

LEOH Trip

St. Martin's Episcopal Church

November 12, 2025





As we entered the narthex of the church,
we noted the inscription above the doors,
**“Come unto me, all ye that travail and are
heavy laden and I will refresh you”**
Matthew 11:28

Original structural pieces
of three historic churches
are displayed on the front
of the building.

St. Martin’s gothic
architecture was patterned
after that of the 1235 A.D.
Marburg, Germany church.



Once inside the
church, we were
greeted by very
knowledgeable
docents!



Catherine Cobb
Docent



Susie McCulloch
Docent

St. Martin's was named for a Christian saint who was born in 316 in what is now Hungary, and who grew up in Italy.

As a Christian, he was compelled to become a monk and founded the first monastery in what is now France.

He was appointed Bishop of Tours in 371 and considered one of the Church's greatest evangelists.

He died in November 397 and was thought to have been buried on the 11th of that month.

Since that time, St. Martin's Day on November 11th has been celebrated for more than 1,600 years.



The tapestry on display in the church narthex illustrates St. Martin cutting off a piece of his cloak to give to a beggar.



The painting above, also displayed in the narthex, entitled **The Fifth Day of Creation**, was painted in the Flemish School, ca. 1600.



St. Martin's Episcopal Church was founded in 1952 by Reverend J. Thomas Bagby DD. The first sermon, attended by 125 people, was in a family's home on Post Oak Road.

Two years later, the church bought 4 acres at its current location, 717 Sage Road, in the Tanglewood neighborhood. The initial church building became known as Founders Hall. Over the years, the church continued to expand, both in size and membership. The present-day church opened in 2004, and is the largest Episcopal church in North America, with over 10,000 members.

The entire church campus encompasses 15 acres.

- The church spires are 188 feet above the street. The four bells in the Bell Tower ring the notes F, A-flat, C, and E-flat. The bells were cast by the Whitechapel Bell Foundry in the UK, the same foundry that cast *Big Ben* in London and the *Liberty Bell* in Philadelphia.

The church Mission is “to bring by the power of the Holy Spirit as many people as possible to know, love, and serve God as revealed through Jesus Christ; and to be transformed into spiritually renewed disciples of Jesus who know, love and serve one another and the world”.

The church affirms and values the Christian faith, worship, discipleship, ministry, stewardship, and fellowship.

The church is currently led by Reverend Dane E. Boston.



Entering the narthex from the nave, you will likely step on the inlaid artwork depicting the Lamb of God. The **Compass Rose**, representing communion, is made of Italian marble in two shades: *Empress Jade Green* and *Rosso Lavanta*.

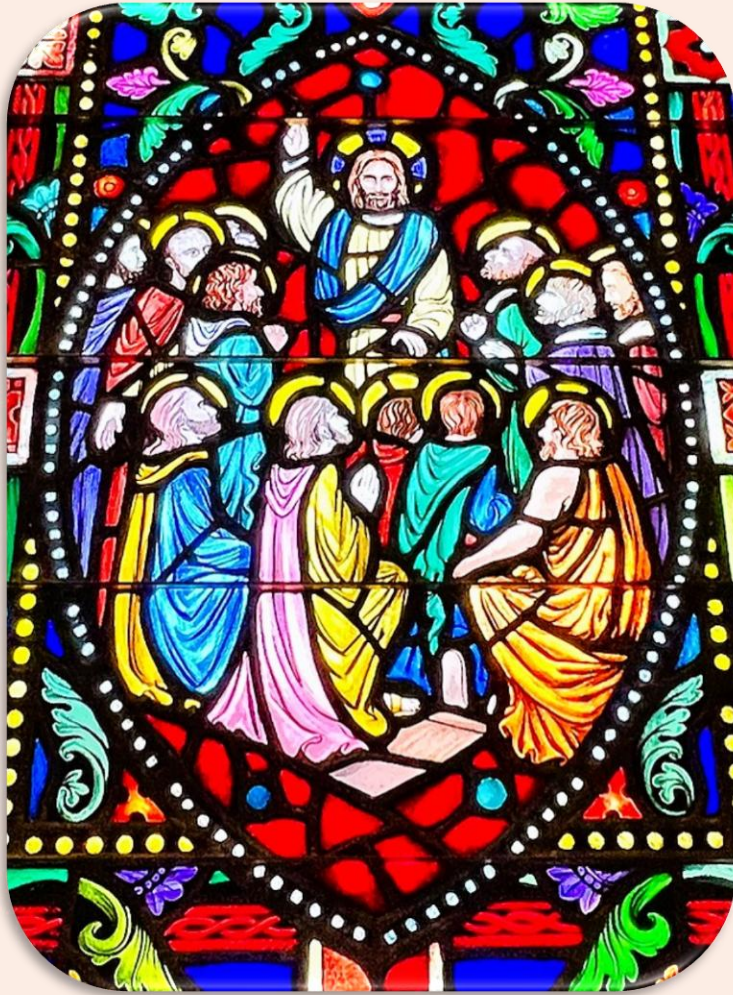
As we made our way down the aisle, we were awed by the wonderful stained glass.

Once we were seated, a docent pointed out the kneeler pads along the pews.

A group of church members skilled in needlepoint stitched a different verse on each pad.



Many tax collectors and sinners sat down with Him. The Pharisees asked, "Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"



Willett Stained Glass Studios
designed and created St. Martin's
stained glass windows.

These are two of the windows
in the church.

The church windows were made
with a total of 133,000 pieces of glass.

*(These photos via iPhone do not
adequately capture their beauty
and artistry)*



When looking at the sanctuary, the eye is drawn to the magnificent **Gloria Dei** organ pipes.

It was custom-made by Schoenstein & Co. in San Francisco. The pipes, 4,649 in all, were shipped in for assembly at the church.

For the initial Easter Sunday services at the new church in 2004, it was imperative that the new organ be in place.

To celebrate, as well as signify its importance, church members enjoyed a “Parade of Pipes”.

A bagpiper led or “piped” members in, each carrying a pipe; more than one person was needed to carry the larger, heavier pipes.

(And it was ready by Easter)



A pipe organ makes sound by forcing air through pipes. The Gloria Dei does this via electro-magnetic action.

The organ console has four 61-note keyboards, a 32-note pedalboard, and dozens of controls to adjust loudness and tone.

The pipes are grouped into 80 ranks, with specific tone qualities. Four keyboards each control a different division – Choir, Great, Swell, and Solo.

For church services, the organ console is positioned behind the choir screen.

For concerts, it can be wheeled out to the front of the sanctuary.



The altar is made of hand-carved Italian marble.

A frontal covers the altar; the color of the frontal changes with the liturgical season.

The choir screen, separating the choir from the sanctuary, is hand-carved from Appalachian white oak, as is the pulpit.

Ten altar rail cushions (photo unavailable), each with a cross of Latin or Greek design, line the altar rail.

All were designed and hand-stitched by *St. Martin's Sainly Stitchers*.

George and Barbara Bush were prominent church members, as well as donors.

We learned that when they arrived for a church service, to avoid distracting from the service, they entered through a side door at the front of the church and quietly took their seats in the third row.



Kay Handly
Docent



Our docent discussed this interesting tri-fold of wood carvings depicting various scenes and characters in the life of St. Martin, including the cutting of his cloak to give a beggar, and Martin's death. Below it is a carved worship rail with kneeler pads.



The other docents tilted the rail piece on exhibit below the tri-fold, to show us the special kneeler pads.



Elionne Belden
Docent



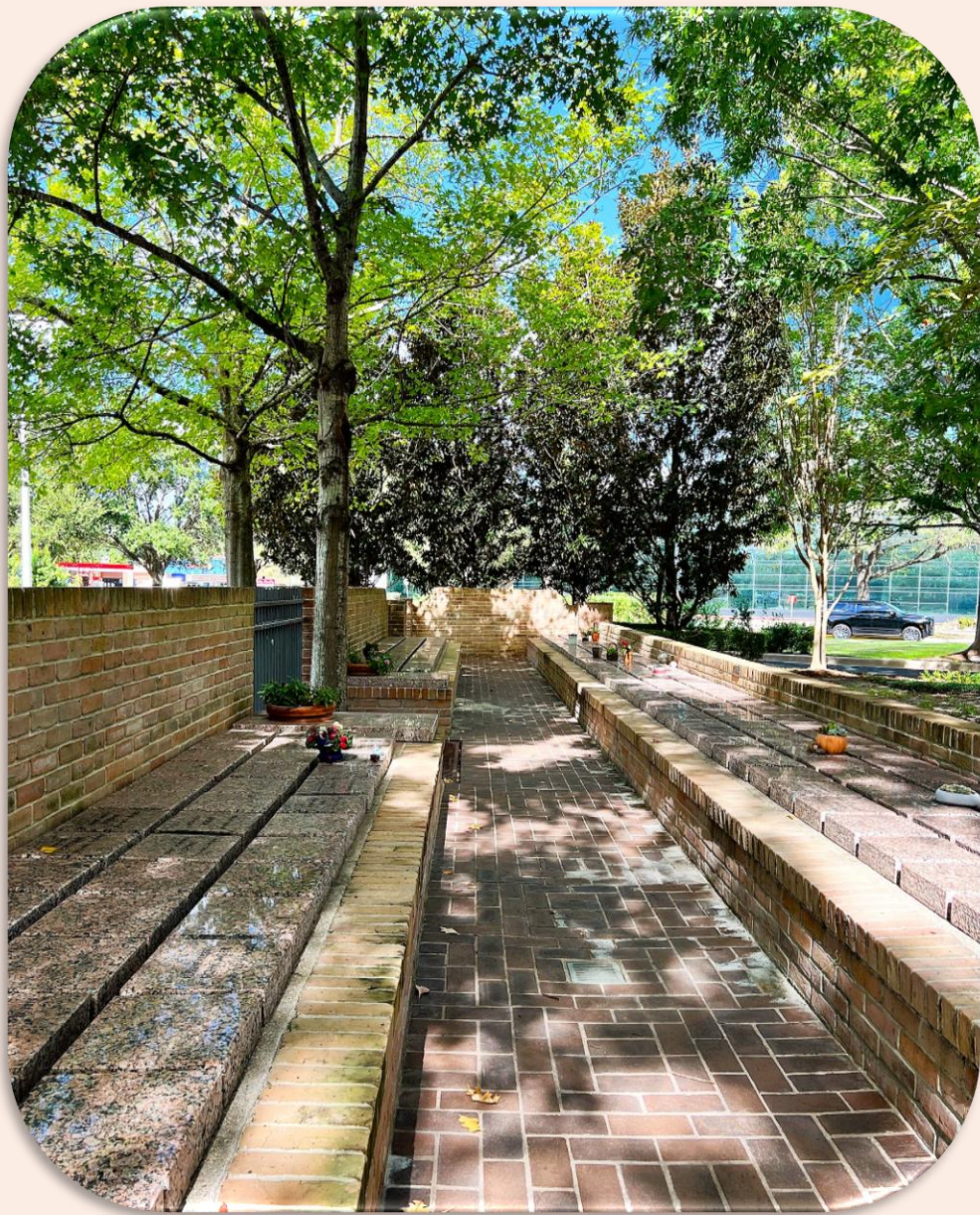
Following the church tour, the docent guided us through the outdoor areas of interest. Crossing the street in front of the church, we entered a shady, park-like setting. The impressive cross shown above is **The Great Cross**, 11 feet tall and made of Texas granite.



Looking outside
from within the chapel



The nearby glass-walled **Wayside Chapel** remains open at all times and is open to all. It serves as a tranquil, restful, and meditative retreat among the trees.



As we left this area, we viewed the church columbarium, which holds the ashes of those who chose this tranquil spot to rest in peace.

Our tour now took us to the gardens in the immediate area of the church.



There are currently
9 gardens to enjoy

Pastoral Garden
Nativity Garden
Chapel Reception
Founders' Fountain
Cloister Garden
Peace Garden
Crosswalks Garden
Serenity Garden
Christus Garden

Each garden was unique, offering lovely views
and the opportunity to rest and reflect.





The Christus Garden and Fountain
features an 8-foot sculpture of Christ
without arms and legs, symbolizing that
we are his arms and legs.

The late Charles T. Williams of Fort Worth
was commissioned to design the statue.





The **Crosswalk Garden** serves as a children's playground.

The bronze sculpture ***Come Unto Me*** by artist Rosalind Cook depicting Jesus with children is very fitting.

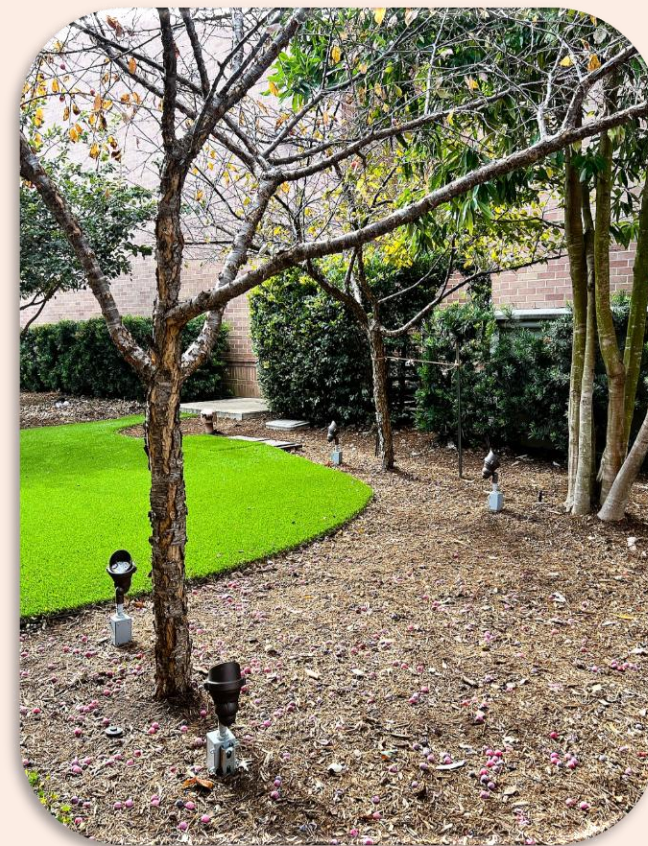
Below, as we entered one of the buildings, we passed by this bench decorated with tiles made by children.





Outdoor activities include a basketball court. Chairs and tables can be seen next to it, as well as on the 2nd story.

The **Founders' Fountain** spire can be seen on the far left.



Above is one of several plum trees in the gardens. Those sampling the plums gave them a thumbs-down due to their slightly bitter taste.



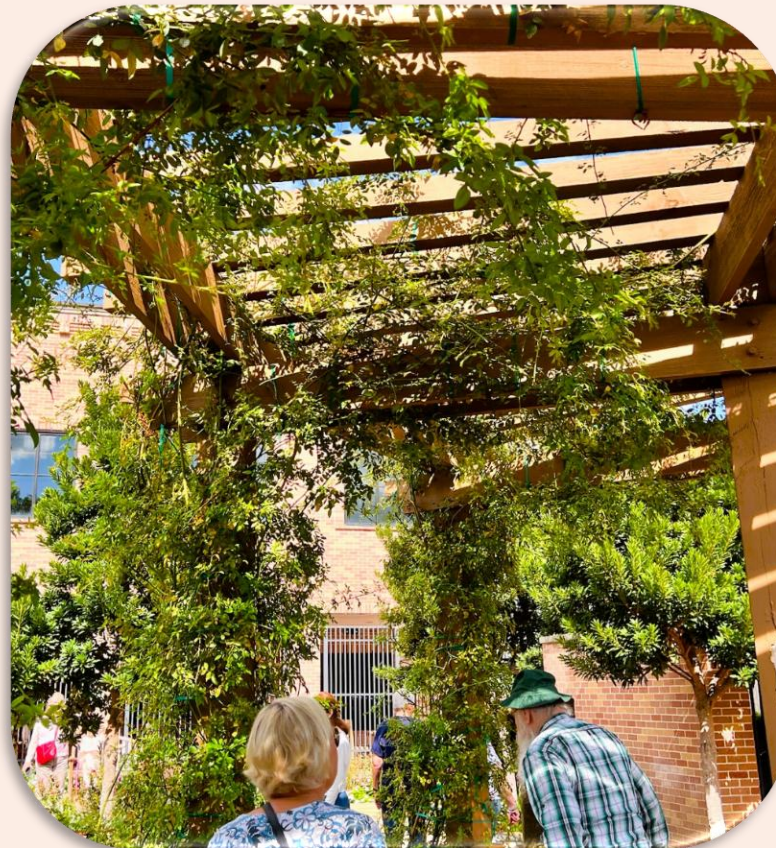
Touring a church and gardens in a 15-acre setting deserves a brief rest here and there!

The Serenity Garden was dedicated to the memory of a family member. As with some of the other gardens on the property, it incorporates water features. It is also planted with Texas native grasses.

The Serenity Prayer

*God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
courage to change the things I can,
and wisdom to know the difference.*

“Trusting that He will
make all things right if
I surrender to his will that
I may be reasonably
happy in this life and
supremely happy with
him forever in the next.”



A partially covered walkway led to another garden.





Throughout the area,
benches and tables
await.





This waterfall feature cascades over the words of a very familiar hymn. Below is a portion.

“I come to the garden alone
while the dew is still on the roses.
And the voice I hear falling on my ear
the son of God discloses.

And He walks with me and He talks with me
and He tells me I am his own.
And the joy we share as we tarry there,
none other has ever known.”



The Chapel

Standing at the gothic-inspired arch and doors, you feel compelled to enter and experience the chapel.
It can be used for a variety of functions, including weddings and small gatherings.

The **Chapel Reception Garden** outside can also be used for events



Entering another part of the building,
we noted the numerous rooms,
each devoted to specific activities.

Snack and beverage stations
were available along the way
on our tour through this area.





The **Book Store & Gift Shoppe**
had many beautiful items
to buy or to just admire!





There is literally “something for everyone” at St. Martin’s.

- Preschool children through senior adults can enjoy a plethora of activities and learning.
- The *Activity Center* offers exercise classes with equipment, Zumba, Tai Chi, Yoga, including chair Yoga, and even Line Dancing. Art classes and bridge are also available.
- The *Welcome Center* offers refreshments and the opportunity to learn more about St. Martin’s.
- *Café St. Martin’s* offers hot meals, snacks, and drinks.
- *The Gift Shoppe* has a wide range of gift items.
- Relax in one or more of the *Gardens*!
- Last but not least, the church provides the means for serving others, through *The Giving Tree* program, a branch of the church Outreach Ministries; scholarship funds; mission trip assistance; and Saint Martin’s Endowment, a nonprofit to support the church as well as its many outreach projects.

To learn much more about St. Martin’s Episcopal Church and all that it offers, review their website

StMartinsEpiscopal.org.

The website also includes an excellent map of the campus to assist you if you plan to visit.



Time for Lunch!







For those members who were ready for lunch
after our extensive tour,
delicious food awaited at **Adair Kitchen**.

***Thank You, Ann Fairchild
Trip Coordinator Extraordinaire!***

You continue to expand our horizons!

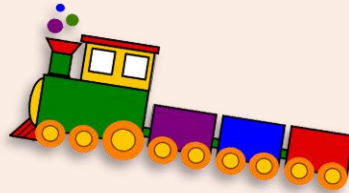
Holiday Gathering!



Thursday, December 4: Christmas luncheon and Toy Drive



Self-drive or carpool to **Candelari's**, 2617 W. Holcombe. Bring a toy for donation and meet at 11:30 a.m. to enjoy lunch/dinner/bar menu choices on their heated, covered patio.



Signing Up for a Trip

Trip Coordinator Ann Fairchild may be contacted at fairann@sbcglobal.net or **281-686-1325**.

She will publish complete trip details, with the opportunity to sign up, closer to the trip date.

If the traveler quota is full, you may ask to be put on a waiting list.