

The Church of
SAINT MARTIN-
IN-THE-FIELDS

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

PARISH PROFILE

CHURCH

ST. MARTIN





TABLE OF CONTENTS

OPENING PRAYER	2
OUR JOURNEY	3
MISSION STATEMENT AND VALUES	7
WHO WE ARE	8
HISTORY AND COMMUNITY	10
LITURGY	13
MINISTRIES	14
FORMATION	17
BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS	18
DIOCESE	21
GOVERNANCE	22
FINANCIAL NOTES	23
CLOSING PRAYER	25
END MATTER	26

OPENING PRAYER

Lord God of hosts, you clothed your servant Martin the soldier with the spirit of sacrifice and set him as a bishop in your Church to be a defender of the catholic faith: Give us grace to follow in his holy steps, that, at the last, we may be found clothed with righteousness in the dwellings of peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.



OUR JOURNEY

Our parish's namesake, St. Martin of Tours, was a Roman soldier in the years of the early church. He is depicted in a stained glass window in the west wall of our church, cutting his cloak in half to give to a cold, desperate stranger he met outside the city gate of Amiens. His act of compassion is a model for us. So too are we called to care for one another.

We at St. Martin-in-the-Fields in Philadelphia are, like our patron saint, on a holy journey following the long and fruitful tenure of our former rector. Such transitions are likely to be challenging, and ours has been no exception. However, as we have mourned our losses, we have also come together with determination, faith, and love to strengthen our church community and our worship. We look forward to welcoming a rector into a community of faith that is vibrant, hopeful, and eager to embrace our future path.

The challenges of this time have been real, and cumulative losses have brought pain and uncertainty. Like most parishes, we experienced dislocation, separation, and sorrow during the pandemic (although we are proud of our successful online worship efforts, which we are continuing and expanding). In the spring of 2022,

WHAT WE SEEK

- **Renew and expand youth and family programming; support families and their growth in the church community.**
- **Collaboratively strengthen community, ministries, and logistical needs with robust lay leadership and staff.**
- **Truly welcome all seekers as a way of embodying Christ's radical love.**
- **Bring us together to become beloved community.**
- **Delight in the ways that music, visual arts, and other experiences deepen our worship.**
- **Communicate clearly, transparently, and with emotional intelligence.**
- **Value the connection fostered by community and communal activities.**



as we were working to reknit the community, both our Rector and Associate Rector accepted calls to other parishes. Their departures meant that for a time our Vocational Deacon was the only continuous clergy person leading worship, though we are thankful for supply priests during that time. Since other staff members moved on, new staff have been handling a great deal. Our children and youth program has languished and is only beginning to rebuild. More recently, we reluctantly parted ways with our Interim Rector. Sadness and anxiety have been a significant part of the last four years in the life of St. Martin's.

Hard as this passage has been, it has led in many ways to a stronger, energized, more adaptable and connected community. Parishioners have assumed responsibility and leadership in ways that have brought us together and developed new skills, new approaches and new programs. New relationships have formed, and older ones have revived. Our staff has done excellent work, holding things together and building towards our future with love and skill. A group of parents has worked hard to build a service and program for our youngest members. Our Vestry and Rector's Warden have provided steady, faith-filled leadership.

Most recently, our worship and ministry have been further strengthened as our formerly part-time Interim Priest Associate Laura Palmer assumed the full-time status of Priest, and Britta Meiers Carlson, a parishioner and ordained pastor with extensive experience in youth ministry, has stepped up to build and lead our children and youth programs through September. Adult formation programs are expanding, ministries are active, music and arts are thriving, and combined attendance (in person and online) is rising from pandemic lows.

The interim period has also given us the opportunity to clarify our hopes for what St. Martin's will be in the future. In preparing to write this profile, the Parish Profile Committee organized a parish-wide series of small "Listening Circles" to discuss our hopes, fears, strengths, challenges, and what we long for as we seek a new rector. Over 150 parishioners participated in sessions that were meaningful and moving opportunities for shared reflection, fellowship, healing and heartfelt reconnection. Below we share the most prevalent themes.



SAINT MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS
PARISH PROFILE



What We Seek

Our Listening Circles lifted up the ardent hope that St. Martin's will cultivate rich ground for families to grow. We know that young people are crucial for the vitality of our future church, but the past few years have seen a diminishment of our once-thriving Ministries for Children and Youth. Parents whose children grew up in the parish fondly recall the role of St. Martin's in their children's upbringing. We want to offer formation, service opportunities, and other resources to support the spiritual development of young people. This longing came not only from parents and caregivers, but from parishioners across many demographics who feel that intergenerational worship, formation, and service nurture the whole parish. **We pray for a rector who will guide St. Martin's in building a program that embraces young families and addresses today's challenges of Christian formation.**

Our conversations highlighted the importance of lay leadership in our parish, and the wealth of talent within the congregation. **We are seeking a new rector who will lead us to harness this energy and collaboratively envision ways to strengthen our church community and ministries through worship.** One point of stress is that many of our ministries are led by the same

core contingent of members. We hope that our new rector will be skilled at identifying the talents and potential of all our parishioners, and will help catalyze the untapped capacity for leadership in more members.

Social action is meaningful to this parish. Many are drawn to St. Martin's because of our service to local and international communities, as well as our advocacy around issues like public school funding and women's reproductive health. However, some members have felt alienated by a sense that church might be becoming "too political." **St. Martin's prays for a rector who will guide us in becoming radically loving in imitation of Christ, and discern with us what it means to truly welcome all seekers.**

Our values state that life in the Holy Spirit is beautiful, and our parish has a deep appreciation for the sublime, evidenced by our excellent music program and beautiful spaces. In addition to our beloved choir, we offer music education for children, and many secular performances for the wider community. We also have a flair for the dramatic. Particularly memorable was the 2021 Easter Sunday service we celebrated at a high school football stadium to observe social distancing during the height of the pandemic. More recently, we marked Jesus'





entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday with the joyful music and dancing of the Positive Movement Drum Line, an anti-gun violence community group. **We hope for a rector who will delight in and support all the ways that music, visual arts, movement, and other sensory experiences deepen our worship and faith.**

While many experience St. Martin's as a place of welcome and belonging, we know we must work toward more deliberate invitation to individuals who show up (and those who don't). This work is central to continuing to reunite after a time of disconnectedness. Happily, the Listening Circles brought together many parishioners from different parts of our community to begin this work, including several who had been on the sidelines. The overwhelmingly positive response to these sessions—and the widespread desire for more of them!—show that providing spaces for honest reflection and showing loving care will be foundational to our church community and to our work toward justice with greater reach. **We hope for a rector who will bring us together and guide us in becoming beloved community, both within the walls of our church and in the wider world.**

We also seek a rector who will work with staff and lay leadership to strengthen the coordination of our many formational programs, ministries, and logistical needs.

The parish has been nimble in its response to staff turnover, rapidly changing public health directives, and urgent social justice needs. The result is a rich but somewhat piecemeal patchwork that requires some work towards coherence. Participants also voiced a desire for clear and transparent communication so that everyone feels informed about critical decisions in the life of our church.

Deep commitment and love for our church have been joyfully evident in our transition. Fellowship opportunities are now abundant. Recent events include a barbecue party organized by the Stewardship Committee, our festive St. Martin's Day celebration, the Intergenerational Advent Dinner, the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, and frequent informal gatherings. These events are bringing large segments of the congregation together and igniting a hunger for more. While some less active members have been watching from the wings during the transition, many have returned for listening circles, worship and events to share and be heard, demonstrating their desire to continue walking in our faith community. **We hope for a rector who values the connection and joy fostered by communal activities.**



MISSION STATEMENT & VALUES

Our Mission

Welcome all seekers;
Worship God in liturgy, music and prayer;
Equip all baptized persons for ministry; and
Engage as agents of Christ's love in the world.

Our Core Values

Learning leads to God;
In giving and receiving care we encounter Christ;
Life in the Holy Spirit is beautiful.

Our Aspirational Values:

Community engagement and social justice;
Unconditional welcome and inclusion;
A community that calls forth the gifts of its entire people;
Becoming a racism-free and diverse community that reflects
the city where we worship.



WHO WE ARE

Substantively

The Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields is a Eucharist-centered Episcopal Christian community that seeks to worship God while serving our wider community in faithful witness to the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Tracing its history back to 1889, our parish was founded to be the vanguard of Episcopal life and worship in the growing Chestnut Hill neighborhood during a wave of development following the Civil War. In the 135 years since, we have become a vibrant faith community, one of the largest in the Diocese of Pennsylvania, that seeks to welcome all people and be an example of Christ's redeeming love.

Parishioners are drawn to St. Martin's by the powerful and relevant preaching from our pulpit, our beautiful liturgies and music programming, and by our strong commitment to social justice, which involves direct and indirect service to communities both locally and internationally, as well as advocacy around issues like public school funding and reproductive health.

Under our last rector, parishioners worked together to discern the areas in which we felt most called to live out the Gospel in the world. We ascertained that climate change, hunger, and education were issues of greatest concern. These priorities are reflected in our ministries, alongside other projects that have arisen with particular urgency in the years since (e.g. refugee resettlement, the fight against white Christian nationalism). Hand in hand with all of these is our commitment to Becoming Beloved Community.

St. Martin's congregation is perhaps more diverse than our history of privilege might suggest. There is variation in socio-economic background and strong representation of the LGBTQIA community. While we are not as racially diverse as we would like, parishioners of color have long been providing strong leadership to the Church. Members come from varied political affiliations, and claim a wide variety of religious backgrounds, including lifelong Episcopalians, converts from Judaism, transfers from other Christian denominations, and those who have joined a church for the first time. Many parishioners are highly educated professionals, and several retired clergy members enrich our parish life. The store of institutional knowledge in our congregation is vast; we are blessed to have many longtime parishioners, some of whom began attending as children.

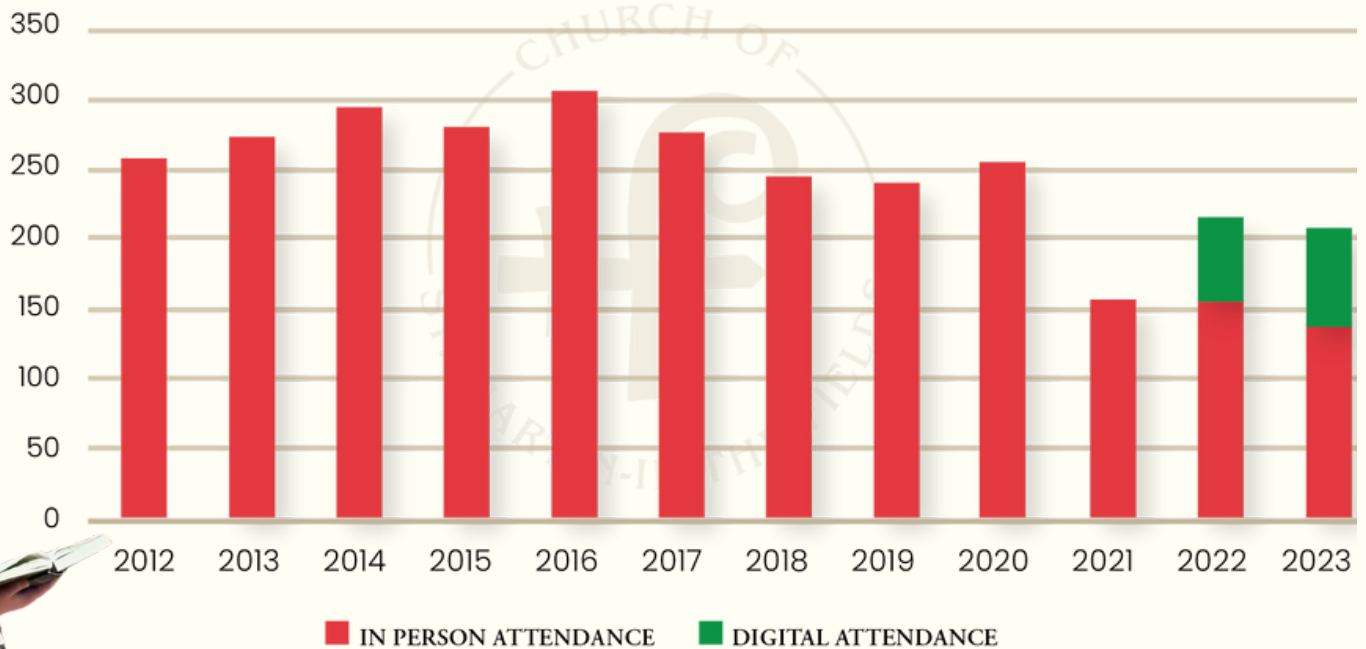
Numerically

St. Martin's had about 900 reported members in 2022, reflecting consistent growth since 2012. Growth has slowed since 2020, as one would expect.

Our average Sunday attendance has shown moderate fluctuation around an average of 250 people per week from 2012-2020, followed by a decrease to

150 at the beginning of COVID, broadly consistent with national trends during the pandemic. St. Martin's started recording digital attendance (live streaming and asynchronous views on our youtube page) in 2022; we average around 60 digital attendees each week.

 AVERAGE SUNDAY ATTENDANCE OVER TIME



A significant effort by the newly formed Member Engagement Committee reached 145 individuals to gauge the level of present engagement and potential future involvement. Half of those available for conversation anticipated staying active in the ministries they're currently active in or engaging in new ministries in the future.

History & Community

The origins of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Philadelphia, are tied closely to the life and work of its founder, Henry Howard Houston (1820-1895), an investor, real estate developer, and officer of the Pennsylvania Railroad.

Houston's vision was for his development in Chestnut Hill to serve as a bedroom community for Philadelphia's upper echelons. His involvement in the railroad industry occasioned the building of the Chestnut Hill West commuter rail line linking Chestnut Hill to Center City (a second line, Chestnut Hill East, was completed by the Reading Railroad in 1854). These lines allowed professionals to work in the city and go home as a reprieve from urban pressures, creating a commuter culture that continues today. Chestnut Hill's socio-economic and racial makeup—largely, though not exclusively, white and upper middle class—still bears out its historic privilege and the structural racism entrenched in Houston's design.

Houston intended St. Martin-in-the-Fields to be a central aspect of a development called "Wissahickon Heights" on the west side of Chestnut Hill. He built the church and rectory in 1888-1889, though formal consecration would not take place until St. Martin's Day (November 11) of 1895.

Designed by brother architects George W. and William D. Hewitt, St. Martin's church building might be described as late Victorian Gothic. Locally quarried gray Wissahickon schist stone defines the exterior walls of the structure, while bright red slate from hundreds of miles away distinguishes its roof.

Houston deeded the property to the Vestry as part of his estate. Gifts of Houston descendants to the original structure include a baptistry (1899), stained glass windows in the north transept (1901), the St. Martin window at the west end of the nave (designed by Tiffany & Co. and installed in 1903), and the Trinity window at the east end of the chancel (1949).

The St. Martin's of the late 19th century would have been regarded as progressive in its approach for the time. The parish did not, for example, charge pew rents the way other late 19th century congregations did. However, worship and housing were segregated. The ripple effects of these divisions are present in our church and neighborhood communities today. Further progressive changes were embraced during the eleven-year rectorship of Rt. Rev. Frank Griswold III, who went on to become Bishop of Chicago and then Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church.



Meet NIKKI WOOD

Nikki and her husband Dan came to St. Martin's 43 years ago with their two boys, Danny and Andrew.

"Both my husband's father and uncle were Episcopal priests in the Diocese. I knew [former rector] Frank [Griswold] from the Diocesan Standing Committee, [of which I was a member]. I liked him; liked his liturgical style. So we started going to St. Martin's. We arrived just before Easter. We saw lots of kids and decided to give it a try, then never left.

I was the only Black member at the time; I might have been the first. But it didn't matter. I was looking for a church home, a place where we could worship as a family. Danny became an acolyte and Andrew joined the choir. We experienced a strong sense of community. It felt just right.

The energy at St. Martin's propelled me into making many contributions to the community. I was on the Vestry twice and chaired the Outreach Committee. The laity played a major role and was so much a part of what was happening. That appealed to me very much. Parishioners made the bread for communion. The Women of St. Martin's raised money for the needs of the church. We were all focused on enhancing parish life.

I remember in particular what it felt like at the time of the Easter Vigil. In Christology, this is a pivotal moment in the life of the church. The parish understood this. It has always felt like the great coming together. We had to put chairs in the aisles. We had to make room for all the people who wanted to come."



“Faith is community centered...My idea of faith is that you do things for and with other people. The relationship is with others and that’s where you find God.”

DICK DUPUIS

Parishoner since 1989



Philadelphia, Center City

Bishop Griswold’s leadership at St. Martin’s and in the surrounding communities was transformational, and reverberates among us to this day.

St. Martin’s congregation is drawn from an area much larger than Chestnut Hill. Roughly one third of the church family is from Chestnut Hill, one third from three Philadelphia zip codes south and east of Chestnut Hill, and one third from suburbs immediately north. There are also some members and attendees widely scattered throughout farther sections of Philadelphia and more distant suburbs.

By widening our lens to include these surrounding areas we can take the full measure of our membership. The majority of our members are from the Chestnut Hill/Mount Airy/Germantown cluster, which together make up the area called Northwest Philadelphia. This cluster is a microcosm of the wider city of Philadelphia, mirroring both its problems and its promise. Its zip codes range from affluent to impoverished. All are interconnected in important ways that the history of Northwest Philadelphia has shown. In the decades of white flight and redlining, which institutionalized residential segregation as financial policy, community organizers worked with faith institutions like Germantown Jewish Center and Summit



Wissahickon Valley, Fairmount Park

Presbyterian Church in Mount Airy to fight block-busting and other racist housing practices. Such models of interfaith alliance and community solidarity continue to show the way of “love implementing the demands of justice,” as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote.

Across the Wissahickon Creek lies Roxborough, the topographical top of Philadelphia, with many working- and middle-class families. A significant number of St. Martin’s members live there in private homes or in Cathedral Village, a retirement and continuing care facility built on land that never got the vast Episcopal cathedral planned and partially built there before the Depression.

Bordering Chestnut Hill on the north are several suburbs that blend into one another. The lush greenness of Northwest Philadelphia continues here. They are connected to Philadelphia by several commuter rail lines, and their schools are a strong attraction for families with children.

Much of our area is abundantly green, bordering the dramatic, wooded gorge of the Wissahickon Valley and Creek, part of Philadelphia's expansive Fairmount Park system. This park, with its hiking and horse trails, is a stunning asset long enjoyed by Philadelphians and outdoors enthusiasts farther afield. There is a vibrant arts scene, reflective of the rich landscape of visual art, dance, theater, and music exhibited in Philadelphia. A stroll down the commercial corridor of Germantown Avenue in Chestnut Hill, Mount Airy, and Germantown offers an eclectic array: from coffee to cider; art galleries and studios that teach sewing and fiber arts; beloved neighborhood restaurants of all kinds; gyms and community acupuncture; plus bookstores and daycares.

The contradictions of urban Philadelphia, including Northwest Philadelphia, are remarkable: historic architecture steps from pockets of poverty; the landmarks of the nation's fight for freedom in one of America's most segregated cities.

With a population of about 1.5 million, Philadelphia boasts of major cultural institutions and universities, a fabulous restaurant scene, and sports fans loyal to a fault. Residents have access to world-class medical care and innovation through the University of Pennsylvania and Jefferson hospital systems. There are many well-regarded public and private elementary and secondary schools nearby, as well as dozens of institutions of higher education, including the University of Pennsylvania, Drexel University, and Temple University.

Philadelphia is also the poorest large city in America. The afflictions borne by some of our most vulnerable residents are sadly commonplace to our country's urban populations: homelessness, addiction, gun violence, lack of access to adequate healthcare, and educational disparity, to name a few. As in other cities, the effects of these injustices fall disproportionately on communities disadvantaged by structural racism. St. Martin's continues to wrestle with its own part in a legacy of division and oppression. We pray for a rector who will walk with us in our anti-racist work, and who will challenge us to bring the work of the church into our neighborhoods, our city, and our world.



Jane and her husband Al Good

Meet
JANE GOOD

Jane and her husband Al have been parishioners for 28 years, arriving after their youngest child, Rosalie, was born.

"I grew up across the river from St. Andrews, Yardley, Frank Griswold's first church. I knew he had instituted the idea at St. Martin's of parishioners celebrating the Eucharist in a circle around the altar, so we went there. After the first time, we didn't want to go anywhere else.

I wanted my spirituality and love of God to grow and I felt like this was the place for that to happen. Here I'm surrounded by people motivated by their love of God. I'm learning how to step into being the person I've wanted to be.

There are parishioners who rally around someone who is sick and needs support at home. Others see themselves as stewards of the earth. There's a group that provides for the needs of a woman who's traveled here to have a safe abortion.

I like being a church lady. I see kneelers needlepointed and flowers donated in honor of someone they love who has died. It's tender and sweet. We put live flowers in the church because God is Beauty. I feel strongly about being good stewards of this beautiful place where we worship.

I want to be someone who shows up – who does what she says she's going to do."



Liturgy

The Liturgy at St. Martin in the Fields tends toward the contemporary Book of Common Prayer order of worship as well as approved supplemental liturgical texts, including *Enriching Our Worship*. St. Martin's is a Eucharist-centered parish, with music very much a part of Sunday worship. There are presently three services on Sunday, all using Rite II; an 8:00 a.m. spoken service, a 9:00 a.m. service (which caters to families with young children), and a 10:30 a.m. service, with music and communion. The church celebrates all the principal feasts of the Christian calendar, as well as our patron saint's feast day. Lent and Advent are fully acknowledged as liturgical seasons and are observed with full parish participation.

Services at St. Martin's continue to be live-streamed for parishioners who are not able to join in person. Besides Sunday services, the parish holds weekday morning prayer on Zoom, followed by Silent Meditation in person in the sanctuary.

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

8 AM Rite II
(Spoken Service)

9 AM Rite II
(Service caters to families with young children)

10:30 AM Rite II
(Service with music and communion)





“As an interior designer, I appreciate this beautiful historic building sitting jauntily on a corner lot. I’ve always liked the challenge of a church’s interim phase and wonder how we can embrace our artistic, bohemian legacy of music and art and also be a hub for spiritual education and awareness for the community.”

DAVID ROTE
parishoner since 2023

TYRONE WHITING
Director of Music and Arts



Ministries

LITURGY AND FELLOWSHIP

Our church has a long history of coming together for the purpose of turning conversation into action, and serving as representatives of Christ to those who need help, connection, and love. Several ministries at St. Martin’s support parish fellowship and peer pastoral care, including hospitality, Stephen Ministry, and affinity groups for men, women, and parents. Wellspring provides ways to nurture spirituality outside church services, through such activities as worship reflections, nature walks, art museum experiences, book and writing groups, and meditation sessions. Liturgical ministries such as the altar guild, lector guild, flower guild, and acolytes support the traditions and order of Episcopal worship.

MUSIC AND ARTS

Our music program, led by a full time Director of Music and Arts, has long been at the center of St. Martin’s life and worship. Our choir, consisting of more than 30 volunteers and supported by four professional section leaders, sings at Sunday services, Choral Evensongs, as well as concerts and recitals. The choir has often sung with other choirs in Chestnut Hill, and has begun a regular collaboration with the choir of Christ Church, Philadelphia in Center City.

Our Chorister Program offers free musical training for children in second grade and up. This program, which does not have parish membership as a prerequisite, has also offered summer choir camp sessions. Regular concerts are given by the Fairmount String Quartet, our ensemble-in-residence, and by other premier groups, drawing music enthusiasts into our sacred space. The bell tower on our campus houses two sets of bells, which ring out welcome every Sunday. In February, our parish celebrated Black History Month in worship, music, and art, a program that continues to expand since its inception three years ago. Other offerings have included a seminar series by local musicians of color describing the growth of their careers, an exhibition of Soul Shots (a Philadelphia group that memorializes victims of gun violence through portraiture and narrative), and the incorporation of artworks depicting the Stations of the Cross (much of which was specially-created by parishioners and local artists) into our Lenten worship and reflection.



PROGRAMMATIC

The Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields strives to be a vibrant, engaging community, whose members are urged to live out their baptismal covenant and serve as the hands and feet of Christ in the world.

Ten percent of our annual operating budget is directed to charitable giving. Financial gifts are directed by the Community Engagement Committee, which provides support, oversight, and funding for St. Martin's programmatic ministries. This committee steers funding, grows relationships with ministry partners, and prayerfully discerns how best to fund work that is most in line with the mission and values of our parish. It is important to note that St. Martin's values and works to help meet the material needs of those who ask for help, and also to advocate and organize, to address the root causes of need, disparity and injustice.

Even in the interim period, the work of St. Martin's programmatic ministries has flourished. The discussion below gives a few examples of these rich and meaningful efforts.



The **Under God ministry** was formed in response to the elimination of the federal constitutional right to an abortion brought about by the Dobbs decision. Under God has raised funds and recruited volunteers to assemble 600 abortion care kits in partnership with the National Council of Jewish Women. The ministry has submitted testimony to City Council, and hosted events on faith and reproductive freedoms, as well as countering white Christian nationalism.



The **Guatemala Companion Parish Committee (GCPC)** has worked since 1996 to develop companion relationships between St. Martin-in-the-Fields and three parishes in the Western Highlands of Guatemala. GCPC supports these parishes to create projects that address their current needs including food insecurity, healthcare, social justice and educational opportunities. St. Martin's parishioner giving has supported two scholarship programs in the Western Highland parishes, affording children the opportunity to go to school and to have a chance of breaking the cycle of poverty. GCPC sponsors regular trips by St. Martin's parishioners to Guatemala to build vibrant, multi-dimensional relationships with our companion parishes through faith, work, and play.





Similarly bringing us into community with our interfaith neighbors is our **Local Organizing Committee (LOC)**. The LOC liaises with POWER, a statewide interfaith organization committed to racial and economic justice, to provide training in relational organizing and invite parishioners into actions around education justice, civic engagement, and other campaigns.



The parish's **Climate Action Team** organizes interactive, often intergenerational, opportunities to act on climate change. Recently the team rebuilt the church's compost bins and held a composting education forum to inaugurate their use. The Climate Action Team also seeks to build momentum by working with organizations with similar missions, such as PA Interfaith Power and Light.

The Refugee Resettlement Committee has supported refugee resettlement through funding, legal support, and job assistance. Most recently, the committee worked with the New Sanctuary Movement of Philadelphia to collect coats and cold weather clothing for Texas asylum seekers arriving here in the winter season.



St. Martin's also collects hygiene items, diapers, and non-perishable foods for various church pantries in the city.



Formation

Historically St. Martin's exceptionally strong formation programs have been a major draw to our congregation. Programs over the years have included services for small children, a robust Sunday School program, and a children's chapel. Teen youth groups culminated in mission trips. For adult parishioners, the parish hosted a regular, highly attended Forum that tackled topics designed to help us incorporate our faith into our daily lives.

Many of these offerings have diminished or disappeared due to dislocations of the pandemic, staff turnover, and the broader challenge of the highly scheduled life many families lead today. However, St. Martin's continues to attract young couples and families with children who enter strongly into the life of the parish.

In 2022 and 2023, a dedicated and highly enthusiastic group of parents at St. Martin's engaged in creating and maintaining Sunday services and other opportunities for youth. A 9:00 service is especially designed for families with young children. We are delighted to have recently hired a part time Children, Youth, and Families Minister, who will be with us until the fall.

She is working with young families to understand their needs and desires for children's services and programs when the permanent position is filled, planning Vacation Bible School for this summer, and engaging children in new ways, including introducing a pancake race to Shrove Tuesday's pancake supper. Some 74 young people were engaged in formation activities in 2023. Many of these young people sing in the highly successful Choristers program.



Adult forums have returned on a regular Sunday schedule, organized by a Vestry member, and attendance is building. We continue to offer Bible study twice a week, and Worship Reflection after the 10:30 service. The parish also provides a robust Education for Ministry (EFM) program that serves several other nearby Episcopal churches.

In addition to these formalized programs, St. Martin's has strongly supported the discernment of several women candidates to the priesthood—including that of our current Priest, Laura Palmer, former Associate Rector Barbara Ballenger, and our former Director of Children and Youth Ministries, Anne Alexis Harra.

There is broad consensus that renewing and expanding formation opportunities, especially children and youth programming, is a top priority for St. Martin's. We recognize that the strength of these programs is vital for attracting and retaining parishioners—particularly families with children—and we are seeking to work in partnership with a rector who can provide guidance and support as we build and strengthen formation at St. Martin's.





BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

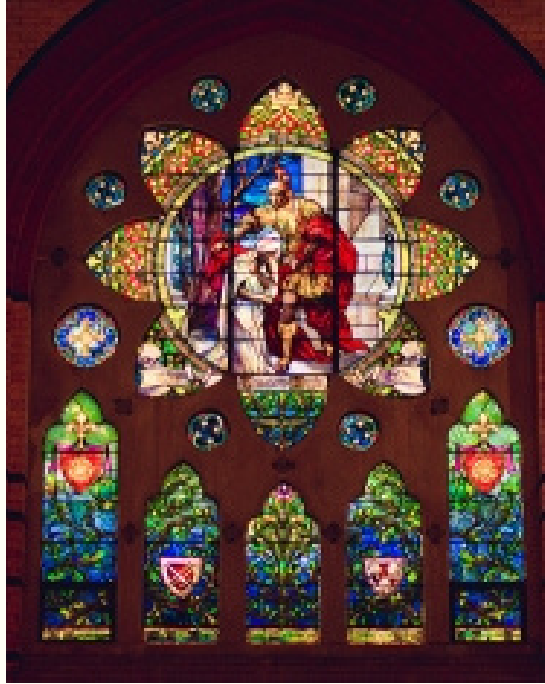
The church centers on a free-standing altar at the crossing, and space for a large choir in the chancel before the high altar. The pews can accommodate 375 people. The bell tower has eight fixed bells and eight change-ringing bells—one of only two peals of bells in the region.

A Parish House containing a single large multi-purpose room was first opened in 1889, just west of the church building. A 1920 addition augmented the original Parish Hall with a foyer, offices, a kitchen, a restroom, and the Houston Room, a large meeting room with a fireplace. On the second floor, four staff offices, a restroom, and a library were provided. The basement of the Parish House offers a choir practice room, storage, and mechanical space. The Parish House is active almost every day of the week, with staff activities, committee meetings, Bible study, hospitality after services, choir practices, receptions and feasts for special occasions, regular Wednesday evening meals, etc. Several neighborhood groups and institutions, as well as recovery groups, meet regularly in the Parish House.

In addition, the St. Martin's campus includes Hilary House, a three-story late-19th century residential structure built that has been remodeled to provide several meeting spaces on the first floor. The two upper floors of Hilary House have served at times to house clergy. There is a parking lot opposite the church at St. Martin's Lane and Willow Grove Avenue.

Parishioners regularly tend the Mary Hare Taylor Knight Columbarium (1967/1988), stewarding a space that is serene, pleasant and contemplative. In 2015, the South Terrace was completed, allowing for a paved gathering space for parishioners, and making the Willow Grove Avenue entrance accessible to the church with a handicapped ramp.





Meet
ROB JENNINGS

Rob moved to Philadelphia with his husband David in the fall of 2014. They settled in Chestnut Hill in 2015. Although the choir was the initial attraction for both of them, Rob realized he was searching for more ...



“There was something about moving to Philly.... I was working at Temple and took the train to work. As we passed through each neighborhood, the income disparities I saw were stunning. When the city erupted in violence after Charlottesville and the murder of George Floyd, I wanted to do something but didn’t know where to begin.

I’d never been an activist. Never marched in a protest. But I suddenly realized this was hugely important to me. St. Martin’s showed me what social justice work looks like. It’s as though someone took my hand and said – ‘I’ll move over; here’s a spot next to me. We can do this together.’

It was that feeling of invitation.”



MAINTAINING ST. MARTIN'S

The Church and the Parish House are for the most part almost 135 years old, and require continuing upkeep. Their exceptional materials require careful, and sometimes expensive, maintenance and repair. Because St. Martin's is listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, and as a "significant structure" in the Chestnut Hill National Historic District, any alteration to the exterior of the church building must be assessed by the Philadelphia Historical Commission.

As part of an exploratory inquiry into the suitability of a Capital Campaign, the Buildings and Grounds Committee of the church considered how to improve the structure in four critical ways: (1) handicapped accessibility for the entire structure (currently only the church and main floor of the Parish House are accessible), (2) air conditioning for year-round use, (3) several new restrooms, and (4) a major upgrade and relocation of the kitchen to allow for immediate food service into the large Parish Hall room, where dining normally takes place. This project is now on hold, but was embraced enthusiastically by the parish community in a series of meetings in the spring of 2022. We hope to resume planning for those needs at an appropriate time.



- 1 Church
- 2 Parish Hall
- 3 Hilary House
- 4 Columbarium
- 5 Playground and shed
- 6 Parking lot



“There were so many things that kept us at St. Martin’s as we grew our family. My husband loved the playground. It was a place where we could connect with other humans after the worship service. We also really appreciated the Wednesday night dinners. It was a place of respite - a place to refuel and connect.”

MONICA FRICHEL
Parishoner since 2008



DIOCESE

The Diocese of Pennsylvania is one of five independent dioceses in the state of Pennsylvania. It was here that the Episcopal Convention met to forge the national church as our nation was also being formed. It has since continued to be a trailblazing diocese in striving for equity and inclusion. The Diocese of Pennsylvania is the home diocese of St. Absalom Jones, who here became the first Black man to be ordained in the Episcopal Church. The first women were ordained as priests in Philadelphia, two years before the affirmation of this right by the Episcopal Convention.

The varied types of worship within the Diocese represent all of the choices within the Episcopal Church. Although ours is generally regarded as an urban diocese, its churches are spread across five counties both urban and suburban.

At present there is one Bishop, but in the past there has been a suffragan and/or an assistant bishop. A Board of Trustees provides governance along with the Bishop, and area churches are divided into deaneries. Deaneries are organized geographically.

Deacons and priests, together with laity, provide a robust community of diocesan leadership. St. Martin’s participates regularly in the activities of the Diocese, supporting its work financially and programmatically.



GOVERNANCE

Governance at St. Martin-in-the-Fields is consistent with the requirements of an Episcopal parish and reflective of our community’s commitment to be Christ’s presence.

The Vestry has 16 members, serving as classes of four members for four-year terms. Our Vestry has shown incredible dedication to the parish of late, each member stepping up to tasks to not only manage the ongoing work of the church in the absence of a rector and associate rector, but also to build momentum for directions in which we hope to grow.

Executive Committee	Officers of the Vestry	Standing Committees
<p>Rector, Rector’s Warden, Accounting Warden, Secretary, Buildings & Grounds Chair</p>	<p>Rector’s Warden, Accounting Warden, Secretary, Buildings & Grounds Chair</p>	<p>Finance (which includes the Investment Subcommittee), Buildings and Grounds, Community Engagement, and Stewardship.</p>

The Vestry meets monthly, preceded by a meeting of the Executive Committee. Decisions of the Vestry are communicated through Vestry meeting minutes, a summary of which is posted in the Parish Hall, and through Field Notes (the parish newsletter) as appropriate.

The parish wishes to strengthen its governance by working with the Rector to define and delineate scope of responsibilities. Areas for this work include:

- Charters for each committee and ministry
- Role descriptions for leaders and members of the Vestry and committees
- Clear delineation of the clerical, Vestry, and parish members’ responsibilities and scope of authority in shared undertakings
- Alignment of ministries and committees, ensuring oversight, coordination and communication

These additions would lend clarity, enhance the efficacy of our ministries, and create repositories of institutional memory to smooth transitions. There is also an opportunity to add committees to the Vestry – Governance, Christian Formation (children and youth, and adult), and Membership/Hospitality.

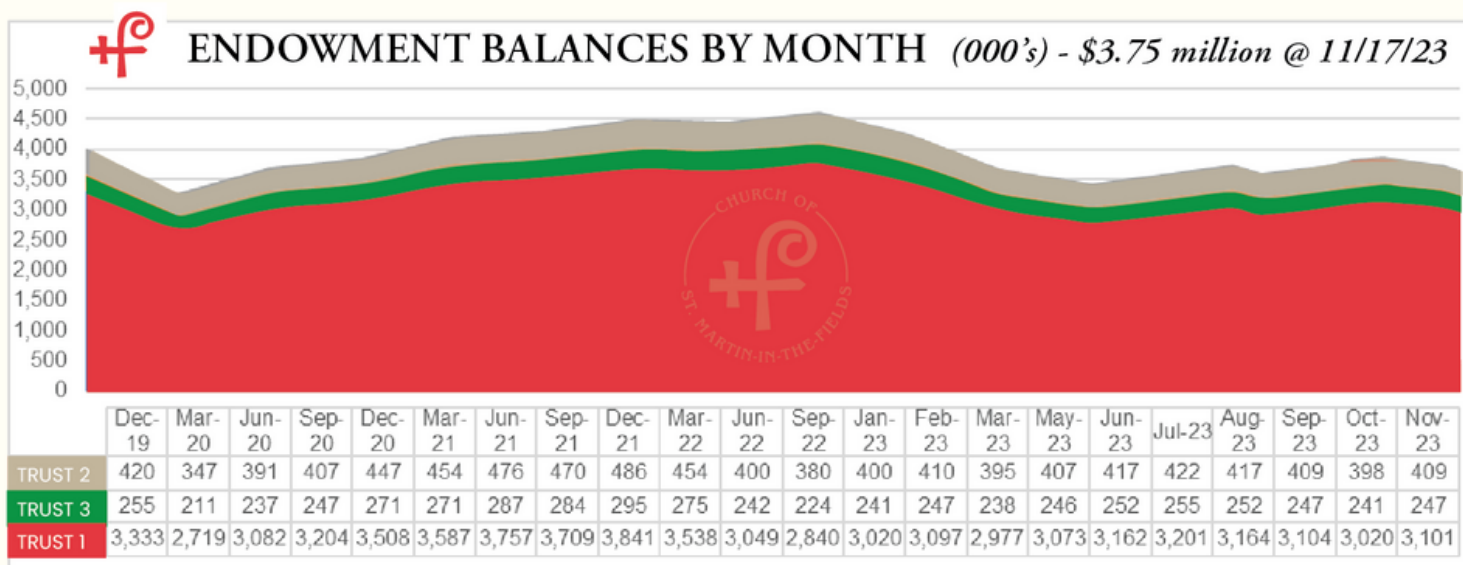
FINANCIAL NOTES

St. Martin’s is fiscally conservative, and we consider ourselves blessed to be debt-free. We strive to maintain a balanced budget each year. Our income statement results for 2017 through 2023 showed either a break-even or surplus balance every year (see table below).

Currently, approximately sixty percent of our operations are supported by pledge income and approximately forty percent of our operations are funded from income from an endowment and a beneficial interest in a large trust.

A dedicated investment committee works with our investment advisor to ensure alignment with our investment policy. The annual draw on the endowment for operational support is 4.25% of the 3-year trailing average balance. The endowment balance was \$3.75 million in November 2023.

We have always paid our full diocesan assessment as well as the suggested mission pledge. In 2022, the 2023 assessment was paid in advance of its due date. In addition, St. Martin’s has contributed between 8 and 10 percent of total revenue to various community partnerships in each of the last seven years.



Our other expenses are relatively stable except for clergy salaries. These have varied during the transition period and reflect periods with and without an interim priest.

We seek to spend wisely in maintaining our physical plant, assuring that our property and systems are serviced appropriately, and replacing them when needed. In 2022 and 2023 we focused on security/safety and efficiency, replacing our aged boiler with a new, highly efficient model.

In addition to our operating funds and our endowment, St. Martin's also has approximately \$250,000 in funds designated for specific purposes such as buildings and grounds, music, community engagement and our Guatemala partnership program.



HISTORICAL INCOME STATEMENTS

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023 Budget	2023 Actual through Nov
Giving	681,185	689,464	689,999	702,314	690,366	601,444	561,000	556,444
Miscellaneous Income	18,429	26,070	20,421	7,991	48,814	15,020	37,000	50,516
Endowment Income	396,041	368,299	381,199	386,175	383,336	415,390	371,333	334,755
Total Revenue	1,095,654	1,083,833	1,091,619	1,096,480	1,122,515	1,031,853	969,333	941,715
Clergy and Program Staff	321,105	317,105	324,330	322,756	242,943	127,689	187,735	171,175
Liturgical Worship and Supplies	2,157	1,160	4,219	12,795	6,164	1,425	1,600	3,528
Children, Youth and Families	22,505	17,152	12,673	8,609	55,979	69,170	69,371	34,952
Music	152,227	164,023	164,276	148,363	168,417	177,692	180,740	156,639
Pastoral Care and Community Building	7,401	8,541	6,815	3,043	3,659	12,453	10,600	7,075
Community Engagement	110,752	110,417	89,096	82,928	106,668	109,386	79,743	70,139
Formation	5,698	3,363	784	401	2,542	3,483	3,700	2,995
Administration	235,403	229,275	251,133	230,842	239,496	260,849	274,995	282,082
DIOPA Assessment and Pledge	45,956	45,071	45,071	51,733	51,733	111,075	*	*
Buildings and Grounds	192,451	187,727	193,185	184,774	179,068	158,494	160,800	138,527
Total Expenses	1,095,654	1,083,833	1,091,581	1,046,245	1,056,669	1,031,717	969,284	867,112
Net Surplus before other discretionary income	0	0	38	50,236	65,846	136	49	74,603
Designations to Restricted funds	-	-	-	(20,000)	(64,333)	-	-	-
Net Surplus	0	0	38	30,236	1,513		49	74,603

*As noted above, our 2023 Assessment and Pledge were pre-paid, and so appear in the 2022 fiscal year.

CLOSING PRAYER

Set us free, heavenly Father, from every bond of prejudice and fear; that, honoring the steadfast courage of your servant Absalom Jones, we may show forth in our lives the reconciling love and true freedom of the children of God, which you have given us in your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

The Rev. Laura Palmer, Priest

The Rev. Carol Duncan, Deacon

Barbara Thomson Previdi,
Rector's Warden

Tyrone Whiting,
Director of Music and Arts

The Rev. Britta Meiers Carlson,
Children, Youth, and Families
Minister

Lorie Hershey,
Parish Administrator

Noor Diskan,
Director of Communications,
Content, and Events

Brooke Witherite,
Children's Choir Chorister
Leader

James Kent,
Sexton

Connie Haggard,
Coordinator of Liturgical
Ministries

Kate Maus,
Director of Member Ministry
and Engagement

The Vestry:

David Collins
David Dieck
James Fairburn
Carolyn Green
Rob Jennings
Emily Law
Michael Martin Mills
Lydia Ogden
Carol Horne Penn
Tom Sibson
Barbara Thomson Previdi
Lorraine Webb
Paula Bononi Wineland

The Parish Profile Committee: Cary Nicholas and Rob Jennings (Co-Chairs), The Rev. Reed Brinkman, Anthony Campisi, Stephanie Hagan, Leslie Newbold, Lorraine Webb, Nikki Wood.

This Profile was written by members of the Parish Profile Committee, with **valuable contributions** by David Contosta, Eugenie Dieck, Michael Martin Mills, Dave Schaaf, and Tom Sibson. Design by Leslie Newbold.

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Thank you for taking the time to learn about us through this Profile. We believe it to be an honest reflection of who we are and of our sincere yearnings for the future. We look forward to the chance to hear from you about your call to serve at St. Martin's.

All photos courtesy of Tyrone Whiting unless noted.

PLEASE SEND YOUR MATERIALS TO

jgober@diopa.org, or

The Rev. Canon Jane Gober, 23 E. Airy Street, Norristown, PA 19401



SAINT MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS
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