

Office of Transition Ministry

Our St Martin Community Profile, 2017

1. Describe a moment in your worshipping community's recent ministry which you recognize as one of success and fulfillment.

Our music ministry plays an important role in our spiritual lives. For example, every December, we offer a Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, which brings together all of our clergy, parishioners, and choirs. Similarly, our Children's Choir director has produced a series of interfaith musical plays with Congregation Bet Haverim, gathering community members from different faiths for shared celebration. In addition, music affords opportunities to engage in fellowship with those of other traditions. In September of 2016, parishioners traveled to the 24th Street Baptist Church in Sacramento for shared worship, developing relationships that remain to this day.

2. How are you preparing yourselves for the Church of the future?

While our Church struggles with change, we have spent significant time in self-evaluation, and have come to the nearly unanimous conclusion that we are seeking to incorporate new people, and in particular families with children, and youth into the life of our Church. We recognize and want new generations to enter into relationship with the Church, and contribute their gifts so that their social justice, outreach and formation goals are realized and strengthened in the body of Christ, even if their contributions are unique, and presented in ways not previously presented in ministry at St. Martin's. To grow into a church of the future, we must focus on spiritual grounding and Evangelism; ministry for children, youth, and young adults; interfaith and intercultural relationships; maintaining adequate resources for church personnel and facilities; keeping our ministry and stewardship relevant in the 21st century; and adapting our forms of outreach to suit contemporary needs and sensibilities. The 2017 Vestry is considering ways to address these challenges.

3. Please provide words describing the gifts and skills essential to the future leaders of your worshipping community

Leaders of St. Martin's have gifts and skills that help us to welcome, heal, nurture, and serve through our ethos of shared ministry. We are a community of leaders, and therefore seek a Rector that can provide guidance and vision, who engages the parish as well as the wider community, and who values flexibility, compassion, intellect, "people skills," and collaboration between clergy and laity. We recognize that Christ's path is not necessarily comfortable or easy, but we are prepared for, and hope to accept, such discomfort as we learn to live out the Jesus Movement both in our personal lives, and collectively as the people of St. Martin's.

4. Describe your liturgical style and practice for all types of worship services provided by your community.

Our regular services use several liturgical styles. Our liturgy is neither Low Church nor High Mass, and would be familiar to any Episcopalian. Incense is generally reserved for Christmas Eve and Easter.

Sunday Services

7:45 am: Rite I without music.

9:00 am: Rite II with a choir and organist who offer music from the Hymnal 1982, LEVAS, Gather, and other sources, often accompanied by piano, guitar, and other instruments.

11:00 am: Rite II with a choir and organist who offer more traditional music from the Hymnal 1982 and other classical sources.

We also offer Healing Service with Holy Eucharist, and Holy Week services that are valued by St. Martins.

5. How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?

We strive to incorporate all who are called into the body of Christ. While we recognize personal invitation into the life of our Church is often the most effective in building relationships and nourishing spiritual growth, we also use our Sunday bulletin, announcements during services, our website, Facebook, weekly email blasts, monthly newsletters, the bulletin board, and Diocesan letter to communicate opportunities for shared ministry.

6. As a worshipping community, how do you care for your spiritual, emotional and physical well-being?

Caring for our community's spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being is not always easy for us, and we are engaged in continual discussion on how to improve efforts in this regard. Corporate worship sustains many of our members. Parish ministry groups such as Stephen Ministry, Healing and Centering Prayer, Eucharistic Visitation, and various small groups provide another source of support. Our Deacon and licensed laity also provide pastoral care in a range of settings both formal and informal. We seek a Rector who will participate actively and guide us in strengthening our pastoral care programs, ensuring that there is care for the care-givers, and encouraging greater participation so that our members do not experience ministry burn-out.

7. How do you engage in pastoral care for those beyond your worshipping community?

Our clergy and laity reach out to those in pastoral need through ecumenical services such as the Mental Health Awareness service, Blue Christmas, and the Prayer Shawl Ministry; we also provide direct services via the weekly collection and distribution of toiletries and food, and

annual drives for Thanksgiving food assistance and warm coats. Support from a network of parish volunteers allows Davis Community Meals and Housing to serve three meals per week in our parish hall. We support campus ministry at UC Davis with meals and fellowship at The Belfry, and we are also part of the Davis Interfaith coalition. We see these programs as a manifestation of the love of God moving through us.

We intentionally designed our church campus to be open to the public for quiet and peaceful reflection. We have seen that members of the wider community use our grounds for these purposes. Specific sacred spaces include our labyrinth, meditation garden, columbarium, and lych gate.

8. Describe your worshipping community's involvement in either the wider Church or geographical region

Social Justice and Outreach is ingrained in St. Martin's DNA. In addition to our SJO ministry, individual parishioners have been instrumental in the creation and ongoing operation of organizations that serve marginalized populations. These include Davis Community Meals and Housing, Yolo Interfaith Immigration Network, Welcoming the Stranger Diocesan Ministries, Short Term Emergency Aid Committee, Cool Davis, and Citizens Climate Lobby.

Our laity and clergy are leaders in an interfaith organization, the Celebration of Abraham, and we have actively supported the local Muslim community in the aftermath of two hate crimes.

Twelve Step groups and the Boy Scouts use St. Martin's for daily or weekly meetings. Other community organizations also use our facilities when needed,

Because of our central location, diocesan groups regularly meet on our campus. Parishioners serve on diocesan committees that include Health Ministries, Disaster Relief, Anti-Racism Training, the College for Congregational Development, Immigration and Refugee Ministries, the Commission on Ministry, and the Standing Committee. Our youth have been involved in diocesan and national youth ministry activities.

9. Tell about a ministry that your worshipping community has initiated in the past five years. Who can be contacted about this?

Many of our programs are long-standing, and as a result we lack a strong example of a recently initiated ministry. In 2016, breaking with our more typical avoidance of gender-specific groups, both a woman's and a men's small group were formed. Both groups meet twice each month to discuss agreed upon books, but many parishioners are still learning of their existence—the Parish administrator can be contacted for more information. We believe as a community we need to consider the development and support of new or modified ministries that are more accessible to families and young adults, and those seeking to find a spiritual home at St. Martin's.

10. What is your practice of stewardship and how does it shape the life of your worshipping community?

Our parishioners are generous with both their time and their gifts. Thus, our Church raises funds, and supports ministries that care for our campus, as well as ministries that care for God's Creation, and for the marginalized in our broader community. We also fund internal efforts that seek to nourish spiritual formation and growth. We believe stewardship requires concern for all these facets of Church life, though there are ongoing discussions about the balance that should be struck relative to the prioritization of these efforts.

11. What is your worshipping community's experience of conflict? And how have you addressed it?

Our community tends to be conflict-averse. While we aspire to face conflict with prayerful discernment, we admit we are seeking a Rector who can help us communicate and constructively resolve issues before they create resentment or anxiety. Although the degree of consensus achieved can vary, we hope our desire to remain in community keeps us working towards reconciliation. We believe it is important for parishioners and clergy to communicate openly and honestly, and to identify potential concerns for the entire congregation. In these ways, we come together as the body of Christ.

12. What is your experience leading/addressing change in the church? When has it gone well? When has it gone poorly? And what did you learn?

Achieving change in a parish with programs of long standing is a challenge at St. Martin's. To support change, it is essential to create a space in which it is welcome. This requires openness to new ideas from the congregation, an organizational structure that facilitates conversation, and transparency.

During our 2010 Capital Campaign, we added a narthex with a full-immersion baptismal pool. Some parishioners objected and felt that full-immersion baptism was un-Episcopalian. After research into the theology of baptism, the building committee created a flyer that set out the Episcopal tradition as stated in the Book of Common Prayer. Clergy and parishioners shared their concerns and thoughts in a forum. Clergy were also receptive to feedback. In the end, we reached consensus and incorporated a baptismal pool in the narthex. The space now provides a warm jewel-like entrance to our sanctuary, and remains an ongoing source of pride.