

THE STAR

05

Celebrating 30 Years of
Faithful Ministry by the
Rev. Martin J. Bastian.

OCT./NOV./DEC. 2026



*Advent &
Christmas
at St. Martin's*

ST. MARTIN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

THE STAR

The Star is an official publication of St. Martin's Episcopal Church.

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.

PLEASE NOTE

All events are subject to change. Please reach out to the contact listed for each event with specific questions.

CHURCH OFFICES

717 Sage Road, Houston, TX 77056

OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
(Individual department hours vary.)

RECEPTION DESK HOURS

Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

CHURCH VIEWING HOURS

Monday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
(except when services occur)

PHONE NUMBERS

Office	713-621-3040
Activity Center	713-621-8625
Café St. Martin's	713-985-3806
Gift Shoppe	713-985-3840
Finance	713-985-3803
Pastoral Care	713-985-3817

For pastoral emergencies after hours and on weekends, please call 713-621-3040 and then press 2 to reach the priest on call.

Prayer Requests	713-830-4124
Preschool	713-621-2944
The Hope and Healing Center & Institute	713-871-1004
Docent Guild Tours	713-830-4117
Visitor Information	713-985-3834

Additional phone numbers and email addresses are at:
www.smec.org > Who We Are > Staff

ST. MARTIN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH WORSHIP OFFERINGS

WEEKDAY DAILY OFFICE in CHRIST CHAPEL

Morning Prayer — 8:30 a.m. • Evening Prayer — 4:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAYS in CHRIST CHAPEL

Traditional Services — 7 a.m. and noon

SUNDAYS in THE CHURCH

Traditional Services — 8, 11:15 a.m. and 6 p.m.

Morning Prayer — 9 a.m. (Holy Eucharist on first Sundays)

Choral Evensong — 4 p.m.

SUNDAYS in PARISH LIFE CENTER

Family Table Service — 9:15 a.m.

Riverway Contemporary Service — 11:15 a.m.



Jesus Tells His Disciples of the Coming of the Holy Spirit

The six panels of Window 33 depict Christ's preaching and teaching. This panel shows Jesus talking to His disciples of the Holy Spirit.

"These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." — John 14:25-27 KJV

Find Window 33a by walking along the far-right aisle toward the altar from the back of The Church. This pane is in the fourth window toward the middle of the nave.

Stained-glass window directory cards are located in the pews.

ON THE COVER:

Christmas lights surround The Church's altar and are reflected in the bronze finial atop the baptismal font's oak cover. The 300-pound lid is crowned with the *Agnus Dei* — the Lamb of God — bearing a cross-embazoned banner, proclaiming Christ's victory through His sacrifice.

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Answer the Call to Serve

October is World Missions Month at St. Martin's. Whether you join mission trips, serve on Campus, or through our Mission Partners, discover meaningful ways to share faith, compassion and hope with children and communities around the world.

Come, Lord of the Harvest

"Come, ye thankful people, come, raise the song of harvest-home..."

When we lived in rural upstate New York, we frequently saw a bumper sticker — usually on beat-up old trucks — that said "No Farmers, No Food." Apart from being a plain statement of fact, it was also a statement of pride. The rolling hills of Otsego County surrounding the picturesque village of Cooperstown are still dotted with small farms, and the folks who had devoted their lives to working that rich land were proud to provide food for their families and their communities. Without their work, there would be no harvest.

God in His mercy has appointed you and me to work together in the field that is His world. He will grant the growth. He will bless the harvest.

Our frequent trips to the gleaming, fluorescent-lit aisles of the Price Chopper grocery store on the edge of town were supplemented by a weekly visit to the Cooperstown Farmers' Market, held every Saturday in the little market hall in the heart of the village. The contrast between the two places was striking. Unlike the sanitized, standardized, mass-produced consistency of a modern American supermarket, the Farmers' Market showed a more earthy side of food production. Vegetables still had some dirt clinging to their leaves and roots. They varied in shape, size and color from week to week and from farmer's stall to farmer's stall. Eggs were brown, or speckled blue, or deep blood red — nearly every color imaginable, save plain white. Local cheese tasted different depending on what the cows had eaten when they were milked.

The Turn of the Seasons

And everything changed with the season. The splendor of true summer strawberries lasted only a few short weeks — but oh, were they glorious! Fresh chickens for roasting were only available at certain times of the year. Apples overflowed in the fall, root vegetables were piled high in the winter and bright greens burst forth in the spring and summer. The harvest was always abundant and abundantly different as our Earth steadily made its annual march around the sun.

As the days grow shorter and the heat finally abates here in Houston, we remember that our common life still depends on the turn of the seasons, the work of human hands and the fruitfulness that God has given to our land. Thanksgiving — my favorite holiday, both in Church and at home — calls us to pause our ordinary busyness and rejoice in the wonder of abundant harvests, made possible only by the labor of farmers and the goodness of the Lord.

And as we begin a new liturgical year in Advent, we look beyond that annual earthly harvest to another, greater harvest. We look to that time when the changing seasons themselves — the rhythm of summer and winter,

seedtime and harvest, unbroken since the foundation of the world — will at last be brought to an end. "For the Lord our God shall come, and shall take His harvest home; from His field shall in that day all offenses purge away..."

In Advent, we acknowledge that not everything we see around us, nor everything we see within us, is fit for our Lord's harvest. There are weeds in our world and weeds in our hearts. And yet the annual promise of this holy season is that Christ Jesus, who once came in great humility, will come again "in glorious majesty to judge both the quick and the dead." Our Lord will complete the victory He won on the Cross, and finally and decisively defeat the evil that still lingers in this creation and in ourselves. And He will gather us, as part of His glorious harvest, safe within His garner forever.

Laboring Until the Harvest-Home

In the meantime, we continue to labor here below. In season and out, winter and summer, we take our part in the Lord's vineyard, rejoicing that He has chosen even such unworthy workers to share in what His Spirit is accomplishing. No farmers, no food. No laborers, no harvest. God in His mercy has appointed you and me to work together in the field that is His world. He will grant the growth. He will bless the harvest.

"Even so, Lord, quickly come to thy final harvest-home; gather thou thy people in, free from sorrow, free from sin; there, forever purified, in thy presence to abide; come, with all thine angels, come, raise the glorious harvest-home!"



A wood engraving of Ruth working in the field of Boaz based on a drawing by Karl Gottlob Schönherr (1824-1906).



The Rev. Dane E. Boston
Rector, St. Martin's Episcopal Church

Dane E. Boston

A New Chapter: St. Martin's Welcomes Vice Rector the Rev. Dr. Andrew T. Grosso

Two decades of parish leadership and theological teaching brought him here, but it's the first two weeks that are already telling the story.



The Rev. Dr. Grosso and his wife, Diana, greet Parishioners during a welcome reception in Bagby Parish Hall on Sept. 6.



The Rev. Dane E. Boston, Rector, and the Rev. Dr. Andrew Grosso lead the procession from The Church on Sept. 6 following the combined Family Table and Traditional service.

On Aug. 31, 2026, St. Martin's Episcopal Church welcomed the Rev. Dr. Andrew Grosso as Vice Rector, arriving just weeks ahead of the retirement of our Vice Rector, the Rev. Martin J. Bastian on Sept. 27.

Fr. Andrew comes to us from Saint Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church in Dallas, where he most recently served as Senior Associate for Discipleship — one of several roles in a career that spans more than two decades of parish leadership, theological teaching and administrative experience.

"I'm very grateful for the heartfelt welcome and encouragement I've received from both Parishioners and Staff," said Fr. Grosso. "I've only been here a few weeks, and already it's apparent to me there's a lot of faithfulness, a lot of warmth, and a lot of energy at St. Martin's.

I've very much enjoyed worshiping with the community, hearing about the many vibrant ministries, and learning the ins and outs of working alongside the staff. I look forward to seeing what God will call us to do together in the years ahead as we strive to be faithful in our proclamation of the Gospel both in word and deed."

Leadership Formed by Parish Ministry and Teaching

Raised in northern Michigan, Fr. Grosso earned a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich.; a Master of Arts in Theology and Educational Ministry from Wheaton College in Wheaton, Ill.; and a Master of Divinity from the University of the South in Seawee, Tenn. He later completed a Doctor of Philosophy in Systematic Theology and Ethics at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wis.

His path moved between the parish and the classroom, often at the same time. In 2014, he joined Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Columbia, S.C., first as Canon to the Dean and then as Acting Dean in 2020. During a period of leadership transition, he helped oversee the restructuring of the endowment portfolio, guiding the vestry through a strategic plan rewrite while also addressing the challenges of the COVID pandemic.

Alongside his parish work, Fr. Grosso built a substantial career in theological education. He served as Dean of the Bishop Kemper School for Ministry in Kansas, taught as an instructor at the Stanton Center for Ministry in Dallas, and led courses — in seminars, hybrid formats and online — for students ranging from traditional seminarians to working adults.

At Nashotah House Theological Seminary, this commitment reached its fullest expression: he first served as Director of Distance Learning and later as Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, while also holding appointments as Research Professor of Philosophical Theology and Affiliate Professor of Systematic Theology.

In 2023, after years of balancing academic leadership with parish ministry, he joined Saint Michael and All Angels in Dallas, first as Associate for Worship and Liturgy and then as Senior Associate for Discipleship, a role he held until coming to St. Martin's Episcopal Church.

Lessons from a Season of Transition

Fr. Grosso said one of the most important lessons he's learned from overseeing strategic planning — particularly during changes resulting from a leadership transition — is the need to prioritize spiritual growth in any strategic initiative.

“Our first goal should always be to discern how God is calling us to draw closer to Him and to grow in our faith so that we might be more effective in our proclamation of the Gospel. Strategic initiatives not oriented towards substantive spiritual growth have a way of leading nowhere, but initiatives grounded in a lively sense of God's call to a deeper life of faith and commitment to mission can be truly transformative.”

That conviction has shaped how he thinks about Christian formation more broadly — helping people become, in his words, mature disciples of Christ through teaching, practice and life together in the Church.

“Two important characteristics of effective formation that immediately come to mind have to do with (first) helping people ground their faith in the fullness of Christian teaching and practice (i.e., to ground their faith in those teachings and practices that bear witness to the ‘one, holy, catholic, and apostolic’ life of the church) and (second) enabling people to discern how God invites them to share in the mission and

ministries of the Church,” he stated. “Growth in the life of faith is always not only an invitation to draw nearer to God, but it's also an opportunity to share more fully in the proclamation of the Church in both word and deed; we are formed for the sake of being better equipped for the work God calls each and every member of the Church to do.”

A Vision Rooted in Spiritual Growth

Throughout his ministry, Fr. Grosso emphasized that healthy congregations begin with spiritual formation. That foundation in God's calling also shapes his approach to Christian formation. This same conviction extends naturally to pastoral care, reflecting his belief that faith is nurtured and lived out in the context of Christian community.

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“Growth in the life of faith is not only an invitation to draw nearer to God; it's also an opportunity to share more fully in the proclamation of the Church in both word and deed.”

.....

“The most effective form of pastoral care is one that is oriented towards ‘preventive maintenance’ rather than towards ‘crisis management.’ The heart of pastoral care, I believe, lies in helping people pursue intentional spiritual growth so they are prepared when challenges arise ... helping the members of the Church learn to care for one another, so that when challenges arise, we find ourselves upheld by established supportive relationships,” he said.

Why St. Martin's?

When asked what drew him here, Fr. Grosso pointed to the congregation's sense of purpose and opportunity. “My conversation with Parishioners, members of the Staff and Fr. Boston clearly indicated St. Martin's is at an important inflection point in its life

and mission, and the community is eager to engage both the opportunities and the challenges before them. That sense of a strong desire to move forward in a manner that is both faithful and strategic is very compelling for me.”

That eagerness to move forward strategically, he said, is part of why he sees his prospective role so clearly — particularly the partnership between Rector and Vice Rector as one centered on shared leadership. “I believe the Rector is the one who, working with the lay leaders of the congregation, helps develop and articulate the identity and mission of the congregation. The Vice Rector is the one who helps oversee the implementation of this identity and mission,” he stated.

Looking Ahead

Reflecting on his arrival, what he looked forward to most was simply becoming part of the Parish community. “I would like the community at St. Martin's to know how grateful I am to have the opportunity to join their fellowship and share in the great work they're doing. It is an exciting time for the Church, and I look forward to tackling the opportunities and the challenges before us in ways that will help us grow in our faith and strengthen our witness to Christ.”

Family Life

Fr. Grosso and his wife, Diana, have been married for 28 years. Diana is an accomplished oil painter whose work focuses on character studies. Both are settling into life in Houston and at St. Martin's. They're joined by their cat, Tyndale, named after the English reformer and Bible translator William Tyndale because she came into their lives on his feast day.

We look forward to the many ways they will enrich our Parish as we continue God's work together.



Celebrating 30 Years of Faithful Ministry

After 30 years of service to this community, the Rev. Martin J. Bastian retired as Vice Rector of St. Martin's Episcopal Church on Sept. 27, 2026. During his time on Staff, he served thousands of Parishioners as Priest and trusted friend, walking with them through heartbreak, joy and all the ordinary moments of life.

During his final 18 months, Fr. Bastian helped lead the Parish through a significant transition while carrying the pastoral burden of ministering to grieving families and the community following the Hill Country Floods. In a communication addressed to the Parish on July 16, the Rev. Dane E. Boston shared his personal thoughts about Fr. Bastian's leadership and imminent retirement. "Marty's calm strength and cheerful hope have inspired and supported me in more ways than I can say throughout my first year as your Rector.

His leadership of the Parish during 18 months of transition encompassed both the ordinary challenges of preparing a Vestry and Staff for a new chapter after a long and fruitful ministry, and the unthinkable pastoral burden of ministering to grieving families and our whole community after the Hill Country Floods. In all this, and so much more, Marty has been a pillar of strength and stability for the people of St. Martin's through a turbulent time."

Reflecting on the transition, the Rev. Boston returned to words from the *Benedicite*, a canticle at Morning Prayer.

"O ye people of God, bless ye the Lord; O ye priests of the Lord, bless ye the Lord; O ye servants of the Lord, bless ye the Lord; praise Him and magnify Him for ever," he said, adding: "Here at St. Martin's, the Lord has given us people, priests and faithful servants."

A Story Already in Motion

When Fr. Bastian arrived at St. Martin's Episcopal Church in 1996, he stepped into a story already unfolding for generations. The Parish's founding Rector, the Rev. Tom Bagby, shared with him a vision of St. Martin's as a generational Church — a place where faith would be handed from one generation to the next through worship, education, service and Christian community.

That vision continued under the leadership of the Rev. Claude Payne, the Rev. Dr. Laurence Gipson, the Rev. Dr. Russell J. Levenson, Jr., and has now been passed to the Rev. Dane E. Boston.

"To have been a part of that continuity, to have stepped into a story already in motion, has been one of the greatest honors of my life," he stated. "This Church formed me as a priest. I arrived here as a young man, eager and perhaps a bit naive, but this community took me in and shaped me."

A Parish That Became Home

Fr. Bastian sees his own ministry as shaped by countless faithful people whose quiet witness formed his vocation. "I often think of those early days as a Curate, where the very rhythms of our worship and the quiet dedication of the Altar Guild began to make me into the priest I am today," he reflected. "As a Curate, worship

St. Martin's Star weekly newsletter from June 1996 announcing the arrival of the Rev. Martin J. Bastian on July 15.

formed me. From the steady guidance of Clergy mentors to the selfless leadership of our lay ministers — who sacrifice their time and talent through the wisdom and guidance of the Vestry and Senior Council — I learned that ministry is not found in a title but in the shared life of a faithful people."

A Ministry of Presence

That calling unfolded far beyond the Altar and the pulpit. Over the years, Fr. Bastian has celebrated countless baptisms and weddings, preached at

funerals and walked beside families through some of life's most sacred and heartbreaking moments.

It is a ministry of presence that has given him "the grace to be a servant first and a leader second," teaching him the vital lesson of being "quick to listen and slow to speak," he said. "I've held countless babies at baptisms and performed hundreds of weddings. People often ask me if it gets old. I always say, 'No!' How can the miracle of new life or the promise of resurrection ever become commonplace? I've always believed in a ministry of presence. Being there for people in good times and bad."

Pointing People to Christ

As Fr. Bastian reflects on his years at St. Martin's, his deepest gratitude belongs not to any one accomplishment but to the congregation that welcomed him, inspired him, trusted and empowered him to grow into the priest he was called to become.

"I want to express my deepest thanks to this entire congregation for your unwavering love and support over the years," he said.

"You have changed me and taught me that the most powerful witness is not found in what we say, but in what we do — the same way Jesus drew people to Himself through His actions and His humility."

An Expression of Gratitude

As he prepared for this new chapter, Fr. Bastian returned to the Scripture that has guided his ministry from the beginning — Philippians 2:5-11, where St. Paul calls believers to “have the same mindset as Christ Jesus,” whose humility and servant heart became a model for Christian leadership.

“My prayer is that through the Word and through my presence among you, I have lived up to that calling,” he shared. “Keep Christ at the center of all you do. Pursue truth, always striving to know God better. Though I may be retiring from my role, you will always be etched into my heart. Go in peace and may the blessing of God Almighty be upon you now and forevermore.”

The Gospel does not retire.
The love of Christ does not loosen its
hold when one servant steps aside.

A Final Word

On Sept. 25, 2026, two days before his retirement took effect, Fr. Bastian offered the Parish a final Daily Word — a farewell drawn from Scripture and three decades of shared life.

“I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.” — Philippians 1:3-6, NIV

“Thirty years ago, you called me,” he wrote. “You did not call a finished priest. You called a man still being formed, still learning how to listen, how to lead, and how to love a people well. And in ways I could not have imagined then, you became the very place where that forming happened. For that, I thank my God every time I remember you.”

“From the first day until now, you have been partners in the Gospel with me,” he continued. “You opened your homes and your hearts. You let me stand beside you at baptisms and weddings, at hospital beds and gravesides, in seasons of laughter and in nights of sorrow. You sat through sermons that were still finding their way. You



A SUPERHERO VISIT — The Rev. Bastian captures children's attention Oct. 31, 2021 during the Family Table service as Marvel Comics' superhero, Iron Man.

trusted me with your joys, your griefs, your children, and your dying. You corrected me when I needed it and forgave me when I failed. You prayed for me when I could not pray for myself. In a hundred quiet ways, many of which only God fully knows, you raised me up. Whatever good has been done in this Parish was never mine alone. It was Christ's work begun in you and carried forward through our life together.”

“I leave with humility, not because these years were small, but because they were more precious than I know how to name,” he wrote. “This community of faith called me, supported me, bore with me, and by the Spirit's patient work helped shape the priest I became. I carry your faces, your stories, your kindness, and your faith with me. I am more grateful than I can say.”

“Paul's confidence is now my own: the One who began this good work will carry it on to completion,” he said. “The Gospel does not retire. The love of Christ does not loosen its

hold when one servant steps aside. God remains faithful to this congregation. He will keep forming pastors and people, keep binding wounds, keep proclaiming hope, keep setting a table in the presence of every friend and enemy, until the day of Christ Jesus.”

“So, I bid you farewell not as one who is finished, but as one who has been held,” he wrote. “Thank you for the call. Thank you for the years. Thank you for your patience, your prayers, your laughter, your forgiveness, and your love. Thank you for letting me belong to you while you belonged to Christ.”

“May the God who began this good work among us keep you in His joy, His peace, and His unfinished, unstoppable grace. Amen.”

“Therefore, God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

From the Diocese of Texas

“St. Martin's is so very grateful for Marty's long ministry, as are the many families at Episcopal High School. He and I have served together for many years, and I give thanks for the sabbath ahead of him and look forward to seeing how he will minister and continue to bring his priesthood to benefit many more in the Lord's name.”

— The Rt. Rev. C. Andrew Doyle — Ninth Bishop of Texas

From St. James' Episcopal Church

“The people of St. James' give thanks to God for your excellent service as Vice Rector of St. Martin's and your loving partnership in the ministry and mission of our Lord Jesus Christ in Houston. ... Your ministry's impact and influence extend beyond St. Martin's to the entire diocese. ... I consider you among the bright lights of our Church and a true friend.”

— The Rev. Victor J. Thomas, Rector and Vestry — St. James' Episcopal Church, Houston

The Ordinary Christian Life

*God often does His deepest work not in life's extraordinary moments,
but in the faithful rhythms of everyday life.*



Do you feel exceptional? Or do you feel ordinary? If you are like me, ordinary is a more apt barometer of how I feel daily. But embracing the ordinariness of life can also lead to feelings of inadequacy and even a diminished sense of self-worth. Feelings of insufficiency are heightened by a culture that is captivated by the extraordinary — the remarkable achievement, the latest app that promises foreign language fluency, and the unforgettable vacation (triumphantly displayed through social media platforms).

We love to celebrate mountaintop moments, life-changing decisions and stories of spectacular success. By contrast, the ordinary often feels dull and forgettable. The daily grind of routine alarm clocks, commutes through dense traffic and the relentless pile of laundry can make one feel as though they are on a never-ending hamster wheel of predictability. Sometimes the Christian life can feel monotonous, too, leading us to quietly wonder whether faithfulness in such ordinary circumstances can really matter all that much.

Yet Scripture tells a different story. While God occasionally works through dramatic miracles and extraordinary events, most spiritual growth takes place in the steady rhythms of everyday life. A Christ-like character is formed not in moments of excitement but in ritual habits of the simple and ordinary.

This brings us to the term “ordinary.” You have probably come across the word in Church.

The word “ordinary” comes from the Latin word “ordo,” which means “order, or sequence.” The same Latin root gives us English words like “ordination” and “orderly.” In the Episcopal Church, it can refer to the office of the bishop, as the ecclesiastical authority who exercises authority (or “order”) in the Church. More commonly, however, in the Church it refers to a season of “ordered” time in the Church calendar. Ordinary Time is the period between the major feasts and seasons.

These ordered weeks developed over time as the church began to structure its worship around the major events in Christ’s life. Christmas proclaims that the Messiah has come. Good Friday and Easter proclaim that Christ has died and risen. Pentecost proclaims that the Spirit has

been given to the church. Over time, other seasons developed, such as Lent, Advent, and Holy Week. As these major celebrations took shape, the remaining weeks in the year needed their own structure (or, ordo). So, the Church gradually developed a system of numbered Sundays between the great church festivals. This period in the Church calendar came to be known as “Ordinary Time.” Ordinary Time is the longest season of the year. It is a season of growth and discipleship. This is why the color green is especially fitting for this season.

*The ordinary is not something to escape
or look down upon; it is the very place where
Christ meets us and shapes us.*

But, with the risk of making a contradiction, there’s an extraordinary aspect to this ordinary season. This is because it’s in the ordinary rhythms of life that growth occurs.

Our Episcopal (or Anglican) worship is intentionally repetitive. We do the same things over and over again. Each week we gather, confess, hear Scripture, pray, exchange peace, give thanks, receive Communion, and are sent into the world. That repetition isn’t an empty routine. It is formation. God works through the repeated practice of these ordinary things. This is because Christ is present in the ordinary.

This is true of our ordinary daily routines, too. The routine things we do each day: the commute, folding the laundry, reading a bedtime story to our children, and yes, even checking the work email. All these seemingly mundane tasks can be conduits for God to work. Christ is there. The Christian task is to be attentive to His presence and to reorient the mundane and ordinary back to God.

When we do this, the ordinary becomes extraordinary, and the result is growth. So, as you continue your journey through Ordinary Time and engage in ordinary life, remember to embrace the ordinary. For it is in the faithful repetition of ordinary things that God quietly forms us into the people he has called us to be. The ordinary is not something to escape or look down upon; it is the very place where Christ meets us and shapes us.



The Rev. Alex D. Graham III

Associate for Children and Family Ministries
agraham@smec.org



The Psalms, Anglican Chant and the Spiritual Power of Sung Prayer

Through music, memory and Evensong, St. Martin's invites Parishioners to hear the Psalms as living prayer.



Keith Lathrom, Director of Music, leads Parishioners through a new way of hearing the Psalms during the Aug. 9 Theology for Life class in The Church.

Same Words, Different Key: How Music Reshapes the Psalms

On Sunday, Aug. 9, after the 9 a.m. service, something unusual happened at St. Martin's: few Parishioners got up to leave the pews. Instead of filing out to Bagby Parish Hall for the week's Theology for Life class, worshipers stayed where they were as Keith Lathrom, Director of Music, invited them to hear the Psalms in a new way — not simply as ancient words to be read but as a living prayer shaped by music, memory and the gathered voice of the Church.

The congregation first learned a portion of Psalm 85, sung to a familiar melody. Once they had it, Lathrom asked Principal Organist John Meier to play the very same tune again — but in a minor key. The words on the page hadn't changed. Nothing had been added or removed. But the Psalm sounded like a different text entirely:

heavier, more searching and tinged with an unease the major-key version hadn't carried.



Principal Organist John Meier plays Psalm 85 in a minor key, illustrating how music shapes the way Parishioners receive and remember Scripture.

"By changing the mode in which the music is, we can affect the text and how we receive it," Lathrom explained. "It's one of the ways that we can express the text of the Psalm by just changing the music that is offered with it." It was a simple demonstration with a large point: music doesn't just decorate Scripture. It shapes how we hear it.

The Oldest Hymnbook in the Church

That point was the centerpiece of Lathrom's class, "The Prayer Book and Anglican Music," part of St. Martin's ongoing Theology for Life series.

The book of Psalms is the book of the Bible read most often in Church services, Lathrom told the class. "The Psalms are poetry, prayer, drama, advice and praise," he said. "They were also the original hymns of God's people." Their use in worship stretches back further than the Church itself, from Jewish prayer into Christian



worship and, eventually, into the Anglican tradition, where the 1662 Book of Common Prayer describes the Psalter as “the psalms of David pointed as they are to be sung or said in churches.”

For centuries, Christians have turned to these same ancient words to find language for nearly every human experience — joy, thanksgiving, grief, fear, repentance, hope — set to melodies both ancient and new.

Why Sing, Not Just Say?

“When we use music to express text, it sticks with us a lot longer than when we would just say it,” Lathrom explained. “And there’s a lot of science behind that. That’s why we’ve begun singing them. ... hopefully these texts of the Psalms will stick with us through our daily life throughout the week, not just on Sunday.”

The minor-key demonstration wasn’t the only tool Lathrom used to make that case. Working through Psalm 85 verse by verse, Lathrom asked the class to listen as the organ’s sound shifted in response to specific words such as “fear,” “glory,” “mercy,” “peace,” and “loving kindness.” Registration, tone and tempo, he noted, allow a musician to do what a preacher does with emphasis and pause: to draw out meaning that’s already present in the text, but easy to miss when read aloud.

You Don’t Need to Read Music

The musical tradition at the center of all this is Anglican chant — a style in which the flowing, unmeasured language of the Psalms is set to a repeating musical formula, rather than to the fixed rhythms of a hymn. Because the Psalms weren’t written as poetry with regular meter, Anglican chant is built to bend around the text instead of forcing the words into a strict beat.

To help singers follow along, printed Psalters mark the text with small symbols — called “pointing” — that show exactly



Lathrom demonstrates how a single melody can transform in meaning — from hopeful to searching.

where each syllable falls against the musical phrase. It looks intimidating at first glance, but Lathrom was quick to lower the stakes. “You are not required to be notationally literate here,” he told the class. “All you have to be able to do is find the symbols.”

With a little repetition, he said, the system becomes intuitive — and musical skill, or the lack of it, is beside the point. “I would encourage everyone, regardless of your musical ability or experience, whether you can hold a tune in a bucket or not, to participate,” Lathrom said. “It is not a performance. It is to make a joyful noise unto the Lord. It is to worship. It is your way of reciting the Psalms.”

Congregational singing, he emphasized, isn’t about a polished sound. It’s about adding one voice among many to the Church’s shared prayer.

An Ancient Prayer, Sung by a Present-Day Church

The Psalms themselves are thousands of years old, but the musical settings used to sing them are often much newer — even when the melodies draw on ancient plainchant roots. That combination, Lathrom argued, is part of what gives the practice its power: old words, renewed continually by new music and new voices.

Parishioners don’t have to wait for another Theology for Life class to experience it. St. Martin’s is carrying that tradition forward through a new Choral Evensong service that was introduced on Sunday, Sept. 13, at 4 p.m. in The Church. It follows the historic 30-day Psalm cycle, with the Parish Choir singing complete Psalms — sometimes several in a single service — each set to a different chant.

For newcomers, the invitation is simple: come listen first. No musical background is required, and the Parish Choir carries the bulk of the singing. It’s an opportunity to experience Psalms differently than on a typical Sunday morning — not just hearing what the words say but hearing how the music gives them shape. Evensong offers Parishioners the chance to experience what Lathrom demonstrated in the Theology for Life class: Scripture heard not only through words but through sound, silence, harmony and prayer.

“If the Psalms are hard, and you’re really trying on the Psalms,” Lathrom said, “the thought is that the hymns will be easier to sing.” He closed the class by invoking St. Basil of Caesarea, who called the Psalms “the voice of the Church” — a fitting description of what happens when a congregation sings ancient words across generations, in one room.

“We sing them together as a congregation in a choir whose members, from our youngest Choristers to our wisest and most experienced Parishioners, may span nearly a century of life,” Lathrom reflected. “In that moment, the words, melodies, and generations of people [are] joined together in a single act of prayer.”

The Psalms give us words when we have none of our own, and music when words alone aren’t enough. In Evensong, they turn an ancient prayer into our prayer — and when we sing them together, they remind us that we never pray alone.

GROW WITH US

At St. Martin's, we offer a wide variety of groups and classes designed to help you deepen your faith and become rooted in God's amazing grace. Whether you're beginning your spiritual journey or seeking to grow as a devoted disciple of Christ, you'll find a place here. We encourage you to prayerfully consider where God may be leading you.

Need more information about our Adult Sunday School programs? Unless otherwise noted, please contact Tany James at 713-830-4108 or tjames@smec.org.

NO SUNDAY SCHOOL

Christian Education Sunday School classes will not be held on Nov. 8

(St. Martin's Day), Nov. 22

(Thanksgiving weekend), Dec. 20 and Dec. 27
(Christmas weekend).

8+ Sundays • 8:55-9:25 a.m.
Chapel Reception Hall

This 30-minute class is a Clergy-led coffee-and-discussion session following the 8 a.m. worship service. Each class focuses on the day's lectionary reading. All are welcome to drop in.

SPIRITUAL FORMATION Praying with the Scriptures

Led by the Rev. Sharron L. Cox

Most Sundays • 10:15-11 a.m.

Levenson Pastoral Care Center, Bride's Parlor

The Holy Scriptures are God's gift to all. Through God's Spirit, humans were inspired to write the Scriptures. And through the Spirit's ongoing inspiration, we are guided in their understanding and application to our own lives, rather than just be a collection of thoughts, words, and events that happened long ago.

Come practice praying with scriptures in a group. No prior training or experience in praying with the Scripture is required.

Contact the Rev. Sharron L. Cox at 713-830-4131 or scox@smec.org for more information.

THEOLOGY for LIFE

THEOLOGY FOR LIFE: The Gospel of John

Led by the Rev. Dane Boston

Sundays, through Nov. 15 • 10:15-11 a.m.
Bagby Parish Hall

This series explores what may be the most beloved book of the Bible, the Gospel of John. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "For God so loved the world, that He gave his only Son." "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

What would our faith be without these and so many other texts found only in John? This fall, join us as we journey through the highlights of John's Gospel from beginning to end.

THEOLOGY FOR LIFE: What Story Are We In? Christian Hope and Its Alternative

Led by St. Martin's Clergy

Sundays, Nov. 29-Dec. 13 • 10:15-11 a.m.
Bagby Parish Hall

Advent is an expectant season of hope, as we train our hearts to look ahead for the coming kingdom of God where Christ is Lord of all. But have we trained our minds and hearts to differentiate that hope from other counterfeit hopes on offer in the modern world?

For instance, can we ever hope to bring about God's eternal kingdom through politics, wealth, or AI and other forms of technology? Join us this season as we sift through what Christian hope really is, amid other hopes and kingdoms that try to claim our hearts.

ADULT CONFIRMATION Anglicanism 101

Sundays, through Nov. 1 • 10:15-11 a.m.
Chapel Reception Hall

The Rev. Dr. Jordan Hylden, Associate for Christian Education, leads an enriching eight-week journey through the core beliefs of the Christian faith as expressed in the Episcopal Church and rooted in our rich Anglican tradition.

For more information about the next Confirmation class, please contact Tany James at 713-830-4108 or tjames@smec.org.

ADULT CONFIRMATION SERVICE With the Rt. Rev. Héctor Monterroso



Sunday, Nov. 15
11:15 a.m. • The Church

The Rt. Rev. Héctor Monterroso will be the guest preacher at St. Martin's

Confirmation service. A native of Guatemala, the Rt. Rev. Monterroso served as bishop of Costa Rica for 14 years before becoming an assistant bishop in the Diocese on July 1, 2017.



FAMILY LIFE CLASS Simplicity Parenting

Led by the Rev. Alex Graham III
Sundays, 10:15-11 a.m. • Activity Center,
Game Room

This class explores common cultural pressures of raising children and provides practical tools to help families navigate the complexities of parenthood.

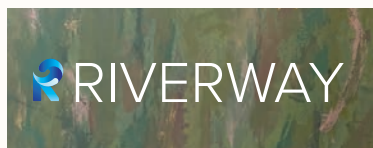
CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER HOUR

Led by the Rev. Sharron L. Cox
Sundays, Oct. 18, Nov 15 and Dec. 13
10:15-11 a.m. • Levenson Pastoral Care Center,
Bride's Parlor

Silent prayer is the interior practice of allowing God to enter our lives and help us grow more in faith, hope, and love for others and ourselves. Join other Parishioners in these monthly offerings as we learn, through silence, of God's love for us and of our love for others and ourselves.

Contact the Rev. Sharron L. Cox at 713-830-4131 or scox@smec.org.

Throughout the fall and Advent season, St. Martin's offers opportunities to worship, pray, remember, give thanks and prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ. Join us for these special services and gatherings.



ODDBALLS & MISFITS SERMON SERIES

Sundays in October
11:15 a.m. · Parish Life Center

What happens when we take a closer look at some of the Bible's lesser-known stories? Each year, Riverway explores rarely preached stories and books of the Bible, inviting us to encounter Scripture from a fresh perspective.

This unique sermon series gives us an opportunity to hear passages we may not often encounter on Sunday mornings and to discover what they have to teach us about God, faith and the life of discipleship. Come curious and ready to discover something new in God's Word.

For more information, please contact Haley Lynch at 713-830-4110 or hlynch@smec.org.



BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS SERVICE

Sunday, Oct. 4 · 5 p.m. · Wayside Chapel

In celebration of the Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi, patron saint of animals and the environment, all are invited to bring their beloved pets to this service of thanksgiving and blessing.

Together, we will give thanks for the beauty and companionship of God's creatures and remember our calling to be good stewards of all creation. We will also collect pet food donations to support local animal shelters.

For more information, contact Barbara Piana at 713-830-4116 or bpiana@smec.org.

OSL HEALING PRAYER SERVICE

First Wednesday of the Month
Oct. 7, Nov. 4 and Dec. 2 · 5 p.m.
Parish Life Center



On the first Wednesday of most months, St. Martin's Chapter of the Order of St. Luke offers a prayer service for healing and wholeness. All are welcome, especially those who are experiencing illness, a difficult season of life, fear, loneliness or a longing for God's peace. Following the service, trained prayer ministers are available to anyone seeking personal prayer.

For more information, please contact Deanna Lawson at dlawson@smec.org or 713-985-3807.



TAIZÉ PRAYER SERVICE

Oct. 18 and Dec. 6 · 5 p.m. · Christ Chapel

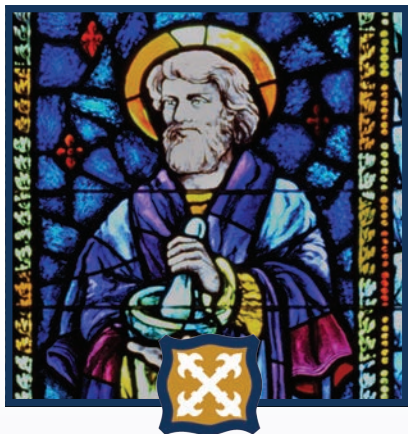
*"Be still and know that I am God."
(Psalm 46:10)*

In the midst of busy lives, Taizé offers a quiet space to rest in the presence of God. Through simple sung prayers, Scripture, silence and reflection, this contemplative service invites us to slow down and listen for God.

Inspired by the worship of the Taizé Community in France, Taizé prayer has become a beloved spiritual practice. Whether you are drawn to silence, seeking peace, or desire to spend a time of prayer with others, you are welcome.

For more information, please contact Rebekah Maddux El-Hakam at relhakam@smec.org or 713-830-4146.





Keeping *the* Kalendar

ST. LUKE'S SERVICE

Monday, Oct. 19 • 6 p.m.

Parish Life Center

Reception to follow in The Narthex

On the Feast of St. Luke, we give thanks for the evangelist whose Gospel reveals Christ's compassion, healing and love for the world. Traditionally remembered as a physician, St. Luke reminds us that caring for the whole person — body, mind, and spirit — is part of God's mission in the world.

This special Keeping the Kalendar service will include incense and Holy Eucharist. Health care workers are especially invited to attend and receive a special blessing.

ALL SOULS' SUNDAY

Sunday, Nov. 1 • 6 p.m. • The Church
Reception to follow

All Souls' Day, Nov. 2, remembers the faithful departed with gratitude and commends them to God's eternal care.

Join us for a special Keeping the Kalendar Holy Eucharist featuring the reading of the Parish necrology, as we remember those who have passed on to glory over the past year. In the beauty of stillness of The Church, we gather as the Body of Christ to remember, mourn, give thanks and place our hope in the promise of resurrection.

For more information about both services, please contact Haley Lynch at 713-830-4110 or hlynch@smec.org.



THANKSGIVING HOLY EUCHARIST:

A Celebration of Gratitude and Grace

"Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever." — Psalm 107:1

Thursday, Nov. 26 • 10 a.m. • The Church

All Parishioners, family and friends are warmly invited to gather for Thanksgiving Day Holy Eucharist. The word "Eucharist" means "thanksgiving." On this day of gratitude, we come together as the Body of Christ to give thanks for God's abundant goodness, for the blessings of this life and for the gift of Christ.

74TH ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Sunday, Jan. 31, 2027 • 10:15 a.m. • Bagby Parish Hall

Please mark your calendar for our Annual Parish Meeting, where we will celebrate our accomplishments in 2026 and look ahead to a new year of programs. We'll also recognize current and retiring Vestry members and other Parishioners, Clergy and Staff for their services.

Adult Sunday School will not be held to allow all to participate in this special event.

ALL SAINTS' DAY AND THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Sunday, Nov. 1 • All Services will be in The Church

8 a.m. – Traditional spoken service with Holy Eucharist

9:15 a.m. – Traditional and Family Table combined services with the Sacrament of Baptism and Holy Eucharist

11:15 a.m. – Traditional and Riverway combined services with the Sacrament of Baptism and Holy Eucharist

4 p.m. – Choral Evensong for All Saints' Day

6 p.m. – All Souls' service with Holy Eucharist –
see information at left.

On All Saints' Day, we celebrate the communion of saints — those holy men and women who have gone before us and whose faithful service lives continue to inspire. In the Sacrament of Baptism, we welcome new members into the Body of Christ through water and the Holy Spirit.

Holy Baptism is especially fitting on All Saints' Sunday, one of the Episcopal Church's principal baptismal occasions.



From Humble Path, A Legacy

As is our tradition in years past, we will reflect this day on our Patron Saint – Martin of Tours.

SOLDIER, PRIEST, BISHOP AND SERVANT OF GOD

Martin was born around 316 in Savaria (modern-day Szombathely, Hungary), a Roman province. Raised in Italy, he joined the Roman army, following in his father's footsteps. During his military service, Martin performed the act for which he is best remembered: on a freezing night at the gates of Amiens, he encountered a poorly clothed beggar and, having nothing else to give, cut his own military cloak in half and gave a piece to the man. That night, Martin dreamed of Christ wearing the half-cloak, saying to the angels around him, "Martin, still a catechumen, has clothed me." After converting to Christianity, his faith clashed with military life — he resigned, was jailed as a traitor and then released.

Choosing a humble path, Martin became a monk, founded Gaul — an ancient region of Western Europe — its first monastery, traveling by donkey and boat to share the message of Jesus. Renowned for healing prayers, Martin was made Bishop of Tours in 371 and became one of Christianity's most beloved evangelists. He died in 397, and his legacy lives on — more churches in the Middle Ages bore his name than any other saint. For more than 1,600 years, Nov. 11 has been celebrated as St. Martin's Day.



ST. MARTIN'S DAY CELEBRATION *Sunday, Nov. 8*

We celebrate our patron feast day on the Sunday near Nov. 11, so our whole Parish can take part together. The 4 p.m. Choral Evensong service will honor Veterans.

Parish Family Picture *10:15 a.m. · The Church Plaza*

All Parishioners and friends from all services are invited to take part in this time-honored annual event.



ST. MARTIN'S COOKIE CONTEST

*Sunday, Nov. 8 · 10:15-11:15 a.m.
Bagby Parish Hall*

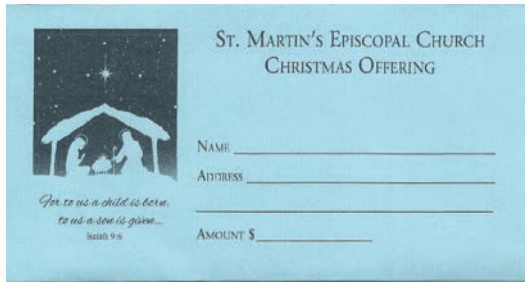
Calling all bakers — ready, set, bake!

Register at www.smec.org/ministries/childrens-ministry

Show off your best homemade cookies at our St. Martin's Day celebration! Bring your batch of homemade cookies, include your recipe and compete for the title of Best Tasting Cookie. We'll share tasty samples, but don't forget to register!



CHEERS TO THE WINNER — Lisa Eubanks captured First Place with her Key Lime Pie cookie in the 2025 Cookie Contest.



THE CHRISTMAS OUTREACH OFFERING

The Christmas Outreach Offering is a longstanding tradition at St. Martin's. We truly have so much for which to be thankful, and we are blessed to share our gifts with others in the community through this Outreach offering. Your generosity, especially at this time of year, will bring hope to others.

Offerings can be made online or in person and may be placed on the offering plate during the Advent and Christmas worship services.

Envelopes are available in the pews and on display in The Church and in Christ Chapel during December.



A CHRISTMAS OFFERING

Dear Fellow Parishioners,

Isaiah 9:6 reminds us of the miraculous gift of Jesus' birth: *"For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."*

On that holy night long ago, the Word became flesh and the Prince of Peace came to dwell among us.

This Christmas season, we can extend that peace beyond the walls of our beloved St. Martin's through our annual Christmas Offering. This cherished tradition allows us to share the blessings God has given us with those in our community who need them. Your generosity, especially during this season of giving, will bring hope and Christ's love to others.

We invite you to use the enclosed Christmas offering envelope to make your gift and return it to the Church by Christmas Day. On behalf of the Vestry, Clergy and Staff, we wish you and your loved ones a blessed and joyful Christmas, filled with Christ's love, peace and abundant grace.

Faithfully yours,

The Rev. Dane E. Boston
Fifth Rector
St. Martin's Episcopal Church

Mrs. Susan McConn
Senior Warden

Mr. David Leonard
Junior Warden



LEARN ABOUT THE VESTRY NOMINATION PROCESS

Sunday, Oct. 4 • 12:30 p.m. • Vestry Conference Room

Hosted by Senior Council President Sherrie Perkins and Senior Warden Susan McConn

All Parishioners are welcome to learn more about the Vestry nomination process, the responsibilities and the significance of serving on the Vestry for our Parish.

Completed nomination forms for the upcoming term must be received by Oct. 15. Visit www.smec.org/vestry-nomination.

Please contact Britney Pena for more information at 713-985-3821 or bpena@smec.org.

ADVENT QUIET DAY

ADVENT QUIET DAY

The Canticles of Advent
Sponsored by The Order of
the Daughters of the King®

*The
Order
of the
Daughters
of the King*
Saturday,
Dec. 5
9 a.m.-noon
Parish Life
Center

In Luke's account of Jesus' birth, three beautiful Canticles of praise: the Song of Mary, the Song of Zechariah, and the Song of Simeon — give voice to praise, thanksgiving and hope in response to God's saving work.

These ancient songs have become part of the Church's daily prayer and are heard regularly at St. Martin's in Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer. During this Advent Quiet Day, members of the St. Martin's Clergy will offer meditations on each canticle, followed by time for silence, prayer and reflection. The morning will conclude with Noonday Prayer.

For more information, please contact
Deanna Lawson at 713-985-3807 or
dlawson@smec.org.



HOUSTON BOYCHOIR

Saturday, Dec. 12 • 4 p.m. • The Church

The Houston Boychoir Winter Concert has been a Houston family tradition for more than 60 years featuring three choirs of boys from the very small to the very tall singing holiday music for the whole family to enjoy.

All are invited to this free concert!

For more information, email
info@houstonboychoir.org.

STRIKE THE HARP AND JOIN THE CHORUS

Sunday, Dec. 13 • 5 p.m. • Parish Life Center

Come lift your voice in joyful anticipation of our Savior's birth. Join us for a festive evening of music and sweets to prepare our hearts for the wonder of Christmas. Together, we'll sing beloved Advent and Christmas songs, filling the season with praise and thanksgiving. The evening will feature our St. Martin's Band along with a few special guests — but most of all, it will feature you! Come sing and raise your voice as we joyfully "strike the harp and join the chorus!"

For more information, please contact Haley
Lynch at 713-830-4110 or hlynch@smec.org.



ADVENT LESSONS AND CAROLS

Sunday, Nov. 29 • 4 p.m. • The Church

This replaces the Choral Evensong service.

CHRISTMAS LESSONS AND CAROLS

Sunday, Dec 20 • Family Table service

9:15 a.m. • Parish Life Center

Traditional service • 4 p.m. • The Church

This replaces the Choral Evensong service.



BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

Thursday, Dec. 17 • 6-7 p.m. • Christ Chapel

Christmas can be a season of joy, but it can also bring grief, loneliness and longing. The Blue Christmas service offers a quiet place to bring those feelings before God.

Through prayer, candlelight, Scripture, and quiet music, we gather with neighbors and strangers who may be carrying loss, disappointment, or difficult memories during the Christmas season. Together, we remember that we are not alone through the darkness.

At the heart of Advent is the promise of Emmanuel, God with us. We look toward the hope of Christ, the Light who comes into the world.

For more information, please
contact Valerie Rivera at 713-985-3817
or vrivera@smec.org.



Celebrating the Birth of our Savior



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

Thursday, Dec. 24

FAMILY SERVICES

9:15 a.m. • Parish Life Center

Come to this family-friendly Christmas Eve service with Holy Eucharist.

11 a.m. • The Church

(No Eucharist); Music and Nativity Liturgy. This shorter family-friendly service recounts a live Christmas story reenactment. *This service is livestreamed.*

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. *The 3:30 p.m. service will be livestreamed.*

RIVERWAY SERVICE

1:30 p.m. Hot Chocolate Bar open • 1:45 p.m. Sing-along

2 p.m. Worship service • Parish Life Center

Join us for a festive Christmas carols sing-along that includes hot chocolate and cider before the start of our Holy Eucharist service. All are welcome.

Childcare will be provided for 6-week-olds through 3-year-olds at all Christmas Eve services except 8:30 p.m.

Additional parking will be available on Christmas Eve at the 5005 Riverway parking garage (next to Hope and Healing Center).

For more information, please contact Rebekah Maddux El-Hakam at 713-830-4146 or relhakam@smec.org.

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE

Friday, Dec. 25

TRADITIONAL SERVICE

11 a.m. • The Church

Holy Eucharist; Celebrate our Lord's birth with traditional service with hymns, anthems and the Parish Choir.



THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS Sunday, Dec. 27 • The Church

9:15 a.m. – Family Table service will be combined with the 9 a.m. service in The Church.

11:15 a.m. – Riverway service will be combined with the 11:15 a.m. Traditional service in The Church.



ENSEMBLE ALTERA: A Nationally Acclaimed Choir Comes to St. Martin's

Sunday, Oct. 25 • 4 p.m. • The Church

Experience the artistry of Ensemble Altera, one of the nation's leading professional chamber choirs, as the Music at St. Martin's Concert Series presents this acclaimed ensemble.

This special performance takes the place of Choral Evensong. Join us for an unforgettable afternoon of music at St. Martin's!

Led by internationally celebrated countertenor Christopher Lowrey, Ensemble Altera has been praised by the "Boston Musical Intelligencer" for its "seamless ensemble perfection." The concert is free and open to the public. The ensemble's thoughtful and engaging programs invite audiences into the beauty and power of choral music.

All are invited to attend. We will collect a free-will offering to help cover the costs of presenting Ensemble Altera at St. Martin's and making concerts like this possible for our Parish and the wider community.

Scan the QR code to listen to the Ensemble Altera – *Bring Us, O Lord God* by William Harris - Ensemble Altera or use this link to the recording at www.youtube.com/watch?v=f1e4FLC2b14



LET THE CHILDREN SING HIS PRAISE!

It is never too late to join the Choristers!

All young people from first grade through high school are warmly welcomed into this joyful ministry.

Youngest singers — Junior Choristers:

Rehearsals at 8:30 a.m. on Sundays in the Children's Life Center and Parish Life Center. Contact Sarah Ann Gonzalez at sgonzalez@smec.org.

Middle and high school singers — Choristers:

Rehearsals at 8 a.m. on Sundays in the Music Center. Contact Carole Nelson at cnelson@smec.org for more information.

All choir members will have wonderful opportunities to lead worship — both in our traditional services in the church and during Family Table in the Parish Life Center. Come and let your child's voice join the chorus of praise!

When children sing in our church choirs, they aren't just making music — they are offering their hearts to God and growing as disciples of Christ. Choir gives our young people a joyful, meaningful way to participate in worship rather than simply observing it.

The hymns and songs they sing are filled with Scripture, prayer and the truths of our faith — and as they sing these words repeatedly, God's Word takes root in their hearts.



PREPARING FOR BAPTISM

Adults and parents preparing for their children's baptisms are invited to attend a Baptism Instruction Class led by Rev. Alex Graham. Classes are offered during three consecutive Sunday School sessions (10:15–11 a.m.) and on select Saturday mornings.



Upcoming Baptism Instruction Classes

Sundays, Oct. 4, 11, 18 • 10:15–11 a.m.

Activity Center Game Room • Register at www.smec.org/baptism

Saturday, Nov. 21 • 9 a.m.–noon • Children's Life Center

Baptism Services

The Episcopal Church traditionally celebrates baptisms on four principal Feast Days each year: the Easter Vigil, the Day of Pentecost, All Saints' Day and the Feast of the Baptism of our Lord. These occasions allow the whole congregation to witness, sponsor and participate in welcoming new members into the body of Christ.



Upcoming Baptism Services

Sunday, Nov. 1 — All Saints' Day

Sunday, Jan. 10 — The Baptism of Our Lord

After completing Baptism Instruction, parents may schedule their child's baptism.

Contact Deanna Lawson at 713-985-3807 or dlawson@smec.org for further information.



WEDDINGS AT ST. MARTIN'S

A wedding is one of life's most joyful thresholds — a season of anticipation, hope, and a new beginning not just for the couple, but for their families and all who love them. Because marriage in the Church is a sacrament rooted in the life of the Parish, weddings at St. Martin's are reserved for couples with an active, ongoing connection to our community. Specifically, the bride, groom, or one of their parents must be a member in good standing – be baptized, confirmed in the Episcopal Church, make and maintain an annual stewardship pledge and attend Church services at St. Martin's on a regular basis.

At St. Martin's, we consider it a privilege to walk alongside couples as they prepare for this sacred step.

For more information, contact Allie Hippard, Wedding Coordinator, at ahippard@smec.org for guidance and support throughout the planning process.

PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS

"And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together ... but encouraging one another." — Hebrews 10:24-25

Faith is meant to be lived in community. Whether you're looking to study Scripture, serve others, grow spiritually or build meaningful friendships, St. Martin's offers opportunities for every season of life. We invite you to join us this fall and discover a place to connect, learn and serve together.

ST. MARTIN'S FELLOWS

with the Rev. Dr. Jordan Hylden

Tuesdays, Oct. 6, 20, Nov. 3, 17, Dec. 1 and 15
6:30-8:30 p.m.

Student Life Center, Living Room

This class is full.

For information, contact Tany James
at 713-830-4108 or tjames@smec.org.

ALZHEIMER'S CAREGIVERS' SUPPORT GROUP

Mondays, Oct. 5, 19, Nov. 2, 16,
Dec. 7 and 21 · 3-5 p.m.

Hope and Healing Center & Institute,
Room 103

Connect with others who understand the challenges of caring for someone with Alzheimer's. Share experiences, find encouragement, and gain practical support in a caring and confidential setting.

Contact Kathy Tellepsen at 713-301-4786
or kattellepsen@me.com for details.



Volunteers make The Gathering possible. Each month, volunteers help welcome participants, engage them in activities, share conversation and provide a warm, caring presence. No special experience is required — just a willingness to spend time with others and help create a joyful, supportive environment.

The Gathering is a program of CarePartners and is hosted by St. Martin's. Consider giving a few hours each month to help make a meaningful difference for participants and their caregivers.

THE GATHERING

Fourth Monday of the month

10 a.m.-1 p.m. · Bagby Parish Hall



"Pumpkins + Smiles=Fall Magic"

Oct. 26 with entertainment by Jane Vandiver

"Gobble, Gobble and Give Thanks!"

Nov. 23 with entertainment by Robert Greany

The Gathering leverages its resources to support Church members and others in our community experiencing memory loss. Participants enjoy engaging activities in a safe, caring environment while caregivers receive a few hours of respite.

For more information about Alzheimer's Caregivers' Support Group and The Gathering, contact Kathy Tellepsen at 713-301-4786 or kattellepsen@me.com.



FAITH IN LITERATURE

Join our Reading Group

Read outstanding literature through the lens of Christian faith. Join thoughtful discussion in a welcoming group, available during the day or evening, in person or via Zoom.

Day Group

Second Wednesday of the month
1-2:30 p.m. · Children's Life Center,
Room 132 and via Zoom

Schedule:

Oct. 21 – "The Correspondent"
by Virginia Evans

Nov. 11 – "The Remains of the Day"
by Kazuo Ishiguro

Dec. 9 – "Time of the Child"
by Niall Williams



Evening Group

Third Tuesday of the month
7-8:30 p.m. · Children's Life Center,
Room 109 and via Zoom

Schedule:

Oct. 20 – "The Correspondent"
by Virginia Evans

Nov. 17 – "Wise Blood"
by Flannery O'Connor

Dec. 15 – "Theo, of Golden"
by Allen Levi

For more information, please contact
Tany James at 713-830-4108 or
tjames@smec.org.

PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS

OSL HEALING MINISTRY STUDY GROUP

Wednesdays, Oct. 21, 28, Nov. 11, 18,
Dec. 9 and 16 • 4:30-6 p.m.
Activity Center, Family Room

Learn and grow in the practice of healing prayer through Scripture, discussion and fellowship. Open to anyone interested in deepening their prayer life and learning to pray for others.

For more information, please contact
Deanna Lawson at 713-985-3827 or
dlawson@smec.org.

DEEP ROOTS: GOOD BOOKS AND GOOD CONVERSATION

Led by the Rev. Dr. Jordan Hylden

"Perelandra" by C.S. Lewis

Thursday, Oct. 29 • 6:15-7:45 p.m.
Student Life Center, Living Room

"That Hideous Strength" by C.S. Lewis

Thursday, Dec. 3 • 6:15-7:45 p.m.
Student Life Center, Living Room

Join the Rev. Dr. Jordan Hylden for a thoughtful discussion about great Christian literature and the question it raises about faith, life, and what it means to be human.

Contact Tany James at 713-830-4108 or
tjames@smec.org.

For All the Saints:

Fall Art & Poetry **RETREAT**

at Houston Christian University



FALL ART AND POETRY RETREAT

Saturday, Oct. 31 • 9 a.m.-2:45 p.m.

Houston Christian University

\$30 per person • Limited seating

Register by Oct. 14

St. Martin's is partnering with Houston Christian University to host a day retreat featuring **Poet and Parishioner Dr. Matthew Boyleston** and our **Artist-in-Residence, Joy Hilley**, as we continue in our mission to embrace beauty and the arts more fully in our lives. No experience is needed, and beginners are welcome.

Our hope is to encourage everyone to lean into a holy imagination. Lunch will be provided, and worship will also be a part of the retreat.

Register at www.smec.org.

For more information, please contact Haley Lynch at 713-830-4110 or hlynch@smec.org.

GLOBAL PRAYER GROUP

Mondays • 1:15-2:30 p.m.

Children's Life Center and via Zoom

Meet to pray for our troubled world and to support those who are spreading hope through the Gospel message.

For information, contact Janie Putman at 713-516-5849 or janieputman@mac.com.

RECTOR'S BIBLE STUDY

With the Rev. Dane Boston

Tuesdays, through May 4 (with some holiday/event exceptions) • Noon-1 p.m.

Student Life Center and Chapel Reception in Levenson Pastoral Care Center

Take a meaningful pause in your week and join our Rector, the Rev. Dane Boston, leads Parishioners through the appointed lectionary readings for the upcoming Sunday.

Contact Tany James at 713-830-4108 or
tjames@smec.org.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

Tuesdays • 9-11 a.m.

Activity Center, Family Room

Participants knit and crochet God's love, care and warmth into shawls that are blessed before they are donated to those in need.

For information, contact Cyndy Gubbs at 713-985-3804 or cgubbs@smec.org.

BLANKET LADIES

Wednesdays • 10-11 a.m.

Activity Center, Family Room

The group makes approximately 4,000 blankets annually for newborns and infants cared for at Ben Taub Hospital.

For information, contact Cyndy Gubbs at 713-985-3804 or cgubbs@smec.org.

LYDIA'S GUILD

Volunteers Needed to Straighten the Pews!

Help keep The Church and Christ Chapel welcoming by straightening and organizing pew racks.

Please contact Barbara Piana at 713-830-4116 or bpiana@smec.org.



WYCLIFFE OXFORD FORUM With N.T. Wright **Faithful in a Divided Age**

Friday, Nov. 6 and Saturday, Nov. 7
8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. • Parish Life Center
\$175 per person, includes lunch

The Rev. N.T. Wright and other Oxford scholars from Wycliffe Hall join St. Martin's Nov. 6-7 to explore Christian political responsibility with hope, not hostility.

How should Christians think about national priorities in an age of polarization and division?



The Rt. Rev.
Prof. N.T. Wright

This fall, the Wycliffe Oxford Forum brings the Rt. Rev. N.T. Wright, the Rev. Dr. Michael Lloyd, the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Brant and other distinguished scholars to our Parish for two days of teaching and conversation.

Delving deeper into Scripture, they will help us approach this difficult but vital area of faithful citizenship in a way that gives hope rather than adding to the noise.

Register at www.smec.org/wycliffe.

SAINTLY STITCHERS

Mondays · 10 a.m.-noon
Activity Center, Game Room

The men and women of Saintly Stitchers fill St. Martin's with beautiful needlepoint pew kneelers.

For information, contact Cyndy Gubbs at 713-985-3804 or cgubbs@smec.org.



ST. CLARE'S NEEDLEPOINT GUILD

Wednesdays · Noon-3 p.m.
Activity Center, Game Room

St. Clare's Needlepoint Guild creates beautiful needlepoint items to sell, raising funds for outreach giving and Church needlepoint projects.

For more information, contact Cyndy Gubbs at 713-985-3804 or cgubbs@smec.org or stclaresguild@smec.org.

ST. MARTIN'S 20s & 30s DINNER & BIBLE STUDY

**20s
&
30s**

Wednesday evenings through Dec. 16 · 6:45-8:15 p.m.
Children's Life Center
*No meeting Nov. 25 due to Thanksgiving

Fellowship opportunities for young professionals.

Connect with other young adults through weekly fellowship, dinner, Bible study and prayer. In addition to Wednesday gatherings, the group hosts Saturday social events and a year-round book club.

For more information and to subscribe to the group's weekly newsletter, contact the Rev. R. Wesley Arning at 713-621-3040 or rwarning@smec.org.

A VERY SPECIAL LENTEN RETREAT – ICON WRITING

March 1-5 · Scout Center · Cost is \$495
Monday through Thursday · 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Friday · 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m.

"...[F]or I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me." — Matthew 25:35-36

Register at www.smec.org/icon-retreat

Join acclaimed iconographer, Teresa Harrison, for St. Martin's annual Lenten Icon Writing Retreat, March 1-5, 2027. This year's retreat is especially meaningful as participants will write an icon of our patron saint, St. Martin of Tours, sharing his cloak with a beggar — a powerful image of Christ's call to compassion.

The retreat includes daily Eucharist, prayer, silence and lively conversation, all art supplies and lunch at Café St. Martin's Monday through Friday. The \$495 registration fee includes all materials. Because the retreat fills quickly, we encourage early registration. Cancellations after Jan. 1 may not be refunded if the space cannot be filled.

For detailed information contact Deanna Lawson at 713-985-3807 or www.smec.org/icon-retreat.



DOCENT GUILD

The Church Tours

Wednesdays · 11 a.m.
First Sunday of the month
after 11:15 a.m. services

St. Martin's Docent Guild offers free, public and private tours. Trained volunteers serve as tour guides, providing information about The Church's Gothic architecture, stained-glass windows, and the details and symbolism throughout the worship spaces.

For more information, contact the Docent Line at 713-830-4117 or Deanna Lawson at 713-985-3807 or dlawson@smec.org.

EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY

Education for Ministry (EfM) is a challenging four-year study in Old Testament, New Testament, church history and theology, developed by the University of the South's School of Theology with worldwide groups that worship and study in a community of 12 participants and an accredited mentor.

Contact Tany James at 713-830-4108 or tjames@smec.org.



GREETERS GUILD

Welcoming Parishioners and visitors on Sundays.

Help create a welcoming environment by greeting Parishioners and visitors before and after the 9 and 11:15 a.m. services.

To volunteer, contact Katharine Perrow at 713-985-3834 or kperrow@smec.org.

THE WAYSIDE PODCAST

ST. MARTIN'S PODCAST

Grow in your faith wherever you are with The Wayside Podcast, hosted by the Rev. Wesley Arning and Parishioner Ryan Presley. Each week features conversations with authors, artists and theologians exploring life and faith.

New episodes are released every Tuesday, with Sunday sermons available on Fridays. Listen on St. Martin's website or your favorite podcast platform and follow [@thewaysidepodcast](https://www.instagram.com/thewaysidepodcast) on Instagram.

For more information, email podcast@smec.org.

PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN

The Women's Ministry provides a vibrant and nurturing environment for women to gather, fostering meaningful connections and opportunities for spiritual enrichment. Our ministry invites you to embark on a journey of faith, personal growth and fellowship. If you're eager to explore your spirituality and find a supportive community that uplifts one another, you will find a welcoming space here.

EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN

Women of Purpose.
United in Faith.



The mission of the Episcopal Church Women (ECW) of St. Martin's is to bring women together for fellowship, service and outreach while spreading the good news of Jesus Christ. Please join us!



ECW LADIES' CHRISTMAS COFFEE

Monday, Dec. 7 • 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

At the home of Alicia Kimmel
Christmas casual attire

Celebrate the spirit of the season at this annual get-together for all women of the Parish. Valet parking will be available, but carpooling is encouraged due to limited parking nearby.

In the spirit of the season, please bring an unwrapped gift for children ages 5-17 or gift cards.

For more information or to RSVP, please contact Valerie Rivera at 713-985-3817 or vriviera@smec.org for more information.

THE MOMS' GROUP Moms, You're Invited

Wednesdays • 11 a.m.-noon

Student Life Center Living Room

Cost: \$25 per semester; scholarships available

Motherhood is better together! Join us for coffee, connection and prayer with moms who get the beautiful chaos.

Learn more and sign up at
www.smec.org/momsgroup.

Contact Rozlyn Cline at rmcline@smec.org for more information.



ECW CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY- Happy Birthday Jesus!

Saturday, Dec. 12 • 10 a.m.

Parish Life Center • Free Admission

Don't miss this family-friendly event that celebrates the birth of our Savior! Activities include reading the Christmas story, making reindeer food, photos with Santa, face painting, crafts and holiday fun!

For more information, please contact Valerie Rivera at 713-985-3817 or vriviera@smec.org.

Save the Date!

ECW SPRING LUNCHEON

with Caroline Shankle

Comparison is the Thief of Joy

Tuesday, Feb. 2 • 11 a.m.

Bagby Parish Hall • \$40/person

Registration Opens Jan. 5

at noon and closes Jan. 25

Register at www.smec.org/ecw-events

Chairs: Alicia Kimmel and Kate Walters

Caroline Shankle, author of the devotional book "The Lion and the Bear," will speak about how comparison can steal our joy and how we guard against it.

Please contact Valerie Rivera at 713-985-3817 or vriviera@smec.org for more information.

A CHANGE OF HEART:

A Story for Women about the
Mother-in-Law Relationship

Wednesdays • Jan. 13-March 3

10:30 a.m.-noon

Student Life Center, Room 201

-OR-

Wednesdays • Jan. 13-Feb. 24

7-8:30 p.m.

Activity Center, Family Room



Women at all stages of life are invited to this eight-week study on the mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationship. If yours is difficult, we can offer hope; if yours is great, we can learn from you. If you are about to become a mother-in-law or daughter-in-law, this study is perfect for you!

There is no cost to attend, although you will need the "A Change of Heart" workbook by Evans, Miller, and Putman. We use the 8.5" x 11" edition published Aug. 17, 2023 and Session One should be completed before the first meeting.



For more information,
contact Cyndy Gubbs
at cgubbs@smec.org
or 713-985-3804.



A Year in the Making:

The Joy of Giving Market Rings in 36 Years of Holiday Magic
Honoring its Co-founder Kathy Tellepsen



Months of prayer, planning, and preparation will blossom into pure holiday magic as the Episcopal Church Women of St. Martin's host the 36th annual Joy of Giving Market from Oct. 13–15. The Joy of Giving Committee, along with more than 80 merchants and local artisans, will transform the Church Campus into a glittering, colorful wonderland of fellowship and festive shopping. Bagby Parish Hall, the Activity Center, the Parish Life Center, and the St. Martin's Gift Shoppe will feature art, décor, clothing, jewelry, home goods, gourmet delights and much more.

More than 1,400 visitors are expected on our Campus to shop over the three days, exploring booths in all three buildings, including the exterior hallways and the outdoor corridor connecting the Activity Center and Parish Life Center.

A Milestone Worth Celebrating

Thirty-six years is a long time for any Parish tradition to endure — and this year's Market carries special weight as a significant anniversary of something that began far smaller than the sparkling wonderland it has become.

In 1990, a small group of dedicated Parishioners created a fall bazaar on St. Martin's Campus. Among them was Kathy Tellepsen, who served as the Episcopal Church Women President at the time and, alongside Kathy Buck, co-founded what would grow into the Joy of Giving Market.

In its earliest form, the event supported local ministries directly and modestly — Tellepsen recalled donations to organizations like House of Tiny Treasures, a Third Ward ministry providing free daycare for families without housing, and the purchase of a commercial soup cooker for St. James House, an Episcopal Diocese of Texas nursing home and rehabilitation facility in Baytown.

Since 2005 alone, the Market has raised more than \$1 million for outreach ministries across the greater Houston area — a scale Tellepsen herself has watched unfold with something like wonder.

"I am so impressed with how the Joy of Giving Market has grown and how it is managed," Tellepsen said. "It is in a different league than what it was 25-plus years ago! Like everything that starts small and grows big, you must have a solid core to start. The Market has been nurtured and cared for by Servants of God for many years."

Three Decades of Best Practices

Growing an event from a folding-table bazaar into a three-building holiday market didn't happen by accident. Other longtime ECW leaders who worked alongside Tellepsen's founding generation point to decades of small refinements that, added together, transformed the Market's sales and reputation.

Merchants' check-in, for instance, used to mean a multitude of vendors arriving at the same time, which lent itself to a chaotic scramble that current volunteers on the ECW Joy of Giving Committee have streamlined into a staggered process. In the early years, booth assignments lived on a hand-drawn map marked with stickers and Post-it notes. That system has since become digitized. Even the Market's fundraising approach has changed: what began as a small silent auction tucked into a single room eventually outgrew its space and moved into the Activity Center.



Joy of Giving Co-Founder Kathy Tellepsen poses with her artwork on Oct. 15, 2024 during the 2024 Market in the Parish Life Center. Tellepsen helped launch the St. Martin's holiday bazaar in 1990, laying the foundation for a tradition that continues to bring Parishioners, merchants and shoppers together in fellowship.



A TRADITION CARRIED FORWARD —The Rev. Dane E. Boston joins the Joy of Giving Market Committee members and the Rev. Lisa Neilson to open the Market on Oct. 14, 2025. Since it first opened as a small holiday bazaar, generations of St. Martin's Parishioners have continued to build on its tradition of fellowship, service, and generosity.

Merchants consistently point to the level of hospitality as what sets St. Martin's apart from other holiday markets and church bazaars. Meals, snack breaks, and attentive volunteer support are what keep merchants returning — some have been part of the Joy of Giving Market since the beginning. Tellepsen sees the level of care and organization as an extension of the Market's original spirit: while the specifics have evolved, its foundation and mission of service in faith have remained the same.

Holiday Magic, Old and New

The 36th Market will open on Tuesday, Oct. 13, with an early-bird Premier Shopping Party that sets a festive tone for the next three days. Guests will enjoy a spread of hors d'oeuvres, including samples from the popular ECW Pantry menu, alongside the highly sought-after Wine Pull, a silent auction, and unique offerings from local merchants — traditions that, in one form or another, trace back to the bazaar Tellepsen helped launch three and a half decades ago.

That through-line, from a handful of volunteers with a folding table to a three-building event drawing over 1,400 shoppers, is exactly what Tellepsen points to as the Market's foundation: a "solid core" of purpose that has simply been built upon, year after year, by generations of willing St. Martin's volunteers.

Sustaining the Mission

This annual gathering remains the cornerstone fundraiser for the Episcopal Church Women of St. Martin's, supporting Outreach grants that reach organizations throughout the Greater Houston area and beyond — carrying forward, on a much larger scale, the same mission Tellepsen and her fellow founders set out to serve in 1990.

Looking back at the Joy of Giving's evolution, the 2026 Joy of Giving Committee members credit Tellepsen with building far more than a seasonal fundraiser. In their view, she created a sense of shared purpose that drew people together for a common cause, and her early vision and leadership laid the groundwork for what has since grown into one of Houston's most beloved annual traditions.

The Committee also expressed deep gratitude to Clergy, Staff and volunteers who dedicated their time and energy to this year's Market, along with the generous donors, loyal merchants and enthusiastic shoppers whose support allows our community to come together in service and joy.



SERVING UP THE JOY —Kathy Bennett and Kathy Tellepsen work the ECW Pantry during the Premier Party on Oct. 18, 2016. Hospitality and fellowship have remained central to the Market's appeal through its 36-year history.



FAITH, SERVICE AND GROWING IN BROTHERHOOD

The Men of St. Martin's welcomes all men of the Parish. Guests and visitors are always encouraged to join us for our weekly Bible study, outreach ministry and social events. This is a great opportunity to deepen your faith and connect with fellow Parishioners. No reservations are necessary.



DADS' BIBLE STUDY

Thursday mornings through Dec. 18

*No meeting Nov. 26 due to Church holiday.
8-9 a.m. • Welcome Center

All Dads are Welcome!

Start your day with coffee, conversation and Scripture alongside other fathers at St. Martin's. This welcoming group brings together dads with children of all ages to explore what it means to live out the Gospel amid family life.

No registration is necessary to attend the discussions led by the Rev. R. Wesley Arning and Ryan Presley.

For more information or to join the GroupMe, contact the Rev. R. Wesley Arning at 346-335-8680 or rwarning@smec.org.



MEN OF ST. MARTIN'S Bible Study

Led by the Rev. Alex Graham III

Thursday mornings* • 7 a.m. • Bagby Parish Hall

*MOSM will not meet on Oct. 15 due to the Joy of Giving Market, Nov. 26 due to Thanksgiving, Dec. 24 due to Christmas Eve and Dec. 31 for New Year's. Café St. Martin's offers breakfast at 6:45 a.m.



After spending the past year studying the Genesis, the Men of St. Martin's continue their journey through the Torah — the first five books of the Bible — with an in-depth study of Exodus, the Bible's second book.

Together, we're exploring how God remains faithful to the promises He made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as He leads the people of Israel out of slavery and into covenant with Him. Along the way, we will examine themes such as redemption, covenant, worship, holiness, and God's presence. We're also looking at the ways Exodus points us toward Jesus Christ, the true Passover Lamb, who delivers His people from sin and restores their fellowship with God.

For additional information about the Men of St. Martin's Bible study program and other events, please contact Deanna Lawson at 713-985-3807 or dlawson@smec.org.

kids' meals **SERVE WITH PURPOSE:** Help Feed Houston's Hungry Children

Tuesdays, Oct. 27, Nov. 17 and Dec. 15 • 5 p.m. • Parish Life Center Kitchen

We're collecting healthy snacks on Thursday mornings for Kids' Meals!



Did you know? Thirty-two percent of children in Houston are currently living at or below the poverty level. We're putting faith in action as we partner with Kids' Meals to prepare nutritious lunches for children in need across Houston. This hands-on monthly ministry helps provide a child with a healthy meal. No reservation is needed. Just bring a hat or head cover and a heart ready to serve.

Please contact Tracee Tindol at 713-985-3811 or ttindol@smec.org for further details.

WELCOME OTHERS AND SERVE AS AN USHER at The Traditional, Family Table and Riverway Services

From greeting visitors and assisting Parishioners to helping worship and funeral services unfold smoothly, ushers offer a ministry of hospitality and care. We encourage older teens and young adults to participate. Training is provided for all volunteers.

Contact Barbara Piana at 713-830-4116 or via email at bpiana@smec.org for more information.

STUDENT MINISTRIES

At St. Martin's, Student Ministries provides a welcoming space for middle and high school students to grow in faith, build friendships, explore Scripture, and discover what it means to follow Jesus Christ in everyday life. Through Sunday gatherings, weekly Life Groups, retreats, service opportunities, and special events, students are encouraged to ask questions, deepen their faith, and grow together as a community.

Want to learn more? Contact Student Ministries at students@smec.org.

SUNDAY GET-TOGETHERS

Sundays • 10:15-11 a.m.

Student Life Center Living Room

Start your Sunday with friends, refreshments and conversation about life and friends. Students gather to explore and discuss the Scripture reading shared in that morning's worship service.



WEEKLY LIFE GROUPS

Wednesdays • 6-8 p.m. Student Life Center



Our Final Life Groups of the fall semester is Dec. 9!

Life Groups give students an opportunity to dig deeper into Scripture. Through meaningful conversation, fun activities, and time together, students grow in faith and friendship. Dinner is provided, so please bring \$5 to help cover the cost.

High school students, middle school boys and middle school girls meet at 6 p.m. and then gather in separate groups. All students in grades 6 to 12 are welcome.

SAVE THE DATES!

- OCT. 11: 2026-2027 Student Confirmation
Parent and Student Social/
Intro Meeting
- DEC. 9: Final Life Groups and
Christmas Crash Social



SECOND FALL STUDENT MINISTRIES BAKE SALE

Sunday, Oct. 18 • 10:15 a.m.

Location to be announced

Help us bake a difference! Students are invited to gather the day before to help bake together and enjoy a time in community. The following morning, we'll sell our homemade treats, with all proceeds supporting our Summer 2027 mission trips.



Student Ministries HARVEST-THEMED SOCIAL NIGHT

Sunday, Oct. 25 • 5-7 p.m.

Student Life Center

Celebrate the season with friends at our Annual Harvest Social! Join us for an evening full of good food, games, prizes and plenty of fun together. Friends are welcome!





STUDENT ACOLYTE TRAINING

Sundays, Oct. 25 and Nov. 1 • 12:30-1 p.m. following the 11:15 services • The Church

Are you interested in serving as an Acolyte during our Traditional services? Join us for acolyte training. All Confirmands, and any students who need a refresher and those interested in becoming an acolyte are welcome. Acolyte service also provides an op hours count as service hours as well, academically!

Contact Student Ministries at students@smec.org for more information.

- IN MEMORIAM - Glenn Meschko

Glenn Meschko, Director of Student Ministries at St. Martin's Episcopal Church in Houston, died suddenly on Sunday, Sept. 6, 2026, just weeks after joining the Parish Staff.

Glenn Meschko began his role on July 27, working alongside the Rev. Dr. Jordan Hylden, Madison Vanacore and Deja Colburn, and coordinating with Children's Ministry leaders Rozlyn Cline and Ursella Rylander. He was formally welcomed at a Family Movie Night on the Lawn on Saturday, Aug. 29.

In his brief time on Staff, he left a lasting impression through his warmth, spiritual depth and collegiality and he had ambitious plans to build a Student Ministries community that engaged young people, parents and the wider Parish.

Before coming to St. Martin's, Meschko served at the Church of the Good Shepherd in Corpus Christi. He is survived by his wife, Keri, and their children, Eli and Grace.

The Rev. Dane E. Boston shared the news with the Parish, reflecting on words from the Book of Common Prayer's Commendation and affirming the community's hope in the resurrection. Middle and high school students, who had been set to celebrate the first Life Groups gathering of the year with Glenn, instead gathered to mourn him together.

Glenn Meschko is remembered for dreaming big and giving himself fully to deepening young people's faith — a life cut short on the threshold of new beginnings, but one that leaves an enduring mark on the community he had just begun to serve.



On Aug. 29, the Rev. Dane E. Boston welcomed Glenn Meschko as the Director of Student Ministries during the Movie Night on the Lawn.



On Aug. 23, Glenn Meschko — standing next to Madison Vanacore, Student Minister — met with parents and students during the Ministry Fair.



At St. Martin's, we believe that children are not simply the future of the church, but children are the church! We take Jesus' teaching to *"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them."* (Matthew 19:14).

Our Children's Ministry team, led by Rozlyn Cline and Ursella Rylander, partners with dedicated parents and Sunday School teachers to offer age-appropriate Bible curriculum that fosters spiritual growth and nourishment.

Questions about Children's Ministry?
Contact Rozlyn Cline at rmcline@smec.org
or 713-985-3816, or Ursella Rylander at urylander@smec.org.

Volunteers Needed!

Parents! There are many ways you can connect with our children. To volunteer your time and talent to Children's Ministry, visit www.smec.org/children.

Childcare Policy

Childcare is available in the Children's Life Center for change to infants through pre-K children during the morning worship services from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. every Sunday and during certain special events.



GALAXY VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL TAKES OFF on an Unforgettable, Faith-Filled Adventure

The countdown began June 8, and by the time it reached zero, the Parish Life Center, Activity Center and outdoor areas were filled with 268 children ready for liftoff. This year's theme, "Galaxy: Launching Kids on a Mission of God's Love," sent our crew on a four-day cosmic journey — blasting off each morning with worship and a countdown before rotating through "Mission Control" Bible lessons, "zero-gravity" games, space-themed crafts and Outreach projects.

This year also marked the launch of The Fifth Element, a special program for fourth- and fifth-graders. Each day, a different St. Martin's priest taught their Bible lesson, followed by an off-Campus visit to one of our Mission Partner locations.

Thank you to our crew leaders, teachers, snack and decorating teams, greeters, teen mentors and everyone who encouraged each child and helped make this mission a success. And a big thank you to the Rev. Dane Boston, who graciously agreed to get slimed at the conclusion of our VBS mission!



DEWBERRY FARM FALL FAMILY OUTING

Saturday, Oct. 17 • 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
Meet at St. Martin's at 9 a.m. to ride the bus to the farm.

Families, you're invited to join our Children's Ministry for a fun fall outing to Dewberry Farm. We'll enjoy kid-friendly activities, hayrides and plenty of autumn cheer together. This is a great chance for families to connect and create memories. Hope to see you there!

Register at www.smec.org/children

Registration closes: Oct. 11

Cost: \$45 per person; children under 2 are free



ST. MARTIN'S DAY COOKIE CONTEST

Think Your Cookies Have What It Takes?

Sunday, Nov. 8 • 10:15-11:15 a.m. • Bagby Parish Hall

Bring your best batch. Bake for Glory. Claim the bragging rights!

It's time for St. Martin's Annual Family Cookie Contest! Whether your specialty is a tried-and-true family recipe, a picture-perfect creation, or the cookie everyone begs you to make, we want to taste it! Bring four dozen cookies to enter, plus your recipe and full ingredient list. Decorate your display, meet the judges, and be prepared to defend your cookie's honor!

Register at www.smec.org/ministries/childrens-ministry.



COCOA AND STORIES

Sunday, Dec. 13 • 10:15 a.m. • Children's Life Center

Kids, you're invited to join Rozlyn Cline and Ursella Rylander in the large POD after Family Table service for Cocoa and Stories, a cozy time together. We'll sip warm cocoa and listen to the wonders of the season, with stories that spark imagination and joy. Afterward, we'll write letters to U.S. Air Force recruits — sharing warm wishes and encouragement to remind them they're valued and never alone.

We'll decorate and seal each letter with care. Don't miss this chance to learn, create, and care for others.



FAMILY MINISTRY CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Thursday, Dec. 24 • 11 a.m. • The Church

Family Ministry presents The Christmas Story, performed by Children's and Student Ministries during the Christmas Eve service. This special presentation is a beautiful celebration of faith, family, and community, as our children and students share the hope, wonder, and joy of the Christmas season. We invite you to join us as we gather together to welcome the Christ Child and celebrate the greatest gift of all.

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

Give your time, talent, and treasure to people in our community, throughout Texas, the nation, and around the world.

St. Martin's partners with more than 40 agencies locally and abroad.

For more information about volunteer opportunities in our Outreach and Mission work, please contact Tracee Tindol at 713-985-3811 or outreach@smec.org.



MEAL DELIVERY FOR HOUSTON HAVEN

Meal Drop Off · Sign Up Required

Sign up to provide a meal to families staying in Houston while they receive cancer treatment at the Medical Center.

Please email outreach@smec.org to sign up.

KIDS' MEALS – COMMUNITY

Fun for the Whole Family!

Tuesdays, Oct. 6, Nov. 3, and Dec. 1
4 p.m. · Student Life Center

Bring the whole family to prepare sandwiches with us! Kids' Meals provides and distributes nutritious lunches to hungry children throughout Houston.

DESSERT MINISTRY – CHURCH IN THE FIELD

Mondays, Oct. 12, Nov. 9, and Dec. 7

Bake homemade cookies or brownies and drop them off at the Reception desk.

Sign up at www.smec.org/church-in-the-field.

CHURCH IN THE FIELD

Tuesdays, Oct. 13, Nov. 10, and Dec. 8
6:15–9 p.m. · Meet in St. Martin's parking lot
Parishioners and friends carpool downtown to serve a meal and worship with our homeless neighbors — many call it transformative.



CCSC WORK DAY

Saturdays, Oct. 24 and 31
9 a.m.–noon · Come and go as needed
3434 Branard St., Houston, Texas 77027

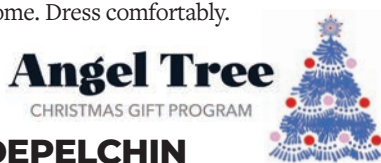
Come sort and distribute food and clothing for families in need at the Christian Community Service Center.



RONALD McDONALD-HOLCOMBE HOUSE

Tuesday, Nov. 3 · 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
1907 Holcombe Blvd., Houston, Texas 77030

Holcombe House JoyFULL Eats Meal Program. The mission of Ronald McDonald House Charities Greater Houston is to provide a supportive home away from home for families of seriously ill children receiving medical care at area hospitals. Help serve a hot meal to a family that is away from home. Dress comfortably.



DEPELCHIN CHILDREN'S CENTER

Angel Tree Christmas Gift Program

Bag Distribution/Sponsorship Sign Up:

Sunday, Nov. 8, 9 a.m.–noon

Gifts due to DePelchin: Wednesday, Dec. 2

Sponsor Christmas gifts for children in foster care, adoption or receiving mental health services through the DePelchin Children's Center. St. Martin's sponsors 250 children every year. Sign-up will be required.

"Our family looks forward to the Angel Tree each holiday season so that we can bring joy to a family. We pick a boy near our sons' ages. As the gifts arrive at our house, they check to make sure the boy we are sponsoring will like them. They help me place the gifts in the child's designated bag and drop it off at the center." — Megan Holstien

AMAZING PLACE FALL FESTIVAL



Tuesday, Nov. 10 · 10 a.m.
3735 Drexel Drive, Houston, Texas 77027

Celebrate fall with our friends at Amazing Place. Amazing Place provides a spiritual and nurturing program for older adults with mild to moderate Alzheimer's or similar dementia, offering respite, education and support to their caregivers and families

GRANT INFORMATION SESSION FOR AGENCIES

Wednesday, Dec. 2 · 10 a.m. · Via Zoom

Learn the grant process and ask questions. St. Martin's gave \$724,000 to nonprofits in 2026. Pre-Applications with sponsor signature are due by Jan. 20, noon, before applying for a grant.

To sign up, email Tracee Tindol at grants@smec.org.



YELLOWSTONE SCHOOLS STAFF/TEACHER GIFT WRAPPING

Tuesday, Dec. 15 · 9:30 a.m.–noon
3000 Trulley St. · Sign-up required at www.smec.org/yellowstone

Come wrap Christmas gifts for Yellowstone Schools teachers and staff. No wrapping skills required, help with delivery on campus. St. Martin's volunteers served over 135 hours at Yellowstone Schools last school year.

"Volunteering at Yellowstone Schools has brought such joy to my life. Through Lunch Buddies, we celebrate students' successes and remind them a community is cheering them on. I love that the ministry continues to grow and now offers opportunities throughout the year to celebrate not only the students, but also the incredible teachers and staff who pour so much time and energy into helping each child thrive." — Marie Lord

OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR WORLD PARTNERS



SHOE CUTTING AT HOME PROJECT OCTOBER 2026

Sign up Required: www.smec.org/sole-hope

Host one at home! Cut from used denim for Sole Hope's Ugandan cobblers to craft shoes for vulnerable kids. Pick up kits on Wednesday at 10 a.m. from the Reception desk; return them by the following Monday at 3 p.m.

For more information, email World Missions at worldmission@smec.org.



CHAT WITH AMISTAD MISSION CHILDREN

Tuesday, Oct. 20 • 6 p.m. • via Zoom

Meet the children of Casa San Martín and their mama at the La Villa orphanage in Cochabamba, Bolivia.

Please email Outreach for the zoom link: outreach@smec.org. For more information about Amistad Mission, visit www.amistadmission.org.



ST. MARTIN'S CELEBRATES WORLD MISSIONS MONTH IN OCTOBER

"Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples!" – Psalm 96:3

WORLD MISSIONS

at St. Martin's Episcopal Church

World Missions at St. Martin's invites you to prayerfully consider how you might join one of our 2026 mission partners in their essential work of building mutually transformative relationships focused on sharing faith, knowledge, experiences, and resources with our global neighbors. So, whether you want to stay close to home, or travel halfway around the world, there is an opportunity through World Missions at St. Martin's ready to aid you in deepening your faith and empowering you to boldly proclaim "by word and example the Good News of God in Christ" to all.

MINISTRY PRAYER POSTCARDS

for our Ministry Partners
across the Globe

Sunday, Oct. 4 • 10:15 a.m.

Activity Center Gym

Join in the fun during the Sunday School hour and decorate Prayer Postcards for Africa New Life, Amistad Mission, Faith in Practice, and Village Schools International.

FAMILY TABLE AND RIVERWAY SERVICES

Present a Special Guest!

Sunday, Oct. 18 • 9:15 and 11:15 a.m.

Hear from Chris King, Executive Director of Amistad Mission at Family Table and Riverway! Come hear about our ministry partner, Amistad Mission, and St. Martin's 2027 trip to visit the kids at Casa San Martín.

For more information, please contact Courtney Kearns at worldmission@smec.org.

AMISTAD BIRTHDAY CARD DECORATING

Sunday, Oct. 18 • 10:15 a.m.

Activity Center Gym

Come decorate Birthday cards with Chris King from Amistad Mission.



AMISTAD MISSION TRIP – SUMMER 2027

June 21-30 • Cochabamba, Bolivia • Deposit \$300 per person • Final Cost TBD
Registration opens Dec. 1 and closes March 23 or until full. • *Minimum age is 14 years old*

Serve, pray and build relationship with the children of Casa San Martín. We'll play games, arts and crafts, outdoor play time, gardening and many other activities. Read more about this mission trip on page 33.

For more information about mission trips, please contact Courtney Kearns at 713-985-3819 or worldmission@smec.org.

SEAFARERS CHRISTMAS GIFT BOX Packing and Wrapping

Sunday, Oct. 25 • 10:15 a.m.

Children's Life Center

Pack shoeboxes and wrap them for crews arriving at the Houston International Seafarers Center.

Details, please contact Courtney Kearns at worldmission@smec.org.



MISSIONARY TEAM

St. Martin's supports a missionary team serving in an area where their identity must stay protected due to threats against Christians.

2026 MISSIONS PARTNERS



AFRICA NEW LIFE

AFRICA NEW LIFE – Education, leadership training and healthcare through church planting and Christian discipleship. Visit www.africanewlife.org.



AMISTAD MISSION – Provides Christian family environments for vulnerable Bolivian children. Visit www.amistadmission.org.



Faith In Practice

FAITH IN PRACTICE – Provides medical care and health education for at-risk Guatemalans. Visit www.faithinpractice.org.



HOUSTON SEAFARERS INTERNATIONAL CENTER –

A “home away from home” for seafarers visiting the Port of Houston. Visit www.houstonseafarers.com.



SOLE HOPE – Treating and preventing jigger infections in Ugandan children. Visit www.solehope.org.



VILLAGE SCHOOLS INTERNATIONAL – Secondary education access across a 70+ school network in Africa. Visit www.villageschools.org.



Amigos and Amistad: Building Family in Bolivia

For more than 30 years, Parishioners from St. Martin's have spent unforgettable weeks building family with the children of Amistad Mission in Cochabamba



BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS ACROSS BORDERS —

Director of Global Outreach Ministries Courtney Kearns and Parishioners Carrie Eickenroht, Samantha Hutchison, Sharyn Short, Joe Short and Shelley Adams share a moment with an Amistad Mission resident and Rosy Romero during the 2025 mission trip to Cochabamba, Bolivia.

Amistad Mission provides family-based homes for children who can no longer live with their biological families, while also working with families and young adults to address circumstances that can lead to child abandonment. For the St. Martin's travelers, the trip offered a glimpse of Christian community expressed through ordinary acts of welcome: sharing meals, playing together, worshipping, praying, and simply being present.

As the Parish prepares to return to Amistad Mission in June 2027, six travelers look back at the trips they took in 2023 and 2025. From July 28 through Aug. 4, 2023, six Parishioners of St. Martin's Episcopal Church traveled to Cochabamba, Bolivia, to visit Amistad Mission. Accompanied by Director of Global Outreach Ministries Courtney Kearns, the group flew to Miami, where they met up with Chris King, U.S. Executive Director of Amistad Mission, before continuing to Cochabamba, Bolivia. What awaited them was a week they would carry home in their hearts: days full of laughter, hugs and holy ground shared with the children and staff of Amistad — a community built on the simple, radical idea that every child deserves a family.

The group doesn't travel light. As Parishioner and volunteer Carrie Eickenroht recalled on the 2023 trip, "Each one of us took a checked suitcase full of arts and crafts for the children, including the roughly 200 teddy bears that Chris carried with him and that the customs officials eyed with suspicion, certain Chris meant to resell them." The story is a lighthearted reminder that even a mission trip involves plenty of logistics.

Once there, the days filled quickly. The group played in parks around town, and climbed San Pedro Hill to see Cristo de la Concordia, the world's second-tallest statue of Jesus. They shared ice cream treats, hosted a hamburger cookout for children across multiple Amistad houses, made bead bracelets, painted fingernails, attended Mass and joined in daily devotionals. One evening, the group enjoyed a pizza dinner with teenagers who aged out of the Villa; another dinner beneath the Jesus statue with Amistad graduates — young adults, Eickenroht noted, who "all seem to be doing great and enjoying successful careers."

Returning in 2025

Eickenroht returned to Amistad from June 25-30, 2025, and found the welcome unchanged. "The kids were all so loving and again, welcoming," she said. "At least they 'seemed' to remember me." She reflected that "the work being done at Amistad sets an example that I wish many other organizations followed."

For fellow traveler Joe Short, the trip was his first. "All the wonderful people who work there and care for the families are so impressive," he said. "The idea of homes with Mamas and Tías (aunts), to raise and guide children who are no longer with their own families is such a special way to turn the children's world around for the better. The Christian love is everywhere, and it was felt the moment we arrived at Amistad. It shows how they are raised to take care of each other," he said, "as we saw in the adults that we were able to have dinner with."

Samantha Hutchison had waited years for the chance to make the trip. "I'm so blessed to have finally made this year's trip with my fellow Parishioners and friends from St. Martin's," she said. "It was truly a life- and heart-changing experience!" We were welcomed as part of the family, making it very difficult to leave on the final day of the trip."

Sharyn Short echoed that sense of instant belonging. "From the minute we arrived, we all received welcoming hugs and smiles and



AMIGOS FROM ST. MARTIN'S — Parishioners from St. Martin's gather with children of Casa San Martín during the 2025 Amistad Mission trip. The week of shared meals, worship, play and fellowship reminded the travelers that Christian mission is about both giving and receiving.

tugging from the little ones asking us to come and play!" she said. "The love and joy that fill Amistad Mission is immense. I felt honored to have the opportunity to enter their community for a short week and I feel blessed by the experience. I think about and pray for these children and their community every day."

Reese, a student and a longtime volunteer with the trip who has known the children of Casa San Martín for years, reflected on the same closeness. "The children and mamá are warm and welcoming; they are prayerful servants of God, and they are confident and close-knit," Reese said. Describing the days spent doing crafts, playing soccer, worshipping and sharing meals, Reese added, "The kids at Amistad seem to have innately grasped the significance of being present and connecting with those around them. The kids anticipate the visit of their 'amigos' from St. Martin's every year."

Ellen Ford was especially moved by the family structure that anchors life when she visited Amistad in 2023. "Mama Isabel and Soñia provide a true family environment for several sibling groups. It was very heartwarming to see the children interact with each other in playful, loving and respectful ways." The group also spent a day with participants in Amistad for Families, a program addressing the root causes of child abandonment — and spent time with young adult graduates learning to live independently through technical school and employment. "Truly an impressive group of young people," Ellen said.

The Team Behind the Trip

Behind the scenes, a dedicated team made the week possible. There are dedicated translators, a group driver and a chef who provides meals throughout the stay at La Morada, the group's accommodations. "Everyone is to be commended for their work and dedication to those children," Eickenroht said, "special gifts from God."

For the St. Martin's travelers, the most meaningful moments were often the simplest: a shared meal, a game, a prayer, a conversation, or a child reaching out a hand to invite them to play. They arrived as visitors, but the experience left them feeling like amigos —

reminding them that Christian mission is as much about receiving as it is about giving.

As Ellen put it, summing up what so many in the group felt: "Amistad Mission is truly serving as the hands and feet of Jesus in Bolivia." Shelley Adams reflected on the trip's impact. "Casa San Martín was so welcoming to all of us without even knowing us. It is so encouraging to see the siblings and the warmth they have as family in the house. They seem to all have a special bond, one that was developed and nurtured at Amistad."

As St. Martin's prepares for its next Amistad Mission trip in June 2027, another group of Parishioners will have the opportunity to cross borders, build relationships and discover where God is already at work.



AMIGOS AT THE FOOT OF CRISTO DE LA CONCORDIA — In 2023, Parishioners and residents of Casa San Martín at Amistad Mission climbed to see the second-tallest statue of Jesus on San Pedro Hill overlooking Cochabamba.

Welcome to the St. Martin's Community

As the fall season begins, the Membership and Ministry teams are delighted to welcome our newest members to the St. Martin's community. Whether you're looking to grow in faith, build friendships or find a way to serve, there are many opportunities to connect — from Sunday School and Episcopal Church Women (ECW) events to the Men of St. Martin's and our local and world outreach programs. There is a place for everyone.

In the coming weeks, watch for a series of emails from Membership introducing you to our ministries and Clergy while highlighting activities and events through the holidays. We also invite you to join us for our "2027 Spring Beyond Hello" session in May. This special gathering will feature presentations from a variety of ministries, provide an opportunity to fellowship with other newer members and highlight exciting programs planned for the summer, including Children's Ministry events.

Our Membership and Ministries teams are happy to visit with you by phone, email or in person to discuss the many ways in which you can connect with others, grow in your faith and share your gifts. Our goal is to help you find the ministry that speaks to you; one where you feel comfortable, enhancing your spiritual life.

Please contact me or stop by the Welcome Center on Sundays or during the week. We look forward to getting to know you and welcoming you more fully into the life of our Parish!



Katharine Perrow
Director of Membership
713-985-3834
kperrow@smec.org



Join us for the festivities
at smec.org/jog

Premier Shopping Party

Tuesday, October 13, 4–8 p.m.

\$20 advance ticket | \$25 at the door

Includes hors d'oeuvres and first access to fabulous items

Wednesday and Thursday

October 14, 10 a.m.–6 p.m.

October 15, 10 a.m.–3 p.m.

Free admission

Contact: Tracee Tindol • joyofgiving@smec.org • 713-830-4128



BIRTHS

FEBRUARY 13

George Driver Kieval
Son of Katy and Joey Kieval

FEBRUARY 23

Walker James Wooten
Son of Clarke and Timm Wooten
Grandson of Ria and Jay Henderson
and Suzanne and Timm Wooten
Great Grandson of Maria Butler

MARCH 19

Eleanor Mae Roozbeh
Daughter of Katherine Mathews
Roozbeh and Babak Roozbeh
Granddaughter of Susan and
Mark Mathews

APRIL 24

Patrick Thompson Roberts
Son of Macy and Andrew Roberts

MAY 18

Ford Javier Hamilton
Son of Catherine and
Matteson Hamilton
Grandson of Kathy and
Tom Hamilton

MAY 28

Annabelle Carolyn Baker
Daughter of Taylor and Walt Baker
Granddaughter of Jeannette
and Drew Baker
Great Granddaughter of
Shirley McAllister

JUNE 25

Rhett Thomas Benoit
Son of Leslie and Corey Benoit



BAPTISMS

MAY 2

Lillian Marie Johnson
Virginia Garrett Willingham

MAY 9

Liles Bonner Baker

MAY 16

Theodore Clewett Butler
Catherine Ann Martin
Mary Grace Summers Pipkin

MAY 24

Peyton Mai Lowe
Luke Talmadge Prath

JUNE 6

Bennett James Chaney
Whit James Petruzzello

JUNE 13

Warren Scott Swanson

JUNE 20

Myers August Cummings
Ivan Stephen Gustin
Sloane Elizabeth Williamson

JUNE 25

Mary Margaret Erhard Doyle

JUNE 27

Henry Michael Cambas
Rose Lucille Powell
Eleanor Mae Roozbeh

JULY 19

Lilly Louisa Rosenberg
George Driver Kieval

JULY 25

Annie Jane Bagchi
Shepard Spence Coy
Carns Erhard Ryan



WEDDINGS

JUNE 6

Kay Lee Jenkins and
Preston Blake Frede

JULY 11

Patricia Mason Galanski
and Blair Joseph Brown

JULY 18

Sarah Case Giammalva
and Kyle James Blair

JULY 25

Kathleen Elizabeth Allen
and Robert Olds Carpenter



SYMPATHY

MAY 2

Charlotte Harman Gran Couch

MAY 3

Bridget Caulley Murchison Burkhart

MAY 16

Ronald Engel Martin

MAY 31

Marilyn Flaitz Andrews

JUNE 6

Thomas Vance McMahan

JUNE 13

John Madison Fryar II

JULY 15

Maria Burke Butler

JULY 22

Betty Lou Crittenden

JULY 24

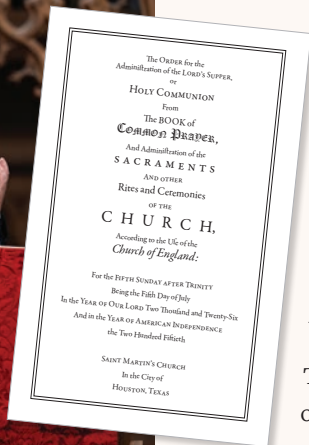
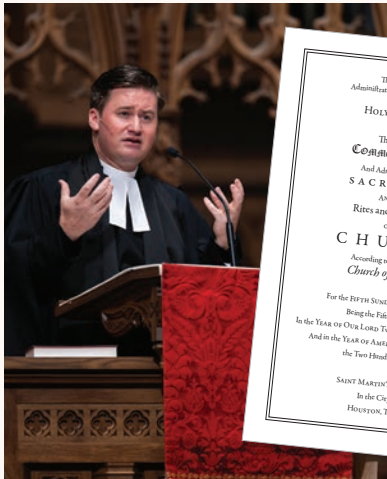
Lynne Tyrrell Campbell

JULY 31

Norman Joseph "Joe" Bailey, Jr.

Parishioners Find Their Space in Ministry

On Aug. 23, Parishioners filled the Activity Center and gym from 10:15 to 11 a.m. for a space-themed Ministry Fair featuring programs, groups and events offered throughout the year. Ministry leaders and volunteers shared information, answered questions and welcomed Parishioners of all ages as they explore opportunities to connect, grow and serve. The Rev. Dane E. Boston opened the event with a prayer and encouraged everyone to find ways to connect with the ministries of St. Martin's in the new program year. Many thanks to all those who helped make the fair a success and to all who serve and put their spiritual gifts to work!



Worshipping Like it's 1776

On July 5, St. Martin's marked the nation's 250th anniversary with a historic observance. For the first time in the Parish's history, the Traditional services used the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, the prayer book in use in the Church of England at the time of the American Revolution. A specially designed worship booklet reflected the typography and style of an 18th-century prayer book and included historic prayers, with the prayers for King George III crossed out to reflect the actions taken by American congregations during the Revolutionary era.

The services offered worshipers an opportunity to experience a portion of the Anglican tradition as it might have been encountered in the years surrounding 1776.

Parish Choir Sings the National Anthem at Daikin Park

On June 30, our Parish Choir sang the National Anthem before the Houston Astros took on the Minnesota Twins at Daikin Park. Parishioners filled Section 105 to cheer on the Astros and support their fellow parishioners as the Parish Choir opened the evening with a memorable musical performance. The Astros went on to beat the Twins 6-4, capping a memorable evening of music, fellowship and baseball.



The Parish Choir rehearses before walking onto the baseball field to sing the National Anthem.

HHCI's vision is a world in which mental health care is easily accessible by all. HHCI was founded in 2011 by members of St. Martin's Episcopal Church committed to being more intentional in their outreach to those encountering grief or loss, battling depression or addiction, or needing mental health resources. An independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, HHCI offers comprehensive mental health resources serving the Greater Houston community and beyond.

For information, visit www.hhci.org or call 713-871-1004.



COFFEE AND CONVERSATION:

Discover an Inside Look at the Hope and Healing Center & Institute

Friday, Oct. 23 · 9-10 a.m. · HHCI Auditorium,
next to the Student Life Center

Coffee and a light breakfast will be served. Free and open to the community.

Join us for coffee, conversation, and a behind-the-scenes look at the Hope and Healing Center & Institute. Learn more about how HHCI provides direct clinical and supportive services while partnering with schools, faith communities, healthcare organizations and other community groups to strengthen mental health awareness and support.

Meet the HHCI team members, tour our therapy and support-group spaces, and see how education, training and community partnerships help us recognize mental health needs and respond with greater understanding and compassion. Come learn how each of us can help build healthier and more supportive communities.

To register, contact Lupita Garza at lgarza@hhci.org.



THE HOUSTON HOPE LINE

832-831-7337: Available 365 days per year!

When someone is struggling, knowing where to turn can make all the difference. HHCI's Hope Line provides early intervention, emotional support, and care navigation for people experiencing emotional distress.

The Hope Line serves as a mental health safety net, helping people connect with appropriate resources and ongoing support before their needs become a crisis. By providing a compassionate first point of contact, Hope Line also helps divert unnecessary 911 calls and connects individuals with longer-term mental health resources.

Visit www.hhci.org for more information.



SAVE THE DATE MAHJONG FOR A MISSION

Friday, Jan. 22, 2027 · 10-11:30 a.m.

Student Life Center · \$50 per person; \$200 per team/table

Bring your friends, gather a team and play for a purpose! HHCI's Mahjong for a Mission tournament will raise funds to help sustain HHCI's free mental health programs and services. Whether you're a seasoned Mahjong player or simply looking for a fun way to support HHCI's mission, mark your calendar and plan to join us.

To learn more, contact Ellen Delery at edelery@hhci.org.



Blessed Creatures Great and Small



From furry to feathered and scaly, and everything in between, each October, St. Martin's opens its doors (and lawn) to creatures great and small for the annual Blessing of the Animals at the Wayside Chapel.

Held in honor of the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, this beloved Parish tradition invites Parishioners and neighbors alike to bring their pets for a moment of blessing, gratitude and celebration.

Parishioner Elionne Walker Belden reflected on the service's meaning to her family: "For 35 years, we've had all our dogs blessed and our daughter's menagerie — Rhode Island Red chickens which she later showed at the Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo; a cat; several hedgehogs; and a goose."



Elionne and Rick Belden with their 2-year-old Havanese, Hastings.

Observed each year on Oct. 4, the Feast of St. Francis honors the 13th-century friar remembered for his deep love of God's creation. For Francis, the natural world was not simply something to be admired, but a reflection of God's goodness made up of fellow creatures worthy of care and thanksgiving. His famous "Canticle of the Creatures" praises God through "Brother Sun," "Sister Moon," and the many elements and creatures of creation.

The Book of Occasional Services includes a Blessing of the Animals, reminding worshipers that God's animals inhabit the skies, the land and the sea, and that human beings share the Earth with them.

Stories about Francis' extraordinary relationship with animals have helped make him especially beloved as the patron saint of animals and the environment. He is famously associated with preaching to birds and gently taming the Wolf of Gubbio. Whether understood as historical events or treasured traditions, these stories capture something essential about the saint: his conviction that all creation belongs within God's loving care.

The Episcopal Church continues this tradition through its liturgical resources for St. Francis Day. The Book of Occasional Services includes a Blessing of the Animals, reminding worshipers that God's animals inhabit the skies, the land and the sea, and that human beings share the Earth with them. The service gives thanks for the animals entrusted to our care and calls us to reflect God's own compassion for all creation.

Parishioners gather each year outdoors not only to celebrate the companionship and joy their animals bring, but to give thanks for the gift of creation and the responsibility that comes with caring for it.

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS SERVICE

Sunday, Oct. 4 • 5 p.m. • Wayside Chapel

Remembering and Honoring Loved Ones and Friends

A gift to Saint Martin's Endowment is a meaningful way to remember a loved one or honor someone special while helping to ensure St. Martin's heritage and ministry endure. Endowment gifts may be designated for special needs within St. Martin's Episcopal Church, or, as appropriate, for needs beyond the Church. Those honored and the families of those remembered will be notified of your gift.

To make a gift by mail: Send your check to St. Martin's Episcopal Church, 717 Sage Road, Houston, Texas 77056. Please include a note with the names of those being honored or remembered, along with your name, address, telephone number and contact information for anyone you would like notified of your gift. **For more information, contact the Finance Office at 713-621-3040.**

These gifts were received April 16 through June 22, 2026.

MEMORIALS

To the Altar Guild Fund in Memory of:

Bridget Caulley Murchison Burkhart
by Betty and Gerald Beathard
Kim and Dean Irwin
Sande and Dwight Lyman
Cynthia and Al Partlow
Susan and Antone Peterson
Susan and Mike Phelps
Cary Cravens Doggett
by Lamar and Warren Hall
Jodie and Jeff Holstien
George Arthur Laigle
by Altar Guild Group VI

To the Building For The Ages Fund in Memory of:

George Arthur Laigle
by Joan and Henry Hill
Sadie Gwin Blackburn
by Linda and Barry Hunsaker

To the Endowment Inreach Fund in Memory of:

Bridget Caulley Murchison Burkhart
by Pam and John Barineau
Minnie and Ed Cappel
Harry Deringer
Janet and Bill Schaumburg
Betty Jane Cox DeVerter
by David DeVerter
Nellwyn Ann Harris
by Altar Guild Group One
John Henry Lawrence Keely
by Nancy and Jay Kelley
George Arthur Laigle
by Jane Osborne
Dr. James Harlie Robinson
by Leah and Greg Eknoyan
Victor Stanek
by Altar Guild Group One

To the Endowment Outreach Fund in Memory of:

Bridget Caulley Murchison Burkhart
by Whitney and Dennis Gormley
Dr. L. Leighton Hill
by George Ferry
Jodie and Jeff Holstien
George Arthur Laigle
by Kathy and Dan Ellwood
Jodie and Jeff Holstien

To the Endowment Unrestricted Fund in Memory of:

Marilyn Flaitz Andrews
by Mike Banks and Lynn Smith Banks
Joan Minor Brollier
by Cynthia and Fisher Trigg
Nellwyn Ann Harris
by Laurie and Scott McDonough
George Arthur Laigle
by Zillah Oden
Margaret L. Smith
Carolyn Wildenthal
Robert Wirt "Bob" Paddock
by Nancy and Harry Burrow

To the General Fund in Memory of:

Joel Bowman Speights
by Savannah Speights
Thomas Gregory Sumner
by Kathy and Dan Ellwood

To the Outreach Ministries Fund in Memory of:

Charles Eugene Baker, M.D.
Sadie Gwin Blackburn
by the Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Russell J. Levenson, Jr.
Bridget Caulley Murchison Burkhart
by Michelle and Lorne Bain
Carol Dehan
Julia and George Hancock
Ginger and Ed Holland

Sandra Jann and Stephen London
Lucinda C. Marinis
Clementine McIver
Martha Ann and Byron Snyder
Linda and Henry Stewart

Stephen A. Caldwell
William Powers "Mack" Denison, Jr.
Betty Jane Cox DeVerter
Cary Cravens Doggett
Patricia Cudd Fox
Dr. L. Leighton Hill
George Arthur Laigle
Gretchen F. McClenny
by the Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Russell J. Levenson, Jr.
Dan Hodges Montgomery
by The Tradition Woodway
Robert Wirt "Bob" Paddock
David Wayne Payne
Dr. James Harlie Robinson
Betty Jean Randal Shindler
Thomas Gregory Sumner
Donna Taylor
Mary J. Naus Watters, Ph.D.
by the Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Russell J. Levenson, Jr.

To the Serenity Garden Fund in Memory of:

Elizabeth Williams Dwyer
Nan Luckett Williams
by Elizabeth D. Williams

HONORARIUMS

To the Building for the Ages Fund in Honor of:

Whit Petruzzello
by Clare and Gage Petruzzello
W.B. "Ber" Pieper
by Jackie Taylor

HONORARIUMS *Cont.*

**To the Endowment Inreach Fund
in Honor of:**

Theodore Clewett Butler
by Holly and Davis Butler
David Henning
Kathy Johnson
by Becky Werlla
Martha Thorsell
by Laura Beavers

**To the Endowment Unrestricted Fund
in Honor of:**

Maggie Row
Catalina Row
by Ellen and Tommy Ford

To the Joy of Giving Fund in Honor of:

Jane Osborne
by Lynn and John Russell

To the Music Ministry Fund in Honor of:

David Henning
by the Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Russell J. Levenson, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Roy N. Martin

To the Outreach Ministry Fund in Honor of:

Cyd Gillette
Kathy Johnson
by the Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Russell J. Levenson, Jr.

ALTAR FLOWERS

Altar Flowers Given to the Glory of God

Beautifying our worship space with flowers is a cherished way to honor a loved one, mark a special occasion, or simply offer a gift to the glory of God. We invite you to dedicate the altar flowers on a Sunday of your choosing. You may also direct floral gifts to the Garden of the Holy Cross flower fund, a meaningful way to remember or honor a loved one.

To make arrangements, please visit www.smec.org/altar-flowers or contact Rebekah Maddux El-Hakam at 713-830-4146 or relhakam@smec.org.

JUNE 7

On the occasion of their marriage
by Kay Lee Jenkins and Preston Blake Frede
In thanksgiving for the baptism
of Bennett James Chaney
by Eleanor and Tyler Chaney
In memory of Ellen Elizabeth Getten
by the Sanders family

JUNE 14

In thanksgiving for Ruth and John Holmes,
celebrating 40 years of marriage today
by their daughter, Isabel, and grandson, Elliott
In memory of Thomas Flory on the anniversary
of his birthday
by his loving family

JUNE 21

In thanksgiving for fathers
In thanksgiving for the baptism
of Myers August Cummings
by Elizabeth and Scott Cummings
In memory of Richard R. Nelson, Jr.
by Marjorie Nelson and family

JUNE 28

In thanksgiving for the baptism
of Henry Michael Cambas
by his parents, Sarah-Hampton and
Brice Cambas
In thanksgiving for the baptism
of Mary Margaret Erhard Doyle
by Gretchen and Douglas Doyle



In thanksgiving for the baptism
of Mary Margaret Erhard Doyle
by her uncle, Bradley Duff
In thanksgiving for the baptism
of Rose Lucille "Rosie" Powell
by her grandparents, Anya and Kevin McInnis;
and her godparents, Jack McInnis and
Kelsey Jones
In thanksgiving for the baptism
of Eleanor Mae Roozbeh
by her parents, Katherine and Babak Roozbeh
In memory of Barbara Allen McMahon
and John T. McMahon on the occasion
of their birthdays
by Shirley and Robert Allen

JULY 5

In thanksgiving for the 250th anniversary
of the founding of our country
In thanksgiving for the baptism
of Emma Aileen Wu
by Ellen and Ted Wu
In memory of Ruth Weathers Giampietro
by Mary and Will Williams

JULY 12

On the occasion of their marriage
by Patricia Mason Galanski and
Blair Joseph Brown
In memory of Earl Lester on the anniversary
of his birthday
by Linda and John Griffin, Laura and Jack
Schuhmacher, and Allison and Philip Lorenzo

JULY 19

On the occasion of their marriage
by Sarah Case Giammalva and Kyle James Blair
In thanksgiving for the baptism
of Lilly Louisa Rosenberg
by Isabel and Jonathan Rosenberg
In memory of Sen. Lindsey Graham
by Prentice and Kenneth Beadell

JULY 26

On the occasion of their marriage
by Kathleen Elizabeth Allen and
Robert Olds Carpenter
In thanksgiving for the baptism
of Shepard Spence Coy
by Regan and Alex Coy

THE STAR

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Membership 707

Discovering Your Membership at St. Martin's

Part I

Monday, Oct. 26 • 6-8:30 p.m.

Bagby Parish Hall

Registration required by 5 p.m. the Sunday
before at www.smec.org/membership

Part II

Sunday, Nov. 8 • 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Hope and Healing Center & Institute
Auditorium/Christ Chapel

Join the Rev. Dane E. Boston as he
guides prospective and current members
through our mission and core values.
Deepen your understanding of St. Martin's
and how to become an active and engaged
member. Reservations are required at
www.smec.org/membership.

For more information, contact Katharine Perrow,
Director of Membership, at 713-985-3834 or
kperrow@smec.org.



ST. MARTIN'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

www.smec.org



Facebook.com/StMartinsEpiscopalHouston



@stmartinsepiscopalchurch



St. Martin's Episcopal Church Houston



*With an emphasis on beautiful liturgy and excellence
in music, worship at St. Martin's provides an opportunity
to give thanks and praise to God. Rite I is the form regularly
used. All Christians baptized in the name of the Trinity are
welcome to receive Holy Eucharist in the Episcopal Church.*

ONLINE WORSHIP SERVICES

SUNDAY

- **TRADITIONAL WORSHIP IN THE CHURCH** Join us for worship at 11:15 a.m. on Sundays
at www.smec.org/watchonline.

WEEKDAYS

- St. Martin's offers Morning Prayer at 8:30 a.m. and Evening Prayer at 4:30 p.m. in Christ
Chapel, Monday through Friday. We also offer an online, recorded Compline Service
available on demand on our website.

IN-PERSON WORSHIP SERVICES

SUNDAY

- **TRADITIONAL WORSHIP** 8 and 11:15 a.m. and 6 p.m. services with Holy Eucharist;
9 a.m. Morning Prayer service — except the first Sunday of the month is Rite I Holy
Eucharist; 11:15 a.m. Children's Chapel; 4 p.m. Choral Evensong
in The Church.
-  **FAMILY TABLE WORSHIP** With Holy Eucharist worship at 9:15 a.m. All families
are welcome in the Parish Life Center.
-  **RIVERWAY WORSHIP** A contemporary Holy Eucharist service, meets at 11:15 a.m.
in the Parish Life Center.
- Healing prayer, or prayer of any need, is offered after each service. Audio and video
links of the Traditional Sunday sermons are available at www.smec.org and on our
YouTube channel.

WEEKDAYS — DAILY OFFICE

- **MORNING PRAYER** at 8:30 a.m. in Christ Chapel.
- **EVENING PRAYER** at 4:30 p.m. in Christ Chapel.

WEDNESDAYS

- **HOLY EUCHARIST** at 7 a.m. and noon in Christ Chapel.
- The Order of St. Luke (OSL) Healing Prayer service meets at 5 p.m. in the Parish Life
Center on the first Wednesday of most months and via Zoom, www.smec.org/osl.