

THE LYCHGATE

December 14, 2025



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

Rector's Message

When I was in seminary, a friend gave me a book which I treasure. *I Heard the Owl Call my Name* is about a newly ordained priest who has been diagnosed with a terminal illness, although he does not realize it. His bishop does, however, and decides to send the young man to a remote parish where he knows he will quickly learn with his parishioners the most important lessons of ministry, lessons which will also prepare him for his death.

During his first Christmas Eve in the parish, the young priest finds himself alone in the church, having tended to the wood stove, the wine cruet and bread box double-checked, waiting for his congregation to arrive for midnight Mass:

...he walked to the window at the left of the door and stepped without expectation into one of those moments that is suspended between time and space and lingers in the mind.

The snow lay thick on the shoulders of the trees; the limbs of the young spruce bent beneath its weight. He saw the lights of the houses go out, one by one, and the lanterns begin to flicker as people came slowly, single file along the path to the church...

For the first time he knew them for who they were, the people of his hand and the sheep of his pasture, and he knew how deep was his commitment to them.

I like to think that the young priest realized in that moment that he himself was a sheep of God's pasture, and how deep God's commitment was to him, too. This is a lesson which his congregation helped to teach him, a lesson we all need to know, for both life and death.

During Advent and Christmas, we are to ponder this mystery. In the birth of Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, God makes his home among us, to watch over us and embrace us with his love, so deep is his commitment to us. This is God's glory. Like the shepherds and others who made their way to the manger on that first Christmas night, to ponder this glory, we are to do the same as we head to our own midnight Mass. I pray that you will come to know even more deeply this season how much the Good Shepherd's love embraces you. Pray that I might do the same.

Fr Nicholas Hatt+
Incumbent

Church Directory



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

151 Glenlake Ave.
Toronto, Ontario M6P 1E8

www.stmartininthefields.ca

Church: 416-767-7491

Incumbent:

Fr. Nicholas Hatt

Honorary Assistants:

The Rev'd Canon

Alyson Barnett-
Cowan

The Rev'd Canon

David Luxton

The Rev'd James

Decker

The Rev'd Michelle

Childs-Ward

The Rt. Rev'd Victoria

Matthews

Organist & Music Director:

Jack Hattey

Church Wardens:

Nadine Barmania

Phil Snider

Office Administrator:

Shukura Alleyne

Property Manager:

Mark Kolberg

Pastoral Associate for Children's and Youth Ministry:

Finn Keesmaat-Walsh (they/them)

Sexton: Bernard Sanders

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 at office@stmartininthefields.ca. For digital access to *The Lychgate*, including colour photos and links to web sites, go to <https://stmartininthefields.ca>.

From the Parish Registers

Since October 5, 2025 (last *Lychgate*)

Baptisms:

Dominic Noorman, Kouhenoor
Antoinee, Noorjahaern Antoinee,
Sunday, November 23

Weddings: None

Funerals: Anne Muravsky, Saturday,
October 18

Christmas at St. Martin's

Wednesday, December 24, Christmas Eve,
7:00 p.m. Christmas Pageant with Holy

Eucharist (sung) family service

10:00 p.m. Blessing of the Crib & Festal Eucharist
(choral)

Thursday, December 25, Christmas Day,

11:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist (sung) followed by
Christmas lunch (sign up in advance at the church)

**Friday, December 26, Feast of St. Stephen the
Martyr, 10:00 a.m.,** Holy Eucharist (chapel) and
baptism

**Saturday, December 27, Feast of St. John the
Evangelist, 10:00 a.m.** Holy Eucharist (chapel)

**Sunday, December 28, First Sunday after
Christmas,**

8:30 a.m. Eucharist

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

Sunday, January 4, Epiphany,

8:30 a.m. Said Eucharist

11:00 a.m. Sung Eucharist

Upcoming Events

- **Sunday, December 14, 3 p.m.** Healey Willan Singers present "Snow Angels"
- **Tuesday, December 16, 7:30 p.m.** Advent Retreat Evening on Zoom led by our bishops
- **Sunday, December 20, 8 p.m.** Voices Chamber Choir presents "Morning Star"
- **Sunday, December 21, 4 p.m.** Carolling in the Garden (bring a flashlight)
- **Sunday, January 11, 1 p.m.** Safety in the Home for Seniors seminar, Guild Room
- **Wednesday, January 21, 8 p.m.** Christian Education Session on Ecumenism
- **Wednesdays, February 4 & 11, 8 p.m.** Christian Education series on the Social Justice Vestry Motion
- **Tuesday, February 17, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.** Shrove Tuesday pancake supper
- **Wednesday, February 18, Ash Wednesday,** 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes; 7:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes
- **Sunday, February 22:** Annual Vestry Meeting after 11 a.m. service
- **Wednesday, March 11, 18, 25, April 1, 8 p.m.:** Christian Education series

Access to the Church during Winter Conditions

By Cindy Paget, Co-Chair, Health, Safety, and Security Committee

As winter is upon us, the Health, Safety, and Security Committee has been diligently working to ensure safe conditions for access to the church grounds during the coming winter months. As the stairs leading down from Indian Grove tend to become snow-packed, icy, difficult to clean, and in serious danger of avalanche from the roof, it has been decided to limit use of these stairs just prior to and during any future snowstorms. Signs will be posted at the bottom and top of the stairs and chains will be installed to prevent use during harsh conditions. Once these stairs are cleared of snow and ice, the signs and chains will be removed and access will again be available. During this time, please use the Lychgate stairs to access the church grounds.

Please remember that the laneway on the southwest side of the building is not cleared of snow by the city and although we endeavour to clear the parking area, access during harsh conditions will be difficult. Please consider these concerns as you prepare to come to church.

These temporary measures are to ensure the safety of parishioners, visitors, and staff. Hopefully, we will have a milder winter and these precautions will be only minimally required.

Our Move to Singapore

By Rebecca Eacho

As announced a few months ago, my family and I are moving to Singapore by the end of this



Rebecca, Arthur and Doug with cake during coffee hour, Sunday November 9 – Peter Chauvin

week. My husband, Doug, will be joining the National University of Singapore as an Assistant Professor in the Department of English, Linguistics, and Theatre Studies. I'm also set to work in a full-time administrative position at the university. In addition, I hear that our son, Arthur, will join a daycare that provides adorable pastel uniforms complete with a bucket hat, shiny shoes, and suspenders. We are exceedingly fortunate to embark on such an adventure.

In the weeks leading up to our flight, I've been asked how I feel about the impending move—

especially one that will take us so far away from our loved ones. The word that repeatedly comes up: bittersweet. We're hopeful about the future, but we're harboring some melancholy about the people that we're leaving in the process, including our family at St. Martin's.

We're incredibly grateful to have found this community when we did. The parish accepted our family from our very first visit to the church in the summer of 2024. You welcomed us for the baptism of our son that fall while we were still getting acquainted. As Americans and as new parents trying to find our footing in a different country, you gave us a much-needed sense of belonging right from the start.

You also helped me better understand the inner workings of the parish as your office administrator. I'm extremely grateful for that opportunity. Serving the parish in this way allowed me to make an earnest effort in fulfilling the promise we all made on the evening that Father Hatt was formerly installed as our new priest. That night we vowed to support the Incumbent and the wider congregation with all of our strengths and weaknesses. I am humbled by the help and encouragement I received while in the office. The experience showed me what collaboration with heart could look like, and what my strengths and weaknesses are. More importantly, it permitted me to get to know so many of you better — an unexpected source of comfort as I prepare for my departure.

The more I reflect on my short stay here, the more I realize what a gift this time has been. People refer to Singapore as the "Garden City", alluding to a paradise of plenty, but I can't help but think of St. Martin's as the truer picture of abundance. I've been inspired by the level of devotion that I've encountered here. I've also

been deeply moved by your care for each other as well as your efforts in becoming more attuned to the needs of our neighbourhood. Not only has St. Martin's shown our family what it means to live in Christian community (and how to do it joyfully), you also gave us something quite special: a home where we would always be welcome.

We plan to be back in the area while spending our summers in North America. I would like to stay in touch and have already shared my email with many of you. Please don't hesitate to send us an update and I will do the same. Thank you for your friendship, your well wishes, and your blessings.

Parish Profile: Anthea and David Wilkinson

By David McKnight



David Wilkinson and Anthea Wilkinson -- Photo taken in Botham's restaurant

Anthea Wootton and David Wilkinson were born in the same year in the town of Northallerton in North Yorkshire, UK (pop. 13,000). They went to the same grammar school but didn't know one another then — they didn't formally meet until they were 20.

Anthea was the third daughter of Philip, a civil engineer specializing in highway improvements, and Zelia, provider of delicious meals often from her own produce. Philip was a Methodist, although one of his ancestors was Jacob Mountain, first Anglican Bishop of Quebec! Zelia's family had a well-established bakery business, Botham's, in Whitby, North Yorkshire. Anthea and David's sons, Ben and Jack, have named their restaurant in the Junction Botham's. It is next-door to their pub, The Hole in the Wall.

At age 11, Anthea went to an all-girls boarding school, Hunmanby Hall, near Scarborough in Yorkshire. She was there two years before returning to Northallerton and the shock of a coed school again. She attended Leeds Metropolitan University where she studied Italian and French. On graduation, she worked for Italian companies, Montecatini Edison in London, and Pirelli in Milan. She came back to the UK when she became engaged to David.

David's parents were "blue collar" but, with good fortune, David won a place in the grammar school through competitive exams and an interview. He left school early to work for ICI at Stockton on Tees and later qualified for a place at Aston University in Birmingham, eventually completing a PhD in Chemical Engineering — Anthea typed his thesis! On one memorable day, due to a faulty fume cupboard, he exploded his lab, blowing out all the fifth-floor windows. He recovered, physically and academically, and no one else was injured.

Anthea and David met in Northallerton through mutual friends. She was "beguiled" by his "gift of the gab" (he still has it). He admired her beauty and still does. They were married on 18 January 1975 at All Saints' Church in Northallerton and then left four days later for

Seattle where David had been offered a position with a U.S.-based industrial insurance company. He stayed with them for 25 years and finished as Managing Director of the international operation, but frequent postings kept the family on the move. Before they came to Canada in 1985, they had been in Seattle, London, Dublin, and back to London. When they first came to Canada, the children, two boys and two girls, were ages three to nine.

In Canada, the moves continued, usually every three years: Toronto, Montreal, and back to London. This was very difficult as the children became teenagers and for three years David commuted between Toronto and London. Eventually, Anthea moved to London and it became her turn to commute to Canada to see grandchildren.

David was able to retire (sort of) at age 50 and they lived back in Northallerton. It was only a partial retirement; from 2001 to 2006, with a partner, he owned a company in Windsor, UK that provided equipment maintenance to hospitals and pharmaceutical research companies. At that time, they had no home in Canada, although their eldest children were at university here. It was decided that a family cottage would fit the bill perfectly. Their cottage in Bala became home for several years until they bought their current house on Indian Road. Cottaging is still a favourite time for the family and the "Famjam" week every summer when they congregate along with eleven grandchildren and two dogs is delightful chaos.

Even with a house and a cottage in Canada, family commitments kept them in the UK. Anthea only moved back seven years ago and David four. They sold the house in Northallerton two years ago.

Anthea attended church school regularly as a child. Her mother was Anglican and her father Methodist and she alternated Sunday Schools. Her maternal grandmother, Violet Botham, was very active in the church and was associated with the convent at Sneaton Castle in Whitby. David's parents were not active in the church but encouraged him to go to Sunday School and he became an altar boy by age 11. He is proud to have won a presentation bible by memorizing seven designated psalms — some very long!¹ However, David's mother died when he was 14 and he stopped going to church.

When the children were young, Anthea took them to church, but David did not go — work often had them in different cities. David's interest in the church was reignited following encouragement from neighbours in the UK, along with a very interesting Alpha Course at St. John's Church, Woking, Surrey.

They have now been attending St. Martin's for a few years. They tried out three or four Anglican churches but liked it best. They like the people and the music and have become involved, including in the garden group and the Christmas Market. They are happy to have settled for longer than three years and we are happy to have them with us.

St. Martin's Christmas Trees

By Ian Greene

A Scout Group has been sponsored by St. Martin's since 1930. To begin with, it was known as the Toronto 90th Scout Group. Around 1962, the 32nd Toronto Scout Group, then meeting at Alhambra United Church, had to find a new location because of the closing of the church.

¹ The bibles are provided through the estate of Philip Wharton, 4th Baron Wharton (1613–1696), a devout Puritan and

The 90th Scout Group at St. Martin's welcomed a merger with the 32nd, in part because the 32nd Group had the right to use the Wilcox Conservation Area near Orangeville for camping.



Toronto 32nd Beaver Colony at Camp Wilcox, May 2007

In the 1950s, the Scoutmaster of the 32nd Scout Group was Bob McTavish, who was a dental patient of Dr. Frank Wilcox who owned 100 acres of land at the headwaters of one branch of the Credit River near Orangeville. He encouraged the 32nd Group to use the land for camping. In 1960, Dr. Wilcox moved his practice to New York City and offered to give his property to the 32nd Group because of its caring and nurturing use of the property. The 32nd Group decided that a better arrangement would be for Dr. Wilcox to donate his property to the Credit Valley Conservation Area (CVCA) on the condition that the 32nd Scout Group would have a continuing right to use the property as it had when Dr. Wilcox was the owner. The CVCA accepted the donation under this condition.

Parliamentarian. Recipients must learn Psalms 1, 15, 25, 37, 101, 113, and 145.

Beginning in the 1960s, the Scout group would cut trees from Camp Wilcox and transport them to the church. I was part of several of these events over decade ago. Two Scout leaders and several Scouts would tramp over the acreage, find several large, well-proportioned trees, chop them down, and load them onto a trailer to take them to St. Martin's.

In more recent years, the CVCA decided that the Scout Group could no longer cut trees from Camp Wilcox. At a conservation area, trees must be preserved. Since then, our Scout Group has purchased trees for St. Martin's from other Scout Groups if the trees are large enough, and, if not, from local sellers. This year, the trees were purchased on December 6 from No Frills on Pacific Ave. and stored in the compound south of the church until they are to be set up. Funds for purchase are raised by the Scouts from fund-raising drives, such as Apple Day in October of each year.



Camp Wilcox, headwaters of the Credit River, and home of a beaver dam

The 32nd Toronto Scout Group appreciates its affiliation with St. Martin's which provides space for Beaver, Cub, and Scout meetings and provides support in other ways, such as Fr.

Hatt's annual tours of the church for the Beaver Colony.

From *The Lychgate*, Christmas 2000

Submitted by Jonathan Gentry, Archivist

It happened at St. Martin's. On the third Sunday of Advent, the congregation broke up when, during the Mass as the bells were rung, a small child's voice, in perfect pitch, piped: "Jingle bells, jingle bells." — related by Don Hattey

Snow Removal Volunteers Needed

By Ian Greene

St. Martin's has a dedicated group of parishioners who might be available to help with snow removal when needed. However, the forecast for this winter is lots of snow, so the more we have on our roster, the better. Students in high school, college, or university will be paid. You don't have to be available all the time — just on our list to be notified when help is needed. Half of our snow shovellers the past two weeks have been senior citizens, so more younger folks are needed! Please contact Ian Greene at iangreene0766@rogers.com.



**Church yard after snowfall and shovelling
November 9, 2025 -- Roberta Laking**



Cake at coffee hour on day of the Baptism of Noorjahaern, Kouhenoor and Dominic, November 23



Fr. Hatt assists with the Blessing of the Animals, October 5, 2025



Bishop Victoria assists with the Blessing of the Animals, October 5, 2025



Fellowship during coffee hour, November 16, 2025 – Philip Dawson