

THE LYCHGATE

December 10, 2023



Parish Newsletter of The Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields

From Father Carefoote

During my years singing with the choir here at St Martin's at the end of the last century, I was introduced to some truly magnificent music that I had never heard or sung anywhere else before. Many of these musical works of art transported me to another plane where it seemed easier, if only for a few brief moments, to believe in a God of love who transcended the ordinariness of daily life. Advent and Christmas were particularly rich in that regard. Given that the first hymn of our Christian era was sung by the angels to a group of shepherds outside a little town called Bethlehem, that somehow seems most appropriate. There was one piece in particular, however, that we sang during an Advent Carol Service long ago that still moves me whenever I hear it. The combination of its poignant lyrics and ethereal tune somehow seemed to encapsulate for me the mystery of this wonderful season that now lies ahead of us, better than any other. Its title was "A God and yet a Man" composed by the late Geoffrey Burgon (renowned for his score for the 1981 television miniseries *Brideshead Revisited*), and the 15th-century text he set reads thus:

A god and yet a man?	A god, and can he die?	God, truth itself, doth teach it;
A maid and yet a mother?	A dead man, can he live?	Man's wit sinks too far under
Wit wonders what wit can	What wit can well reply?	By reason's power to reach it.
Conceive, this or the other?	What reason, reason give?	Believe and leave to wonder.

The poem celebrates the paradox of the Incarnation: our belief that the immortal and invisible God chose, at a specific time and in a specific place, to become mortal and touchable in the person of Jesus Christ. Paradoxes, of course, are two statements that seem incapable of being true at the same time – how can a human be God, for example? – and Jesus clearly loved using them as teaching tools. The last shall be first; the greatest shall be the least; only those who lose their lives will save them. Paradoxes are meant to grab our attention and force us to dive deeper, looking at reality from a different angle, a different perspective in order to understand ourselves and our world in a more meaningful way. So, what is the paradox of Christmas supposed to teach us? Quite simply, that the Almighty One, who is pure goodness, loved this sad, old world so much that he sent his Son to assume our weaknesses and thereby bestow upon us the greatest gift of all – salvation and eternal life.

I say "quite simply", but in fact it isn't simple at all, is it? This gift of redemption is hard to wrap our heads around, let alone wrap up and place beneath a decorated tree. That, however, is where our anonymous medieval poet can help us once again. "Believe and leave to wonder", he writes. I often hear adults say how they wish they could recover the wonder of the season they see reflected in children's faces. I believe they can, if they look past all of the distractions of December and allow themselves, once in a while, to be awestruck by the mystery of a love so great, so overwhelming, that God was willing to pitch his tent among us in our flesh, and then live and die, so we might live forever. When I look at the creche, I am always touched by the beauty and stillness of a scene that may or may not reflect the reality of a young, displaced couple dealing with a newborn baby so far away from everything that was familiar to them. I suspect that as I gaze upon it this year, I will probably be empathizing even more with those innocents around the globe – too many of them, to be sure – who are struggling right now to keep their little ones safe. The nativity scene, however, evokes more than that for me. In the face of that holy child, I see the man he will become; who by his teaching and example, his living and dying will open the way to fulness of life, both here and now and in the world to come, and for that I cannot help but be eternally grateful. I cannot help but feel hope. How that happens I do not fully understand. Sometimes, however, it is enough to "believe and leave to wonder." May you, your families, and loved ones enjoy every blessing of this remarkable and paradoxical season.

Yours in Christ, Fr. Carefoote

Church Directory



The Church of
St. Martin-in-the-Fields

151 Glenlake Ave.
Toronto, Ontario M6P 1E8

www.stmartininthefields.ca

Church: 416-767-7491

Organist & Music Director:

Jack Hattey

Church Wardens:

Peter Chauvin

Jay Haddad

Nadine Barmania (Deputy)

Office Administrator:

Andrea Zinn

Property Manager:

Mark Kolberg

Children and Youth Pastoral

Associate: Finn Keesmaat-Walsh
(they / them)

**Interim Priest in
Charge:**

The Rev'd Dr. Pearce
James (PJ) Carefoote

Honorary Assistants:

The Rev'd Canon

David Luxton

The Rev'd James

Decker

The Rev'd Canon

Harold Nahabedian

The Rev'd Canon

Alyson Barnett-Cowan

The Rt. Rev'd Victoria

Matthews

About *The Lychgate* Newsletter: *The Lychgate* is published four times a year. Parishioners and friends are encouraged to submit news and articles to the co-editors, Ian Greene and David McKnight. For digital access to *The Lychgate*, including colour photos and links to web sites, go to <https://stmartininthefields.ca>.

From the Parish Registers

Since September 24, 2023 (last
Lychgate)

Baptisms: none

Weddings: none

Funerals: Lorne Frederick Leslie,
died 25 Oct. 2023, funeral 11 Nov.

Christmas at St. Martin's

Sunday, December 24, Christmas Eve

7:00 p.m. Christmas Pageant with Sung
Eucharist (family service)

10:00 p.m. Blessing of the Crib & Choral
Eucharist

Monday, December 25, Christmas Day

11:00 a.m. Eucharist with Carols, followed by
Christmas Lunch (sign up in advance at the church)

**Sunday, December 31, First Sunday after
Christmas**

8:30 a.m. Eucharist

11:00 a.m. Christmas Lessons & Carols with
Sung Eucharist

Sunday, January 7, Epiphany

8:30 a.m. Said Eucharist

11:00 a.m. Sung Eucharist

Upcoming Events

- **Sunday, December 10, 7:30 p.m.:** Advent Carol Service
- **Wednesday, December 13, 8 p.m.:** Christian Education series: Saints of the Christmas Season
- **Saturday, December 16, 8 p.m.:** Healey Willan Singers present Enchanted Carols
- **Sunday, December 17, 4 p.m.:** Carolling in the Garden (bring a flashlight)
- **Wednesdays, January 17, 24 & 31, 8 p.m.:** Christian Education series on social justice (see details in church bulletins)
- **Tuesday, February 13, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.:** Shrove Tuesday pancake supper
- **Wednesday, February 21, 28, March 6, 13 & 20, 8 p.m.:** Christian Education series: Exploring the Psalms (see details in church bulletins)
- **Sunday, February 25:** Annual Vestry Meeting after 11 a.m. service

Parish Selection Committee Update

By Nadine Barmania, Chair

In November, the Parish Selection Committee (PSC) finalized the Parish Profile which is a report identifying key strengths, priorities, and concerns within the parish to inform the search for the next incumbent priest. It was submitted to Bishop Robertson and on December 2 we received the his approval to publicize it.

On December 6, the Christian Education Committee provided the PSC with the opportunity to present the Parish Profile to parishioners. It will also be posted on our website and linked to various publications to support Bishop Robertson's call for candidates for parish priest at St. Martin's.

Next steps

In the new year, candidates will be introduced to the PSC by Bishop Robertson for consideration. The timeline on completing the process and the appointment of a new incumbent is not firm. The PSC continues to move forward in keeping with the process set out by the diocese.

Contact

Please contact a member of the Parish Selection Committee with comments or concerns through the church office, or leave a message at the church office at 416-767-7491 and one of us will return your call. Members of the PSC are Nadine Barmania, Ron Cheung, Ian Greene, Jay Haddad, Anne Longmore, Patty McKnight, Cyriline Taylor, and Kathie Wagg. Alternatively, you could speak to us during coffee hour after the 11 a.m. service.

Christmas Market

By Tim Stephenson

The Christmas Market was a great success this year, raising almost \$10,000. The Jewelry Table (Maggie Knight) is always a draw for the larger community and was particularly busy this year.

The Silent Auction (Susan Goddard) was entirely in person this year and did well without the extra work of trying to maintain online bidding. The Craft Table (Nadine Barmania) was as eclectic as ever and some of the leftovers were shared with the Ukrainian group that meets at the church. The Bake Table (Kathie Wagg) always does well, particularly with any desserts that parishioners prepare.



**Christmas Market:
Books and kid's activities**

A new addition this year was the Books and CDs table (Zack Barmania) that raised over \$400 which is remarkable given that everything is \$2. Gayne Brawn provided her Surprise Bags and Finn Keesmaat-

Walsh had games for kids.

Thanks to the many St. Martin's volunteers and patrons. We plan for months but it could not be a success without you. To keep improving please let me know if you have any suggestions for next year's Christmas Market.



Special Vestry on December 3

By Ian Greene

On Sunday, December 3, following the 11 a.m. service, a Special Vestry was held to discuss replacement of the church's boilers and other improvements to the heating system. At the February 26, 2023, Annual Vestry meeting, \$150,000 had been approved for this purpose. Subsequently, Management Board approved engagement of engineering consultants to advise on the scope and pricing of the project. The cost estimate based on the engineering consultants' report is \$350,000 to \$400,000.

During the Special Vestry meeting, Mark Kolberg, our Property Manager, presented a detailed report on the church heating system, what is wrong with it, and how it can be repaired in the most cost-effective

way designed for maximum years of service. Questions were raised and answers were provided.

The following motion was put to those present: "It is moved that Management Board be given the authority to repair and upgrade the heating system at the church, including obtaining consulting and design, replacement of ancillary equipment and building renovation needed to complete the project (the "Project") as long as the cost is no greater than \$400,000. It is further moved that Management Board has the authority to fund the Project using funds from the Memorial Fund and that such use will be over and above what is currently authorized to be taken from the Memorial Fund on an annual basis. Management Board will identify grant monies and initiate a capital campaign as soon as possible to replenish the Memorial Fund and otherwise pay for the Project."

All present voted in favour of the motion; there were no votes against or abstentions.

Land of Promise, Covenant of Love

By The Rev'd Canon Alyson Barnett-Cowan

[A number of parishioners requested that my sermon from October 29th should be included in The Lychgate. So here it is.]
Deut 34:1-12; Ps 90:1-6; 1 Thess 2:1-8; Matt 22:34-46

The late Archbishop Michael Peers used to say often 'trust the lectionary'. We Anglicans don't have the freedom to pick the lessons we hear on Sundays – or other days, for that matter. We all read the same passages in most parts of the Anglican world, and Roman Catholics and Lutherans and many others mostly use the same ones.

So it was not my choice that we should be hearing today the often repeated promise from the Hebrew Scriptures that God will give the land of Israel to Abraham and his descendants forever. As Moses is dying, he is granted a view of that Promised Land, the land that Palestinians say is 'from the River to the Sea'.

It is not my role to give an opinion about the Israel-Hamas war. In fact, I wish that most people would realize that that is not their business either. Words are being flung around and analyzed and misinterpreted everywhere about this, and it doesn't do a thing to ease the terrible conflict. Yet of course

this desire to express an opinion, or to protest, comes from a deep sense of empathy with the dead and wounded and also a sense of hopelessness and despair about this dreadful calamity, as with so many others in our troubled world.

But I think it is my role as a preacher to offer some ways in which the people of God in this place at this time can wrestle with the Scripture for the day and how it might bear on the events of this dreadful time. So, we have to reckon with these words of God to Moses about the Promised Land.

This sad and contentious land. We pray always for the peace of Jerusalem, but it has hardly ever been at peace. This land has been fought over probably more often than any other stretch of territory in the world. The war in the Middle East did not begin on October 7. It probably began when Sarah threw Hagar and Ishmael into the wilderness so that her son Isaac would be the one who would inherit the promise.

In the eucharistic prayer we usually use, the priest says, 'We give thanks to you, Lord our God, for the goodness and love you have made known to us in creation, in calling Israel to be your people.'

Why, O why, did God choose this people to inherit this land? Of course, we cannot fathom the ways of God, but it seems that what God wanted was a particular people who would not only have a fertile country to live in, but who would commit to living by God's commandments. Those who are gifted and blessed always have obligations, and the highest obligation for any of us humans is to live by the ways of the realm of God. And, of course, the Scriptures repeatedly tell us that Abraham and his descendants are not chosen as if other peoples did not count: they are to be a blessing to all the nations by their faithfulness to God and God's ways.

Jesus sums these up just as they are also summed up in the book of Deuteronomy. We repeat them every time we use the Book of Common Prayer: 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. This is the first great commandment. And a second is like unto it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets'.

That's it. That's all we have to do. And all of the world's great religions have the same principles. Perhaps you've seen the multi-faith poster that has similar words, the Golden Rule, from the Koran, from Buddhism, from Taoism, and so on. If only.

The people of Israel, and we the Church who have been grafted onto that vine, have the obligation to live by those two great commandments, and to be an example and a beacon to others in all the world. Not to beat others with the commandments and to judge others, but to demonstrate them. That is our calling, and the destiny for those who try to fulfill that calling is to live in the Promised Land, the promised rest of God, the shalom and peace of God.

So, it is all the harder to see the land of promise rent asunder yet again, as the children of Abraham tear each other apart.

The Book of Deuteronomy tells us that no one knows where exactly Moses' body was buried. That is probably a good thing, because we know how the graves of important people become shrines – which can be both a blessing and a curse. The patriarchs and matriarchs Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob and Leah are buried in Hebron. When you visit there, as I did a few years ago, you go either on the Jewish side or the Muslim side of the building. You go through security. You get to look at representations of the tombs, for the bodies are buried far beneath the ground. But you do not look at them together with their other descendants. Each has their own perspective.

And so, it seems, it has been for century upon century.

What are we to make of all this? A few suggestions:

In the first place, of course, we are called to pray for all our brothers and sisters and leave the judgment about who is right and wrong to God.

In the second place, we need to remind ourselves that we are children of the promise, and our job is to live as best as we can according to God's commandments of love of God and love of neighbour, knowing that we will never be perfect about this, but that God's Son stands between us and our failings and makes it possible still to enter into God's rest. That means tending to our neighbour here and now. If any of you know Jews or

Palestinians, for heaven's sake reach out to them without judgment, but with support and care. Everyone is grieving. Perhaps you can go to a Jewish or Muslim place of worship and just be with your sisters and brothers. And remember that our closest relatives in that land are Christian Palestinians. Fr. Philip could testify to the grace and faithfulness exhibited by Anglicans in the Diocese of Jerusalem, most of them, including Archbishop Hosan, Palestinian.

In the third place, resist any hatred shown to anyone. Speak out if you read or hear anything that diminishes the humanity of anyone. War has a tendency to make people think of their enemy as 'other', sub-human. We have unfortunately heard or read some of this.

No, a thousand times no. We are all Abraham's children – we are all God's children, and this is a time to be really clear that no one should suffer from racism, prejudice, rejection, or violence.

In the fourth place, return to my first suggestion, and pray. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, and all the world.



**Setting up for Christmas Market:
We have unique ways to give**

Notes From the Treasurer

By Philip Conliffe

Dear friends: I thought I would let you know that through to the end of October, we are running more than \$10,000 behind our budgeted amount for undesignated donations. If you have fallen behind on your pledge, it is not too late to contribute. Here are some tips to help facilitate your donations to St. Martin's.

- Donations via e-transfer can be sent anytime to cw-smartininthefields@toronto.anglican.ca. If donations are intended for a specific purpose, e.g., flowers, FaithWorks, etc., please include

these instructions in the Notes/Memo box provided by your online banking platform.

- To register for PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance) — our preferred means of making regular, automated donations — please use the form found on our website, www.stmartininthefields.ca.
- Changes to PAR instructions, such as an increase in your monthly amount, can be sent via a simple email to the Envelope Secretary, Piers Hemmingsen.
- For instructions on how to donate by transferring eligible marketable securities, please contact Philip Conliffe.

If you have not received an interim statement of donations by early December, it may be because we do not have your mailing address. When donations are made via e-transfer, we receive only the name of the donor. If this might apply to you and to ensure we can issue you a tax receipt for your 2023 donations, please send your mailing address to the church office.

To be eligible for a 2023 tax receipt, **the deadline for donations made by cash and cheque will be at the 11 a.m. service on Sunday, Dec. 31. Because this year ends on a Sunday, amounts donated via e-transfer must be made by close of business on Friday, Dec. 29.**

Thank you for your continued support of St. Martin's and its ministries.

Congratulations Prince Emmanuel and Sheila!

By Ian Greene

In the September 26, 2021, edition of *The Lychgate*, we featured a Parish Profile about Prince Emmanuel Adjinn-Tettey and Sheila Wadie, who emigrated from Ghana to Toronto in August of 2020. To begin with, they lived a few blocks from St. Martin's, and within weeks of their arrival, they and their three boys joined the St. Martin's community. Prince Emmanuel is on the livestream team and is the IT member on Management Board. Sheila is on the FaithWorks committee and has helped with the Walkathon. The three boys attend church school and are currently rehearsing for the Christmas pageant. In 2022, they



Prince Gerald, Prince Emmanuel, Gordon, Sheila, Gareth, and Ian at the convocation reception

moved to Oshawa, but have continued to attend St. Martin's.

The profile noted, "Prince Emmanuel applied to York University to the Master of Public Policy, Administration and Law program and asked Ian Greene if he knew about it. Ian did: he was the founding director of the program! Sheila has also enrolled in a master's program in Management Practice. Both started their remote learning mid-September [of 2021]."

This past October, both Prince Emmanuel and Sheila graduated from their programs. Prince Emmanuel earned his Master of Public Policy, Administration and Law degree, and Sheila now holds a Master of Science degree in Management Practice. Fortuitously, their convocations took place in the same ceremony on the afternoon of October 12 at York University, and their three sons – Prince Gerald, Gareth, and Gordon – saw them graduate. Although I am retired, I joined the faculty procession so that I could shake the hands of Prince Emmanuel and Sheila as they walked across the stage. The School of Public Policy and Administration held a reception for graduates that evening in the banquet room in Black Creek Pioneer Village. What a joyous event! Congratulations to Prince Emmanuel and Sheila for their hard work over the past two years while continuing to work full-time and raise three energetic boys.

Parish Profile Update: Okechi Nwamaka Okojie



Ted, Daniel, Lisa, Okechi and Jania

In the December 2020 *Lychgate*, we included a Parish Profile of Okechi Okojie and her husband Daniel. At that time, they had a daughter Lisa (2), and a son Ted (a toddler).

Their family expanded in 2022 when their daughter Jania was born. Lisa is now 5 years old, Ted is 3, and Jania is 1. You will see Lisa and Ted in the Christmas Pageant on December 24.

Another update: Okechi expects to graduate from the University of Toronto with an Master of Social Work (MSW) in June 2024. She has successfully completed her first practicum at Women's College Hospital and is eagerly awaiting the start of her second practicum early in the New Year.

Afghan Family Moves to Long-Term Accommodation

By Ian Greene

As reported in the previous *Lychgate*, the five members of the Afghan refugee family that St. Martin's is co-sponsoring arrived in September. Upon arrival, the newcomers were provided with temporary accommodation in Brampton thanks to the kindness of the son of two sponsorship group members and his girlfriend. Since arriving, they have been studying English, and getting their paperwork

and other affairs in order, such as successfully finding a family doctor.

After the stressful search for permanent housing, the family has now found long-term reasonably priced accommodation in a newly constructed housing development in the Sheppard Ave. and Allen Rd. area, close to the Sheppard West subway station.

When Fr. Philip moved out of the rectory, furniture and household items donated by parishioners and others were stored there. On December 1, Tim Stephenson and I, together with the family and six other members of the support group moved the stored items into the new accommodation. The family are overjoyed with their new home! Thanks be to God.

The Family's Next Steps

The family came to be known to the sponsorship group through Attaullah, who worked with the Canadian charity Books Over Borders to promote literacy and education throughout Afghanistan, especially for girls. A natural enemy of the Taliban, Attaullah has continued to stay active and explores ways to support his charity work from afar since his arrival in Canada. We are also happy to report that after seven months in jail, Attaullah's brother Matiullah was released by the Taliban.

Attaullah's wife Elnaz, and her brother Firooz, are keen to start working and to continue their education. Elnaz holds an undergraduate degree in public administration and Firooz has a background in urban planning and engineering. They would both like to pursue Master's degrees. Kaiwan, son of Attaullah and Elnaz, now three years old, has been enjoying his new life in Canada. Maryam, Kaiwan's grandma, is a professional seamstress and looks forward to working again.

With the family settling into their long-term housing, the sponsorship group is now looking for ways to assist them in meeting their goals. If you can help in anyway, please reach out to Tim Stephenson or Ian Greene.

Mission at St. Martin's

By Kathie Wagg for the Missional Team

What is Mission? 'It requires an outward focus, rather than inward. It calls us out of the building into the neighbourhood and invites us to serve as Christ's hands and feet and heart and mind.' Fr. Andrew MacDonald

The final 2023 Missional activity, Carolling in the Garden, will take place on Sunday, December 17 at 4 p.m. We will be asking for your help again – help to welcome our neighbours and their friends into our garden for fellowship and to raise our voices in singing Christmas carols. Please mark your calendars, dress warmly, bring your voices and a flashlight, and join us!

The Team is always very appreciative of the support from you, our parish family. Without your help we could not do what we do each year: blessing of bicycles, neighbourhood fun fair, blessing of pets, and, of course, carolling in the garden. We could not hold our twice weekly pickleball sessions that are attended by many in the neighbourhood. Most importantly, we could not operate our blessing box to supply non-perishable food, personal and household supplies, and, in cold weather, hats, mitts, gloves, scarves, socks, and hoodies to those in need. While we do see many in the community putting supplies into the box, it is chiefly donations from our parishioners that keep this box in operation. THANK YOU! Please keep up the good work.

The Missional Team will soon be meeting to plan activities for the parish for 2024. We hope to be able to continue existing activities but also to add some new ones for the New Year. If you have any ideas for events you would like to see, please mention your idea to one of the Team: Canon Alyson Barnett-Cowan, Lexi Brennan, Jay Haddad, Glen Storey, Tim Stephenson, Alex Tinius, or Kathie Wagg.

If you would like to join us as a member of the Team, please contact Kathie Wagg.

God's blessing be with you all.

Dinner for Homeless and Food Bank Users

By Judith Kidd

On Saturday, December 2, volunteers from St. Martin's and St. Olave's provided a Christmas lunch for about 100 homeless or food bank users in our area at St. Olave's. The number of attendees demonstrated the magnitude of the need.



December 2 lunch for homeless



Elaine, Sirina, and Jay volunteering at the lunch



Fr. Carefoote volunteering at the lunch