



Asanka, Mel (Church Warden) & Noriko put finishing touches on Easter Sunrise Service Breakfast

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Welcome to Friends of St Martin-in-the-Fields for 2023!

Robert Demming, Friends Chair

We'd like to welcome you to Friends 2023 by answering a few questions you might have about us...

Who are the Friends of St Martin's?

70 years ago Friends started as a way to welcome newcomers to St Martin's and keep others no longer able to attend in touch. We carry on that tradition by welcoming and connecting people near and far with St Martin's as we increase our world-wide congregation.

What do Friends do?

- We communicate with Friends, deepening spiritual and emotional connections with St Martin's
- We highlight St Martin's events so Friends can take part
- We contribute to special projects at St Martin's such as the Sunday International Group, South African Youth Pilgrimage, flowers for church festivals & the Children's Ministry

How can you join Friends?

Click this link to join the Friends

<https://www.stmartin-in-the-fields.org/life-st-martins/friends/>

Application form on page 10

Contact us: friends@smitf.org

Any questions & Friends Magazine comments



Elder Harry, Rev'd Richard & Head Brother Augustine at St Martin's 11th March 2023

Head Brother Augustine and Elder Brother Harry of the Melanesian Brothers of the Solomon Islands did a month's pilgrimage to St Martin's, Exeter and Chester.

Melanesian Brothers & Rev'd Richard

Richard served as a priest and member of the Melanesian Brotherhood for 15 years in the Solomon Islands before coming to St Martin's in 2006. In his book, 'In Search of the Lost', Richard portrays the mission of the Melanesian Brothers and Sisters:

proclaiming the gospel and peace in service to local communities and on special missions, and undertaking vows of chastity, poverty and obedience.

Richard's book tells of the brutal murder of seven Brothers by dissidents in a civil war in Guadalcanal 24 April 2003 and the story of the Melanesian Brotherhood facing conflict, tragedy and their attempts to make sense of their faith. It is also a reflection on trying to live the Christian faith when confronted by fear and great loss.

The Melanesian Brothers mission to us refreshes the role of faith and prayer in our daily lives, living simply in service to others. The tragic murder twenty years ago of Seven Melanesian Brothers who were serving the cause of peace reminds us of Jesus sacrifice for us. Our Melanesian Brothers played the roles of disciples in the Passion Play at St Martin's on Palm Sunday, portraying vividly their real life roles of sharing the Gospel and bringing peace in communities in the Solomon Islands and throughout the world.

Melanesian delegation from Coronation at St Martin's 7 May 2023

We feature the Coronation Event at St Martin's in this magazine. The Melanesian delegation for the Coronation graced St Martin's on Sunday 7th May.

The Governor General is Rev David Vunagi, former Archbishop of the Anglican Church of Melanesia, and is to Rev Richard Carter's right, the First Lady to his left.





Revs Sally Hitchiner & Angela Sheard, Choir & Clover the Donkey led the congregation from Admiralty Arch to Trafalgar Square to St M's



Clover the Donkey & Choir going into St M's



The Passion Play with intense emotion as Jesus is carried out



Saturday before Easter: Flower arranging, flowers funded by Friends of St Martin's & led by Anne Langley, Friends Membership Secretary



Brother Augustine & Abbs cleaning the altar silver and brass



The Easter Fire



Renewing our Baptism Vows with a huge sprinkle



Christ is risen & we celebrate His Return



HRH Prince Charles 2008, Patron of St Martin's Renewal at the Topping-out Ceremony

HRH Prince Charles was the Patron for the £36m Renewal project of St Martin's, 2005-2008. Here Prince Charles is topping-out St Martin's to celebrate the completion of the renewal, led by Rev Nicholas Holtam, (Vicar 1995-2011)

(Source: St Martin-in-the-Fields Guidebook)



Vicar Rev Dr Sam Wells welcoming & setting the scene in front of a floral crown made by Anne Langley



St M overflowed with our community, and many of us felt as if we were with the congregation & King at Westminster Abbey taking his vows



Welcome to St Martin-in-the-Fields, the Royal Parish Church

The earliest church on this site was built in the thirteenth century when monks from Westminster Abbey grew food in the Convent Garden. Rather than walk back to pray they built a chapel in the middle of their workplace.

As London grew to include Westminster with the building of Buckingham Palace and Trafalgar Square, St Martin's has become the centre of this bustling city. It gained a name as the society church, Handel regularly played the organ here, and Mozart wrote a motet for the church. King George IV was so fond of this church that he became Church Warden and was regularly in the royal box to the left of the altar. Through the Victorian & Edwardian periods the church remained at the centre of London life until in 1920 the vicar, Dick Sheppard, who had recently returned from being a chaplain in the First World War, saw the many young veterans who were now homeless and struggling with poor mental health. He started the transformation of St Martin's into what it is today, a glorious mixture of the beauty of the arts and solidarity with those who are facing the parts of life that are not beautiful, a place of faith and a place of commerce. A place of full humanity.

We are glad to be here with you.

(Source: St M's Programme for A Live Screening of the Coronation of King Charles III, Saturday 6 May 2023)

St M's History: Churchyard Scandals

Dan Kaszeta continues his history of St M's Burial Grounds



St Martin-in-the-Fields and Charing Cross, circa 1562

Source: Wikipedia, St Martin-in-the-Fields

The parish included a pair of pubs at the bottom of St Martin's Lane: the King's Head and The Checquers, a bit infamous for inspiring Hogarth (late of the Parish himself) for his "Harlot's Progress". The King's Head got us in trouble, although, it is not the only pub in our history- more about that in later issues.

I have heard occasional albeit rare criticism about St Martin's for the sin of owning a business, but our owning commercial enterprise goes back at least 350 years. For reasons lost to me, in the mid-to-late 1600s, St Martin's owned the King's Head ale house. Owning and profiting from the pub was not a problem in itself in those days. The problem, and ensuing scandal, stems from storing barrels of wine for the King's Head in at least one of the burial vaults. In 1672, the Bishop of London was the inestimably named Humphrey Henchman, clearly long-suffering as he had survived both Great Plague and Great Fire. Bishop Humphrey was vexed by the vicar and wardens of St. Martin's, and railed against us for "prophane use" [sic] of consecrated ground and ordered that in the future vaults should be "solely made use of for the burying and interring of dead bodies."

Another great scandal happened in 1817 when London cemeteries were plagued by "resurrection men" – body snatchers. Fresh cadavers were much needed by medical and surgical students, but rarely available by legal means. Of particular demand were unusual bodies. In 1817, our vergers and their boss, the sexton, were really afraid of a grave robbery of a highly unusual interment, a freshly buried Grenadier Guardsman, amazingly tall – 7 feet. Such a body would capture a lot of money on the black market.

The sexton and vergers did what today might be unthinkable. They rigged a cemetery gun, a bundle of muskets booby-trapped with trip wires. The wires were connected to a piece of string tied to a bit of wood buried near the late Guardsman. Any digging would set off at least one of the guns, all pointed to the grave. Never underestimate the creativity of a verger.

At 4:30 am on 30th December 1817, a gunshot awoke the sexton who went to investigate. The cemetery gun had discharged. Picks and shovels were abandoned at the partially disturbed grave with no dead or wounded grave robber, only a hat. The hat had the clear entry hole of a musket ball...but no exit wound. The Times speculated that the robber had been killed and his (or her... some of the resurrectionists were women) body was sold instead. Amazingly, St Martin's did not get in trouble for what would now be, at a minimum, corporate manslaughter or possibly murder. "Cemetery guns" were outlawed 9 years later.

Rev. Angela Sheard, MD

Dr Phyllis SantaMaria explores with Angela her journey from Junior Doctor to St Martin's Curate in five impactful years



Spot Rev Angela with a 'Let Climate Justice' sign at 21st April 'Churches for Climate Justice' demonstration

What attracted you to St M's?

I like the whole organisation of St M'. At Bread For The World I liked that contemplative and informal service during the week, the chance to have small groups, valued the friendships and relationships, focus on prayer and contemplation. Sacramental tradition around BFTW, importance of Eucharist in gathering community.

Really value the Sunday International Group and being with people marginalised in this city, people with no recourse to public funds, being in a place with people to provide the service of hot food, showers, laundry and spending time with people, having conversations, like in BFTW, building friendship and connection, value those aspects of St M's.

What was your journey to becoming a priest?

My journey started six years ago at Pride July 2017. I used to be Roman Catholic, and I went to the stall of one of the LGBTQI Catholic groups at Pride, got a flyer for an ecumenical service at St James Piccadilly. At the Eucharist, the priest, Lucy Winkett, was holding up the host, and all of a sudden, I thought, that's what I want to do.

What were you doing at that time?

Working as a Junior Doctor, had just turned 25, coming to the end of my first year of working. That moment really changed my whole life, I started going to St James's, two weeks later met with Lucy, the Rector, told of my experience, and she encouraged me to keep turning up at church. Quite a big shift really, a movement into a new denomination, as I used to be a RC, I spent two years' exploring at St James, while working full time as a Junior Doctor in Oxford, commuting to London on the weekends. Doing long hours as a Junior Doctor, fitting my church life in around it.

A big shift for you?

Yes, six years of medical school at Oxford, then two years' working. In my second year I became a locum doctor in London, had flexibility to explore properly the discernment process. In Autumn 2019 I went off to study theology.

I grew up in Tooting in London, local schools, my local church, when I left school I went to Oxford University, quite a big change, for six years.

What was it like for your family when you wanted to become a priest in the Anglican church?

Two big changes really, moving from being a Catholic and from being a Junior Doctor to becoming a priest. Both were really difficult for my Mum especially; over the years we had a lot of difficult conversations. Over the years we have emerged stronger, our relationship became an adult to adult one, a really positive experience, a huge move to make, five years ago. I don't think I could have done it earlier, I needed to live life long enough to be confident about what God is calling me to do.



Rev Angela at Easter Sunrise Service

How has your time studying medicine and as a Junior Doctor helped you in becoming a priest?

Definitely, one thing emphasised in medical school is it trains people how to be attentive in a particular way. I describe it as being like Sherlock Holmes, have you seen the BBC TV series, when Sherlock's in a room or walking down the street, he notices all these things around him, he gets these thought bubbles, things he notices, and medical school is training you to notice things about people, clues about health. That process is being a diagnostician, learning how to observe in different ways, that lead to formulating about what's going on. That attentiveness has really helped with ministry, for sure. It's a slightly different kind of attentiveness I'm cultivating as I train to become a priest. That attentiveness process is helpful in this new chapter.

I've noticed you're gifted with music, piano and flute, singing

Really important to me and helpful in ministry, also a passion of mine, started learning at 11, big part of my life from then onwards. I went to a state school and started learning guitar at age 8 from a teach yourself book and a little guitar my Mum bought me. Used to write my own songs as well.

Your theological training?

Queens Foundation, Birmingham. Wanted to have experience in a different city, a residential college to stand me in good stead for parish work. It's also ecumenical, emphasis on theology from the global south, feminist, ways of looking at theology and our relationship with God from different contexts and perspectives.

That brought you full circle from your experience at Pride, walking into St James's and saying, 'I want to do that'

Yes, huge resonances there. I was ordained on Pride Saturday five years later, 2022.

Also at college you met your fiancé

Yes, James, a Methodist Minister, also in his probationary year in Amersham

Other areas in your deacon's role in addition to BFTW and Sunday International Group?

Role of deacon is to be attentive to the needs of the community, in worship and other activities, trying to give, to be attentive to what is needed.

Your medical training's a good background; anything you miss about being a doctor?

I miss that problem-solving world. I talked about attentiveness earlier, the problems you solve in medicine are different to the challenges in parish ministry. I miss grappling with information, coming up with solutions, and the relationships with patients in hospital. I love the relationship building here at St M's, and it's a real honour for me to cultivate relationships with the congregation and local community. But again those relationships are different to the ones in health care, especially when you can make a significant difference to someone's life in hospital, and there's an intensity with that brief encounter you have with that person. That's a different quality of relationship.

But I feel I'm in the right place at the moment, where God's called me to be. And I feel I'm part of the network of relationships God has called me to be among and to serve. Even though there are things I miss, I feel like I'm in the right place now.

Thank you so much. I feel you are doing in a social way what you have done in a medical way, see similarities. It was that moment when you saw the priest holding up the host, and you said, 'that's what I want to do'. I'm getting goosebumps, it's that social healing rather than medical healing.

Yes, definitely. Thank you, Phyllis, I hope that's good material.

Our first 'Getting to Know St Martin's webinar kicked off with cymbals and song: Andrew Earis with good news about the impact of St M's music world-wide during the pandemic!

Summer 2020:
BBC Radio 3
Choral Evensong



[Home](#) > [News](#) > [BBC Radio 3 announces the return of live Choral Evensong broadcasts](#)

BBC Radio 3 announces the return of live Choral Evensong broadcasts

Radio 3's Choral Evensong returns with a month-long residency at London's St Martin-in-the-Fields



By Emma Platt Published: July 29, 2020 at 10:46 am

The impact of St Martin's Music

During the pandemic St Martin's

- Provided work for musicians
- Established with the Church of England the 'A Church near you' programme
- Produced music for online services used by 25% of all C of E churches, resulting in over
 - 500 pieces of music used by over 4000 churches.
 - 5 million downloads.
- Developed a Daily Prayer app with the Church of England, resulting in over
 - 20 hours of music.
 - 1 million listeners
 - 6 million downloads.

Webinar comments

21 attended the first webinar from the UK, US & Germany with these comments:

- Webinar – very interesting
- A lifeline during the Pandemic,
- Its work 'Should be on the front of the Times not the Church Times'
- Rebirth of going to church
- St Martin's is a story worth sharing
- Saturday morning walks by Father Richard – a comfort
- I go to several churches - St Martin's is my favourite church

July Webinar Rev Richard Carter about his life as a priest, his amazing family and his many projects

- Nazareth Community & Companions
- Sunday International Group
- Saturday Prayer Walks
- Links with Melanesia
- Drama productions
- Autumn Lecture series and Lent courses
- Retreats
- Books:
 - 'In Search of the Lost' (2006)
 - 'The City is my Monastery: A contemporary rule of life' (2019)
 - 'Letters from Nazareth' (Sept 2023)

Webinar July date & link to be in Parish Pipeline & online services

How St Martin's Ltd makes an economic & social impact

CEO Chris Denton of SMITFL spoke at St M's AGM 21 May 2023

What does St Martin's Ltd do?

The business exists to generate income to help support the church and its wider work, to ensure that the site is maintained and our assets are effectively managed.

What bigger role does the business play in reflecting the values of St M?

We choose to demonstrate how culture, commerce, compassion and congregation can all be positively reflected in what our business does and the way we do it. The last 2 years challenges have included Covid's financial legacy, inflation, staff shortages and energy costs, yet we work to reflect the values of St Martin's in everything we do. Some ways are:

- Training and promoting cafe staff into more senior roles
- Paying above the London Living Wage to invest in our staff and build a team who want to stay for the longer term
- Job opportunities to those experiencing challenges, such as helping a homeless man with clothes, sanitation and a positive pathway back into work
- Choosing suppliers who share our beliefs: our coffee and tea suppliers devote their profits to support homeless and people displaced by war or violence
- Work experience for people with Special Education Needs
- Free rehearsal spaces for Sing for Freedom Choir, made of refugees
- Supporting the first performance of Chineke! Voices – the UK's first professional choir made up of black and minority ethnic singers
- Paid performance opportunities via our Summer Stage and lunchtime series for young and early career artists who have struggled throughout the pandemic to earn a living and develop their skills.
- Delivering an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy to ensure we nurture a team who are reflective of our society
- Investing in Mental Health training, support and guidance for any staff who need help
- Hot meals at cost price for staff to help them through the cost of living crisis
- Despite sky high food costs, we maintain a hot meal option at under £5 for the public

What challenges does SMITFL face today?

Our central purpose is to generate profits to help support the church, a vital source of income for the Parochial Church Council (PCC). Chief sources are café, shop and church rental to concert promoters.

The pandemic stopped business, so we are rebuilding whilst dealing with losing all our reserves and debts through Government Covid loans. Plus we are facing soaring energy costs, pay inflation and food costs.

Trade's not at pre-covid levels, so we are not at our former financial support to PCC and church. Our new ideas for using our spaces and broader range of events will attract new visitors. We will have new revenue streams and diversify our income, enabling new people to discover St Martin's, making us less reliant on a daytime café audience or a transient tourist market.

How are you generating new income?

We are trying anything and everything to maximise the revenue and get back to financial stability. The journey is a long one and here are some examples:

- January's amazing son-et-lumiere projection and sound show attracted 10,000 people and £80,000 in gross revenue.
- Our popular cabaret West End evenings most Saturdays and Crypt Wednesday lates sell out
- Programming simultaneous events in the church and the Crypt to increase revenue
- Silent discos for up to 500 young people at a time in the Crypt, looking at all at the space, and saying 'I never thought a church would do this, but it's great they are'.
- Winter Courtyard Bar last year and this year an enchanting family experience in our Gallery space.
- Partnerships with new musical ensembles to attract a more diverse audience and raise our artistic reputation.

And, it's not ALWAYS about the money...

We are not yet making the financial difference we need to help the church, and we are still making a difference in other ways, equally valuable and important.

We are on the road to recovery and as we make that journey, I hope you can be proud of your business and see in it the values of St Martin's which we all hold so dear.

Who we are...

The Friends have been a 'BRIDGE TO BELONGING' to St Martin-in-the-Fields locally and globally for over 70 years.

We aim to bring together those wishing to share in St M's mission and ministry through our

- Regular magazines featuring people, experiences & everyday St M life
- Homecoming events twice a year
- Access to St Martin's online resources

All are welcome...

Whether you are visiting St Martin's for the first time or as a frequent visitor or from overseas, all are welcome to join our inclusive community.

You may have heard a radio broadcast or online service, or perhaps you're here to attend a concert. Whatever your reason, we hope that something of the holiness, atmosphere, history as well as our work with the homeless will inspire and remain with you when you leave.

Your subscription supports...

- Sunday International Group for those seeking asylum
- Relief in Need assisting travel costs for church attendees
- Church flowers
- Outreach work with St Mary's Cathedral, Johannesburg, South Africa
- Children's Ministry

Join us...

For a donation of your choice you will be contributing to the life and work of this inspiring church community.

Belonging remains a special part of human relationships. The Friends is a tangible way we at St Martin's embody our belonging to one another and to God.

It doesn't get better than that.

Rev Dr Sam Wells, Vicar of St Martin's

Membership Application

Title _____

Forenames _____

Surname _____

Address _____

Post Code _____ Country _____

Email _____

Gift Aid Declaration for UK taxpayers

Tick the box below to Gift Aid your donation

☐

I want to Gift Aid my donation of £ _____ to St Martin-in-the-Fields Friends

I am a UK Taxpayer and understand that if I pay less income tax in the current year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations, it is my responsibility to pay the difference.

Please notify the Charity if you want to cancel this declaration, change your name or home address or no longer pay sufficient tax on your income.

How to pay donation of your choice

Cheque payable to The Friends of St Martin-in-the-Fields
Membership Secretary
The Friends of St Martin-in-the-Fields
5 St Martin Place, London WC2N 4JH, U.K.

Bank Details:

Friends of St Martin-in-the-Fields
Sort Code 30-00-08
Acct No. 03024670
Ref: your name

Application form on-line: <https://www.stmartin-in-the-fields.org/life-st-martins/friends/membership-application/>



**Scan this for Friends
Application form online**

Queries: friends@smitf.org

Click the link to join The Friends, the **BRIDGE TO BELONGING** to St Martin's

<https://www.stmartin-in-the-fields.org/life-st-martins/friends/membership-application/>

Queries: friends@smitf.org