

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. MARTIN

REFLECTIONS

**Epiphany at St. Martin's: Bringing the
Light of Christ into the World**

January 2026

**An early
welcome
to Lent**

**A blessing
filled
Bishop's
visit**

**Exploring
changes
to the
campus**

**Responding
faithfully to
immigration
enforcement**

**Upcoming events
and parochial news**

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CONTENTS

03

FROM THE RECTOR

04

A BLESSING-FILLED VISIT
FROM BISHOP MEGAN

05

EXPLORING CHANGES TO
THE CAMPUS

06

INDIGENOUS VOICES
HIGHLIGHTED AT LESSONS AND
CAROLS

07

RESPONDING FAITHFULLY TO
IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT

08

A PLACE AT THE INN: CHILDREN
AT THE HEART OF ADVENT



09

AN EARLY WELCOME TO LENT AND
UPCOMING EVENTS

10

FIRELIGHT AND FELLOWSHIP: AN
EPIPHANY GATHERING

WHEN THE SEASON FEELS BLUE

11

VESTRY NEWS AND REVIEW

12

MEETINGS, MEALS, AND MORE

13

EAGLE SCOUT CEREMONY AT
ST. MARTIN'S

14

WHAT IS THE PAROCHIAL REPORT?

15

PHOTOS!



RECTOR'S REFLECTIONS



"You are the light of the world. People do not light a lamp and put it under the bushel basket; rather, they put it on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house." *Matthew 5*

The season of Epiphany is the perfect time to think about what it means to be "the light of the world." As the Magi followed a light in the night sky to find the Christ child, so are we asked to follow the light of Christ wherever it may lead, and to be bearers of that light for a world so often cloaked in darkness.

In this edition of *Reflections*, you will see some shining examples of how St. Martin's is bringing Christ's light into the world. We had a rich and meaningful Advent, with a focus on children and others sometimes left on the margins. Bishop Megan's visit was a definite highlight, and our Christmas services were truly resplendent—check out the pictures on p. 15!

We want our light to be visible to all, and so we are focused on making our campus and our community even more welcoming and vibrant. We also stand firm in our commitment to seek and serve Christ in all persons, including immigrants and refugees. And we share light with one another, whether around a bonfire making s'mores, at Coffee Hour, or even at our Annual Meeting.

I hope you will enjoy this magazine and share it with others. And please let us know if you have ideas for future editions. As Jesus says in the Gospel of Matthew, "Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to God." Let your light shine, indeed!

**BLESSINGS,
PAMELA+**



Did you wonder what was on the cover? It's a photo of the sanctuary window reflected on a mirror. The mirror is under candles our wonderful Altar Guild put out for our Blue Christmas service.

A BLESSING-FILLED VISIT FROM BISHOP MEGAN



On December 7, Bishop Megan Traquair, Bishop of the Diocese of Northern California, visited St. Martin's for an especially joyous Sunday worship. During her visit, she celebrated the Holy Eucharist and blessed our newly restored stained-glass window. The window, visible above the congregation in the sanctuary, underwent extensive restoration work during 2024-2025. We are grateful for the care, expertise, and generosity that made this project possible, and we give thanks that this beautiful window will continue to inspire prayer and reflection for generations to come.

In addition to celebrating the Eucharist and blessing the window, Bishop Megan confirmed, baptized, and/or received thirteen (!) of our parishioners at this service. What a joy to witness so many people affirming their faith and deepening their commitment to the life of the Church. The presence of family, friends, sponsors, and the wider parish made the moment all the more meaningful.

Together, the blessing of our sacred space and the welcoming of new members offered a powerful reminder of what the Church is called to be: a living community, rooted in faith, continually renewed by God's grace, and always open to new life.

Campus Opportunities

St. Martin's explores how the campus can better serve our parish



Over the past several months, St. Martin's has been engaged in a thoughtful process of discerning how our campus can better support our ministries and better serve our community. Reports from committees, a professional building inspection, and discussions with ministry leaders and the Vestry have all pointed to the same conclusion: our campus is strong, but there is real opportunity to make our spaces more welcoming, more functional, and better aligned with our mission today and into the future.

At its November meeting, the Vestry approved funds to take the next step in this exploration: hiring an architect or designer to prepare conceptual options for how our campus might be improved. At its December meeting, the Vestry approved an architect selection process.

This is not a decision to renovate or to begin a capital campaign. Rather, it is an information-gathering stage. The architectural plans will offer several possibilities, ranging from minimal updates to more transformative ideas, each with estimated costs.

These concepts will help us discern how improved spaces could strengthen our ministries, support community life, enhance welcome, and advance our commitments to sustainability and climate resiliency. This is about growth and envisioning what is needed for the future!

Once the architect's work is complete, the Vestry and parish will review the options together, and only then will we discern whether to move forward with any next steps.

We look forward to keeping the parish updated as this process unfolds and invite your prayers for wisdom and creativity in this season of imagining our shared future.

INDIGENOUS VOICES

HIGHLIGHTED AT ADVENT LESSONS AND CAROLS



On Sunday, December 14 St. Martin's held a very special Advent Lessons and Carols. This service usually combines song and scripture to prepare our hearts for Christ's coming. This year's service included a unique element: selected reflections from Native North American poets and philosophers placed alongside the traditional Lessons. These readings were not presented as parallel sacred texts, but as thoughtful illuminations—ways of hearing the Advent story through the wisdom of cultures that have lived on this land far longer than anyone else.

By engaging with voices outside our own tradition, the service invited attendees to listen more deeply to the Scriptures and to all our neighbors.

The music for this service included choral anthems and piano music by Native American composers, including Andrew Balfour's *Wyandot's Realm*, a striking re-imagining of the well-known Jesuit missionary song, *Huron Carol*, which inspired this service. Balfour, an Indigenous Canadian composer, created this work as an act of reclamation, honoring the vanished Wyandot people while addressing the complicated colonial history behind the original carol.

Sung alongside traditional hymns and carols, the beautiful and culturally striking choral anthems offered poignant musical meditations on longing, hope, and renewal.

The Sanctuary Choir meets on Thursdays at 7pm for rehearsal if you are interested in joining. All are welcome!



A New Parish Policy

RESPONDING FAITHFULLY TO IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT

At recent meetings, the Vestry has spent time discussing how St. Martin's should respond if Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or other immigration enforcement were to come onto our campus. After prayerful discernment and consultation with diocesan and legal resources, the Vestry has voted to adopt a clear policy to guide parishioners and staff should such a situation arise.

This policy is rooted in our baptismal promise to respect the dignity of every human being and in our understanding of the church as a place of worship, refuge, and community care. While we do not expect ICE to appear on campus, having a plan in place allows us to respond calmly, lawfully, and consistently, rather than react in confusion or fear.

The policy affirms that St. Martin's campus buildings, nursery play area, columbarium, and parking lot are nonpublic areas. If ICE or other law enforcement were to request access to these spaces, parishioners and staff are instructed to ask for a judicial warrant—that is, a warrant signed by a judge, issued by a court, indicating a specific person's name for which the warrant is for. If such a warrant is not provided, the policy directs us to peaceably state our objection to enforcement activity on our campus. Should enforcement activity occur, the parish may exercise its right to record what happens and seek legal guidance if needed.



IMMIGRANT SUPPORT RESOURCES



<https://stmartinsdavis.tiny.us/ISR>

Just as important, the policy makes clear that all are welcome to worship and participate in the life of the parish. This policy does not change who is welcome at St. Martin's; rather, it reflects our commitment to creating a space where people can gather without fear and where ministry can continue with integrity and compassion.

We share this update so that our community is informed, prepared, and reassured. If you have questions or would like to learn more, Vestry members and clergy are always happy to talk.



A PLACE AT THE INN CHILDREN AT THE HEART OF THE SEASON



Advent is a season centered on a child, the baby Jesus, and this year at St. Martin's, children were at the heart of how we marked the season. Through music, storytelling, creativity, and joyful participation, our youngest parishioners helped shape Advent as a shared experience for the whole community.

Children took part in Las Posadas, joining in song and a procession as the story of the Holy Family's search for lodging unfolded. They also decorated the Christmas tree in the parish hall, making handmade ornaments and transforming the space into a place of celebration and anticipation.

On Christmas Eve, that spirit of welcome came fully to life in our pageant. Any child who wished to participate was invited to do so, serving as narrators, angels, shepherds, members of the holy family, and more.

We are grateful to the many volunteers and musicians who made these events possible, and especially to the children whose presence, voices, and enthusiasm reminded us that there is always room at the inn, and in the life of the Church, for joy and new life.

AN EARLY WELCOME TO LENT

FEB 18

ASH WEDNESDAY

At 7am & 12pm imposition of Ashes. At 7pm in person and online service with imposition of ashes.

FEB 22

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

At 10am, family friendly service with solemn procession and interactive sermon.

MAR 29

PALM SUNDAY

10am service begins with donkey procession to welcome Jesus on his journey to Jerusalem.



APR 1

MUSICAL MEDITATION

At 7pm join us for a musical meditation on the nine Nocturnes by Frédéric Chopin

APR 2

MAUNDY THURSDAY

At 7pm we commemorate Jesus's last supper with Holy Eucharist, stripping of the altar, and optional foot washing.

APR 3

GOOD FRIDAY

Services at noon (Stations of the Cross) and 7pm (liturgy for Good Friday).

APR 4

EASTER VIGIL

At 8pm enjoy the immersive retelling of the story of salvation through dramatic readings, with Holy Eucharist. Reception to follow.

APR 5

EASTER

8am and 10am joyful service with choral music and communion.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Pancake Breakfast: Save the date for a pancake breakfast Feb 15 between the Sunday services.

Scout Sunday: Join us on April 26 for a Creation Care-Themed Scout Sunday! St. Martin's sponsors a Scout troop and we welcome them to our worship service at that Sunday. Read more on page 12.

Vacation Bible Camp: Save the date for Vacation Bible Camp June 15 - June 19

Diocesan-wide youth service project: All high-school students and/or chaperones are invited to join the Sierra Service Project on July 12-18 in Navajoland, Arizona or July 19-25 in Del Norte County, California. Scholarships available. Contact the office for more information.

FIRELIGHT AND FELLOWSHIP AN EPIHPANY GATHERING



On January 11, St. Martin's gathered for an Epiphany bonfire and Evening Prayer, marking the close of the Christmas season with light, warmth, and fellowship. The evening began with Evening Prayer, inviting quiet reflection on the meaning of the Epiphany as a season of revelation and blessing. Following prayer, participants gathered around the fire to share roasted marshmallows and conversation.

The evening also included the tradition of chalking the church building with the inscription 20 + C + M + B + 26. This chaked message represents the names of the Magi, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar, and a prayer that Christ would bless all who enter and dwell within these walls in the coming year. Together, prayer, firelight, and fellowship offered a joyful and grounding way to step into the season after Christmas.

WHEN THE SEASON FEELS BLUE

On December 21, St. Martin's hosted a Blue Christmas service, a contemplative, candlelit gathering created especially for those who find the holiday season difficult. While much of December is filled with celebration and cheer, Blue Christmas offers a different kind of space—one where grief, loneliness, weariness, or quiet reflection are welcome. Through prayer, music, and soft candlelight, the service acknowledged that not everyone arrives at Christmas feeling joyful, and that God meets us tenderly wherever we are. The evening offered comfort, connection, and gentle hope, reminding us that even in the quieter and harder moments of the season, we are not alone.



VESTRY NEWS AND REVIEW

BY TONY MILLER

At the beginning of December's vestry meeting, Rev. Pamela mentioned that it had been a "super busy fall." The same can be said in bold for the month of December. The first Sunday of December set the tone. St. Martin's was honored with a visit from Bishop Megan Traquair (see page 4 for more details).



Our clergy, staff, music ministers, wonderful choir, wardens and leaders, and countless, essential volunteers, worked very hard and did a great job to create a memorable Advent and Christmas for all of us at St. Martin's. Thank you.

The Vestry has also been busy, and there was much important work done, including:

- The Vestry approved the 2026 budget for St. Martin's. Many thanks to our Budget & Finance Committee for all your hard work this year.
- Senior Warden Maria Acuna-Feldman updated us on the Diocese's recently established curacy program and St. Martin's partner in this program, St. Luke's in Galt. She also presented information regarding the estimated cost of enlarging the Columbarium.
- Rev. Pamela shared information about an upcoming calendar planning meeting, a visit from an energy auditor, and staff evaluations.
- The Vestry reviewed the reports of the Social Justice and Outreach Committee and the Building and Grounds Committee. On the theme of "busy," it is worth noting that the latter worked on 16 repair and maintenance projects for our campus.

Good things (and lots of them) are happening at St. Martin's.



MEETINGS, MEALS, AND MORE

DAVIS COMMUNITY MEALS AND HOUSING

Hot meals: Tuesdays and Thursdays 5:45pm, Saturday 11:30am. Parish hall.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

Prayer Shawl Gathering: 1st Wednesday of the month, room 6/7.

Choir practice: Thursdays 7pm, the Sanctuary.

BOY SCOUTS (PARISH HALL)

Troop 466: Monday, 7-9pm;
Troop 139: Tuesday, 7-9pm

MEET WITH LEADERSHIP

Rector's Office Hours: Tuesdays, 4-5:15pm, the office.

Vestry Meetings: 3rd Wednesdays of the month, 7pm, room 6/7.

AA MEETINGS

AA Young People's Group. 7pm, Fridays, Parish Hall

AA Davis Hope Group. Mondays 6:30pm, Tuesdays 6:45pm, Thursdays 6:45pm, Saturdays 12pm, Sundays 7pm, room 6/7

PRAYER AND WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Morning prayer: Short 20 min service, Wednesdays 9am, the Sanctuary

Centering prayer: Contemplative prayer session, Wednesdays 5pm, room 6/7.

Sunday worship: 8am (traditional) and 10am (contemporary), the Sanctuary.



TROOP 466 EAGLE SCOUT COURT OF HONOR CEREMONY AT ST. MARTIN'S

BY TIM WILLIAMS



I had the privilege to attend Troop 466 Eagle Scout Court of Honor Ceremony on Jan. 4, 2026 in our Parish Hall. Three very fine scouts achieved this milestone, John Schall (son of Jim Schaal and Sarah Conning) from St. Martin's, Rohan Chintalapati (I had the honor of helping with his Eagle Scout project at Holmes Jr. HS) and Finn McCaffery.

The ceremony gave me a glimpse into what it took for these three exceptional young men to achieve the Eagle Scout honor. It showed that the parents, scout masters, troop members, family and friends are all very proud of these fine young men. It also made me proud that St. Martin's supports our two

Scout troops, allowing them to use our facilities and serving as the charting organization for Troop 466. The troops in turn give back to St. Martin's, such as working our Building and Grounds Committee work parties to beautify our campus and donating Christmas trees for our Sanctuary and Parish Hall, along with other efforts.

From what I witnessed, scouting certainly supports our mission of being rooted in faith and service to others. I am sure Bruce Carswell, former member of St. Martin's and very active scout member and leader, is looking down from heaven with a big smile.

Our partnership with the Boy Scouts certainly is a mutual benefit.



WHAT IS THE PAROCHIAL REPORT?

Each year, every Episcopal parish completes a Parochial Report, a kind of annual snapshot requested by The Episcopal Church. It gathers information about our worship life, finances, attendance, and the ministries we offer, not to reduce church life to numbers, but to help tell the story of who we are and how we are growing.



While statistics aren't always the most exciting part of church life, they can sometimes reveal meaningful trends. One of the figures the report tracks is Average Sunday Attendance (the average number of people worshipping with us on a typical Sunday). In 2024, that number was 114. In 2025, it rose to 123. At first glance, that may not seem dramatic, but even modest increases like this represent real people: new faces, returning members, and a deepening commitment among those who call St. Martin's home.

Taken together with what we experience week by week—fuller pews, lively ministries, and growing participation—these numbers point to something worth celebrating. The Parochial Report helps us see, in one small way, how God's work among us is bearing fruit.



Did you enjoy the lovely flowers and greenery during Advent and Christmas? Many thanks to our Flower Guild, Buildings and Grounds Committee, and the many volunteers who gave of their time at the Greening of the Church! Thanks also those who donated in memory of or in thanksgiving for loved ones; your generosity made this wonderful arrangement pictured to the left possible.





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A PUBLICATION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. MARTIN

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