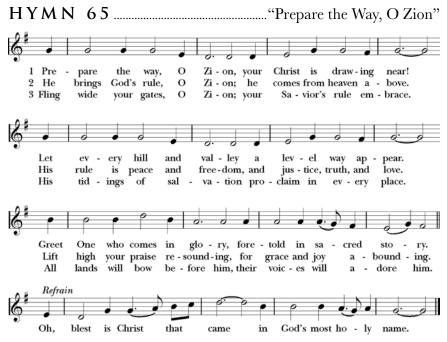
Words and Music: Andrew Carter. © 1986 Oxford University Press.



Tune: Jacques Berthier, (1923-1994); Words: Luke 23:42; Music: From the Taize Community; Copyright © 1981 by Les Presses de Taize (France). Used by permission of G.I.A. Publications, Inc., Chicago, exclusive agent. All rights reserved. Reprinted under OneLicense.net A-705539.



Music and Text: Copyright © Martha Butler, 1141 S. Landing, Leasburg, NC 27291 UPB.



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.

After Communion, the Celebrant says (kneel) Let us pray.

Celebrant and People

Almighty and everliving God, we most heartily thank thee for that thou dost feed us, in these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favor and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs, through hope, of thy everlasting kingdom. And we humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen. At 9 and 11:15 a.m., after the Post-Communion Prayer, members of the Shepherd's Guild may come forward. The priest or deacon gives the Sacrament to the Eucharistic visitors, saying In the name of this congregation, I send you forth bearing these holy gifts, that those to whom you go may share with us the Communion of Christ's body and blood. We who are many are one body, because we share one bread, one cup. **Amen.**

THE BLESSING

All stand.

HYMN 5 (1940 Hymnal)....."Lo, He Comes" 1 Lo! he comes, with clouds de-scend-ing, Once for our sal - va - tion slain; 2 Ev-'ry eye shall now be-hold him, Robed in dread-ful ma-jes - ty; Thou-sand thou-sand saints at - tend-ing Swell the tri-umph his train: of Those who set at naught and sold him, Pierced, and nailed him to the tree. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Christ the Lord re - turns to reign. Deep-ly wail-ing, deep-ly wail-ing, Shall the true Mes - si - ah see. 3 Those dear tokens of his passion Still his dazzling body bears,

Cause of endless exultation To his ransomed worshippers: || With what rapture || Gaze we on those glorious scars! 4 Yea, Amen! let all adore thee, High on thine eternal throne; Saviour, take the power and glory; Claim the kingdom for thine own: || Alleluia! || Thou shalt reign, and thou alone.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1758, alt.; Music: St. Thomas.

THE DISMISSAL

A Minister says the dismissal. Alleluias are omitted during the season of Advent. **People:** Thanks be to God.

VOLUNTARY "Low How a Rose E'er Blooming" Johannas Brahms

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

RECOGNITIONS



FLOWERS GIVEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD

In thanksgiving for 65 wonderful years of marriage by Ricki and Bill Henry In thanksgiving for Lance Richard Kannard and Scott Matthew Kannard, and my grandchildren and great grandchildren

by Mary Anne Matthews Kannard In memory of Gertrude Matthews Schwartz and Richard Louis Matthews, Donald E. Schwartz, Richard Arnold Matthews and Charles Robert Matthews, Edwin Arnold, Sr. and Lillliebell Arnold by Mary Anne Matthews Kannard

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

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 vrivera@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 vrivera@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.

RIVERWAY

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**

READINGS FOR THE DAY

THE OLD TESTAMENT Micah 5:2-5a

You, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
who are one of the little clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to rule in Israel,
whose origin is from of old,
from ancient days.
Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labor has brought forth;
then the rest of his kindred shall return
to the people of Israel.
And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.
And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth;
and he shall be the one of peace.

When Christ came into the world, he said,

"Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me;
in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure.
Then I said, 'See, God, I have come to do your will, O God' (in the scroll of the book it is written of me)."

When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), then he added, "See, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

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" – FINAL CLASS 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

COCOA & CAROLS

All children will gather to hear a Christmas story, sing Christmas songs and enjoy hot chocolate and a treat. 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 23-28, 2024

ALL ADULTS

St. Martin's Campus will be closed Wednesday through Friday, Dec. 25-27 in observance of Christmas. Activities that normally occur on Tuesday will not meet due to Christmas Eve services.

EVENTS



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

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.

RIVERWAY

Celebration Sunday

Celebrate December Birthdays and Anniversaries with Riverway.

SUNDAY, DEC. 29 Parish Life Center Narthex

Following the 11:15 a.m. services

We invite everyone who has had a recent birthday or anniversary to join us in acknowledgement of your special day, and share a dessert or breakfast item with us. Everyone is welcome!

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

YEAR-

GIVING

END

The Internal Revenue Service requires that, in order to be tax deductible in 2024, 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 **Tuesday, Dec. 31;** this includes any payment to your 2024 pledge, prepayment of your 2025 pledge and payment of your Building for the Ages pledge.

The Finance staff is required to check the postal cancellation dates on all receipts in early January to ensure our legal compliance to this rule.



Debbie Hutchison dhutchison@smec.org 713-985-3803



SATURDAY, JAN. 4 • 10 A.M. CHILDREN'S LIFE CENTER

GUEST SPEAKER: POLLY DAWSON

St. Martin's Parishioner Polly Dawson will speak about the importance of prayer. She has been involved in Christian Life Study, Church in the Field and the Global Prayer Group.

Contact: Tracee Tindol • tmartin@smec.org • 713-985-3811

THEOLOGY LIFE

Frequently Asked Questions

Sundays, Jan. 5–Feb. 23 10:15–11 a.m. • Bagby Parish Hall

Have you ever wondered about some of the things we do here? Have you ever gotten hard questions from non-believing friends or family that you don't quite know how to answer? In this series, we hope to give the best answers we can to your good questions, always grounded in God's holy Word.

Amanda DeViney adeviney@smec.org • 713-830-4110 *An exciting lineup of exceptional guests and friends of St. Martin's will lead this series.*

- JAN. 5 What is the Anglican Communion? Led by Archbishop Josiah Idowu-Fearon, Ph.D.
- JAN. 12 Why do we baptize babies? Led by the Rev. Dr. Jim Jackson, Jr.
- JAN. 19 How can we believe the Bible is true? Led by Dr. Lynn Cohick
- JAN. 26 Annual Parish Meeting No Sunday School
- FEB. 2 How can we share our faith? Led by Cn. Carrie Boren Headington
- FEB. 9 What do we believe about Communion? Led by the Rt. Rev. Mike Hill
- FEB. 16 What happens when we die? Led by the Rt. Rev. Mike Hill
- FEB. 23 How are we saved? Led by the Rev. Dr. David Peterson







a water a start



TOUR A GOTHIC-STYLE CHURCH WITHOUT LEAVING HOUSTON!

SUNDAY, JANUARY 5 Following the 11:15 a.m. service Meet in the Narthex

St. Martin's docents offer free, public and private tours. Everyone is welcome regardless of religious affiliation. To schedule a tour, please call St. Martin's Docent Guild at 713-830-4117 and leave a contact name and number for a return call.



FEASTOFLIGHTS

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 • fritchie@smec.org • 713-985-3843



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



PRAYER POSTCARDS FOR OUR MINISTRY PARTNERS ACROSS THE GLOBE

Pick up pre-printed prayer postcards during December and January, decorate and return when convenient. Postcards can be picked up from the front reception desk or the Activity Center information desk during the week, Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–5 p.m. or the Parish Life Center Narthex on Sunday mornings.

Contact: Tracee Tindol • tmartin@smec.org • 713-985-3811

ST. MARTIN'S PRESENTS

A VERY SPECIAL LENTEN RETREAT

MONDAY-THURSDAY

March 24–27 • 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. The Scout Center

FRIDAY

March 28 • 8:30 a.m. – 2 p.m. The Scout Center and Christ Chapel

Theresa Harrison returns to St. Martin's to guide retreatants in creating the icon of Jesus as the Good Shepherd. Beginners and experienced iconographers will find this retreat enriching.



Registration fee: \$495 Includes all supplies and lunch at Café St. Martin's.



ST. MARTIN'S

Contact: Tracee Tindol tmartin@smec.org • 713-985-3811

Early bird registration: bit.ly/smeciconretreat



The Shepherd's Guild ministry complements the work of St. Martin's Clergy in visiting homebound Parishioners or those who reside in retirement and assisted living facilities.

The trained lay volunteers offer support, prayers and Holy Communion, being a physical reminder of Jesus' love for them and their value and importance within our church community.

To learn more about joining this ministry or to provide information about Parishioners who may benefit by the Shepherd's Guild, contact Deacon Gill at **gkeyworth@smec.org** or **346-335-8660.**

Training and support is provided.

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 vrivera@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



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. Will Hedges Vestry Representative Morning



Mrs. Courtney Schilling Vestry Representative Evening

OUR CLERGY

Jesus, The Christ The Head of This Church



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



The Rev. Gill B. Keyworth Deacon gkeyworth@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 Your 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

