



ST. MARTHA'S

Episcopal Church of Bethany Beach

Gathered by Grace

"For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another." — Romans 12:4-5



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PARISH PROFILE 2026

Rector Search

Those seeking information about, or interested in applying for the ministry position, please contact:

The Rev. Canon Brad Hinton, Canon to the Ordinary at: bhinton@delaware.church

WHO WE ARE



"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." (1 Peter 4:10)

Saint Martha's is a warm, welcoming, and growing Christian community known for its strong sense of hospitality. Parishioners greet our many visitors and invite participation in church life. We strive to reflect Christ's welcome by recognizing each person's gifts, providing pathways into ministry, and nurturing authentic relationships. At St. Martha's, we believe in the power of God to transform lives and change the world. Everyone is welcome to explore with us what it means to be followers of Jesus.

***We are grateful for your interest
and prayerful discernment as
you review our profile.
God bless you on your journey of
discernment.***



OUR MISSION

**TO SHARE GOD'S
LOVE WITH ALL**

OUR VISION

*"A GROWING CHURCH
COMMUNITY IN WHICH ALL
KNOW AND EXPERIENCE
THE UNCONDITIONAL LOVE
OF GOD."*

OUR VALUES

SHARE OUR LOVE JOYFULLY

We share God's love with joy through worship, pastoral care, fellowship, and outreach. Whether in person or online, we serve others with open hearts, bringing hope, compassion, and kindness to our community and beyond.

KNOW AND HONOR CHRIST

We grow in faith by worshiping together, studying Scripture, and praying for one another. Through sermons, study groups, and personal reflection, we seek to deepen our relationship with Christ and live by His example.

ENGAGE INTELLECTUALLY, SOCIAALLY AND SPIRITUALLY

We nurture lifelong growth by engaging our minds, hearts, and spirits. With fellowship and prayer, we strengthen our faith, build meaningful relationships, and live out our call to love and serve

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

We are committed to sustaining a church community where everyone feels secure, respected, and valued. By upholding clear boundaries, promoting inclusivity, and ensuring physical, spiritual, and emotional safety, we create a space where faith and trust can flourish.

WHOM WE SEEK

"So he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart, and guided them by the skillfulness of his hands." (Psalm 78:72)

St. Martha's is seeking a priest whose life reflects a deep, personal relationship with God and who is prepared to guide a congregation already on a journey of faith.

Our Rector...



is a part of our parish family and leads with faith, joy, love and compassion



is visible, approachable, shows genuine empathy, and has a sense of humor



actively supports parish ministries, and fosters a welcoming, joyful atmosphere in which all feel accepted, valued, and encouraged to grow in faith



is a spiritual leader guiding worship with preaching that is reverent, relevant, and rooted in scripture (sermons are expected to be engaging, concise, and relatable, helping parishioners connect biblical teaching to their daily lives while consistently affirming God's unconditional love and grace)



has a strong understanding of Episcopal liturgy and sacramental life, and a deep respect for the traditions that define St. Martha's



supports our commitment to our many outreach programs and supports the 12-step recovery groups that call St. Martha's home



conducts courses of instruction or programs such as Bible study, lectures, discussion groups, retreats, book study, etc.



is comfortable sharing ministry and governance with laity — this role is understood as a shared ministry, in which the Rector, Vestry, and congregation work collaboratively to support one another



BIBLE STUDY

If you are searching for a faith community to call home, we invite you to make yourself at home with us.



WORSHIP SERVICE

St. Martha's celebrates Holy Eucharist Rite II every Sunday at 8 AM and 10 AM.



CHOIR PRACTICE

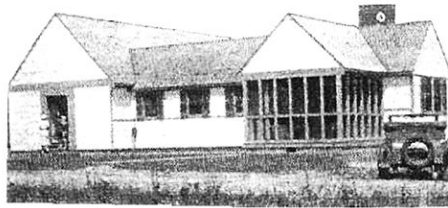
St. Martha's is alive with the sound of music! music! music! Come sing along or let the music feed your soul!

WHERE WE HAVE BEEN



"Rt. Rev. Arthur P. McKinstry, Bishop of the Diocese of Delaware, recognized the need for a summer chapel to serve vacationing Episcopalians in Bethany Beach."

St. Martha's began in 1940, when the Rt. Rev. Arthur P. McKinstry, Bishop of the Diocese of Delaware, recognized the need for a summer chapel to serve



vacationing Episcopalians in Bethany Beach. Six lots were purchased, and architect William H. Thompson designed a small chapel—originally named St. Martin's—with plans for future expansion. Summer services were led by visiting clergy from Wilmington, including John E. Hines, who later became Presiding Bishop.



In the 1950s, the Rev. Richard S. Bailey of All Saints', Rehoboth, assumed oversight, organizing the Altar Guild and enhancing the chapel's interior. As a nearby mission in Selbyville grew into its own St. Martin's Church, Bishop Mosley renamed the Bethany chapel St. Martha's to avoid confusion.

As the local community expanded in the 1960s, so did the desire for year-round worship. This became a reality in 1979, made possible by the presence of the Rev. Nathaniel C. Acton, a retired priest who settled in Bethany Beach. Under his leadership, St. Martha's began offering continuous Sunday services, a tradition that has continued since 1980.

The congregation grew steadily through the 1980s, becoming a mission of the Diocese of Delaware in 1984. Outreach ministries expanded, and lay leadership strengthened through the Mission Committee. By 1990, increased membership led to the church's first major expansion, adding much-needed space for worship and fellowship. Further renovations in the mid-1990s reshaped the church into its present form.



In the late 1990s and early 2000s, St. Martha's moved toward parish status, supported by dedicated clergy and lay leadership. After a period of intentional transition and discernment, the Rev. William Hunt Wickham was called as the church's first rector in 2004. St. Martha's was formally recognized as a parish in 2005.

Since 2005, St. Martha's has been blessed by a succession of rectors, each bringing distinct gifts in pastoral care, parish leadership, faith formation, education, and worship. Together, they have sustained and shaped the parish into the vibrant, growing, and deeply engaged faith community it has become today.

WHERE WE ARE GOING

In the fall of 2025 we started on a strategic plan for the congregation. And through that plan we identified five Strategic Priorities to be worked on over the next five years.

Aging: We recognize that the congregation is aging, as is the community around us. We want to continue to be the faith community where aging is celebrated as a spiritual strength. Our older members feel valued, supported and connected.

Growth: In recent years the average Sunday attendance (ASA) has increased month over month. New members and families are welcomed and included as they participate in church programs. We recognize that our current church campus needs to keep pace with this growth.

Volunteers: We want to expand or broaden our volunteer participation in essential ministries to the community. In addition to continuing our strong financial support of various community projects, we are also seeking ways to provide more direct person-to-person ministry support.

Community: We are committed to being a parish of worship, fellowship and ministry to the larger community. Along with our new rector, we look forward to continuing our tradition of worship and sermons that inspire spiritual growth, service and personal reflection.

Awareness: We want to build greater awareness regarding the impact St. Martha's has in the larger community beyond our hometown of Bethany Beach.

HOW WE WORSHIP

WELCOME!

Welcome to St. Martha's Episcopal Church. In this beautiful church between the sea and the sky—between heaven and earth—God is present and is working in new and amazing ways to draw all things together in Christ.

God is loving, and healing, and blessing, and making all things new, including all of us and the world we live in. We are blessed to be a part of what God is doing in the world. Here at St. Martha's, we believe that our church is the House of God and our altar is the Table of Christ, and ALL are welcome to join us.

OUR TRADITION



Grounded in the richness of the Episcopal tradition, St. Martha's celebrates Holy Eucharist Rite II each Sunday at 8 AM and 10 AM with music at both services. The choir leads congregational singing at the 10 AM service.

During each service, worshipers are invited to come to the altar for a personal blessing to celebrate a birthday, an anniversary, upcoming travel, or to be remembered for a special intention (often a medical issue or upcoming procedure). After each service, all are invited to coffee hour. Additionally, we have licensed Worship Leaders and Preachers.

MUSIC! MUSIC! MUSIC!



St. Martha's is alive with the sound of music! music! music! We are blessed with a Music Director who provides a rich diversity of music at each Sunday service, conducts our wonderful choir (10 AM), and directs our Bell Choir on special Sundays. He invites other musicians to join us from time to time and offers special concerts with guest musicians on festive occasions. Come sing along and let the music feed your soul!

HOW WE SERVE

St. Martha's is a vibrant and highly active parish, enriched by a strong spirit of participation and community engagement. Multiple committees work collaboratively to serve both the parish and the broader community. These include the Becoming Beloved Community, Adult Education and Community Events Committee, Hospitality Committee, Scholarship Committee, and Outreach Committee. Each group contributes through ongoing initiatives, special events, and community-focused programs that involve a wide range of parishioners.



OUTREACH & SERVICE INITIATIVES

St. Martha's actively serves the broader community through outreach efforts:

- Participation in a diocesan Justice Quilt project, including contributions from twelve parishes and the Diocese's Racial Justice and Reconciliation Commission
- Thanksgiving Project providing groceries and gift cards to local schools
- Annual diaper drive
- A helping network for parishioners unable to perform difficult household functions
- Scholarships awarded to children to attend the Diocesan summer Camp Arrowhead
- College Scholarships awarded based on financial need
- Angel Tree Christmas gifts for local school children
- Support for Habitat for Humanity house dedications through donations of cleaning supplies, vacuums, and essential household items
- Annual International Students Picnic
- Bake Sales and Book Sales.

EDUCATIONAL & COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

The parish is committed to lifelong learning and meaningful dialogue through a variety of programs:

- CPR/AED training for parishioners and community members
- A vibrant weekly Bible study group
- Informational sessions with South Coastal Village Volunteers
- Parish Ministry Fair to highlight church programs and involvement opportunities
- Distribution of information on community solar energy services and discounts
- Screening of the movie Zoo including a discussion with the producer/director
- Panel discussion addressing homelessness and the lack of affordable housing in southern Delaware
- A lively Sunday book discussion between services
- Monthly book club meeting discussing titles with spiritual focus
- A discussion with the first trans female member of the U.S. House of Representatives
- Educational tours

FELLOWSHIP & COMMUNITY EVENTS

St. Martha's places a strong emphasis on fellowship, offering regular opportunities for parishioners to gather and connect:

- Game Nights featuring snacks and inclusive activities for all ages
- Birthday Dinners celebrating members of the parish
- Summer Picnics on the Beach
- Christmas Luncheon
- Theme Dinners
- Weekly Coffee Hours following services

Through a wide range of outreach, educational, and fellowship activities, St. Martha's continues to foster a welcoming, engaged, and service-oriented parish community. The combined efforts of its committees and ministries create meaningful opportunities for connection, learning, and compassionate service both within the parish and beyond.

HOW WE HAVE FUN

St. Martha of Bethany, the patron saint of all those who work to offer hospitality, knew that being joyful, doing good, and enjoying the world and its people are God's gifts. In that spirit, our kitchen and parish hall are where we get life's party started!

The fact that Coffee Hour after Sunday services is commonly called "Happy Hour" speaks volumes. Parishioners meet, greet, catch up, and share plans for the coming week—all while enjoying a bounty of snacks. Potluck dinners to celebrate birthdays, seasonal events and holidays fill the hall. We revel in life with live music and dancing. In the summer, we make the one-block walk to the beach for picnics that are accompanied by the rhythm of the waves and singing gulls. Approximately 90 parishioners participate in monthly restaurant and in-house dinner groups, ensuring we get to build relationships between the "8:00" and "10:00" parishioners, and keep the fun going through the winter months.

In the spirit of St. Martha of Bethany and Christian hospitality, our signature event of the summer is hosting the International Picnic for the young people from around the world who come to work in our beach community. We partner with local restaurants and businesses to welcome those who are the backbone of our summer community. Languages meld, new friendships are forged (even a marriage!), and selfies are taken. Bicycles are fixed up, some given away, and safety and health information provided. Letting young people far from home know that we welcome and support them has filled our hearts and formed some life-long connections.

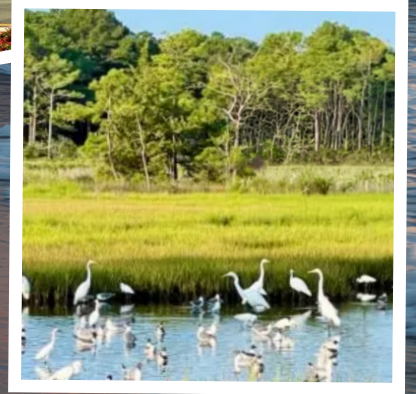
You can find our gang golfing (for fun and charity), bowling in competitive leagues or just for fun. Monthly game nights are filled with laughter and competitive taunts which are all part of the fun. Book groups tackling a variety of genres lead to insightful discussions. Guest speakers enlighten us and our community about history, politics, foreign lands, and local lore.

Road trip! Piling on the bus, or caravanning by car, we've recently visited the historic landmarks of Sussex County, the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the Harriet Tubman Museum, and the University of Delaware's Oyster Hatchery. Pre COVID, there were cruises, since then, small groups of parishioners have ventured out domestically and abroad, and now there's talk of future foreign travel adventures! Come along and join the fun!

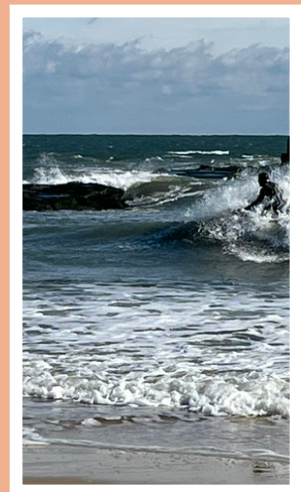
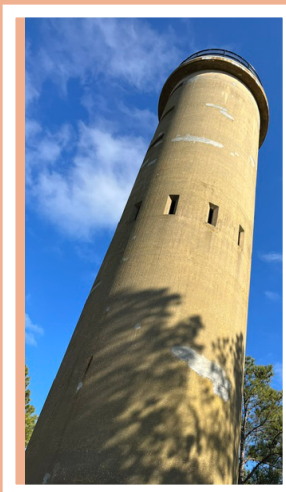
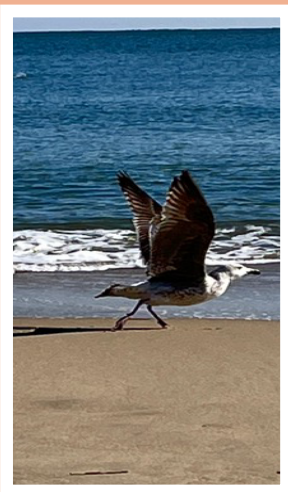


WHERE WE LIVE

*"How Pleasant It Is When
God's People Live Together
In Unity" -Psalm 133:1-3*



Bethany Beach, home to St. Martha's, is part of Delaware's "Quiet Resorts" — a string of charming coastal towns stretching from the Indian River Inlet to the Maryland line. The area is known for its wide beaches, peaceful inland bays, wooded parks, and slower pace of life that invites both reflection and adventure. While summer brings generations of families to the shore, the community has also grown into a vibrant year-round home for many who are drawn to its warmth, beauty, and strong sense of connection. Founded in 1901 as a religious retreat, Bethany Beach still carries that spirit today — a place where people come not only to vacation, but to breathe deeply, belong, and put down roots.



CHURCH LEADERSHIP



St. Martha's Church is governed by a nine-member Vestry, each of whom serves for a three-year term. Our Vestry is highly active, engaged, and forward-looking.

Vestry Members

John Short, Sr. Warden	Gari Lewis
Dale Smith, Jr Warden	Tim Lush
Marianne Peña, Secretary	Jim Randle
Debbe Grannis	Mary Thompson
Pat Leskowitz	

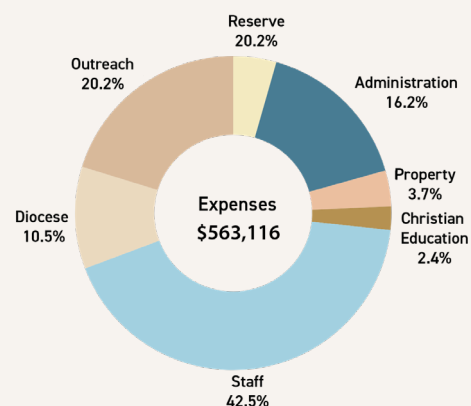
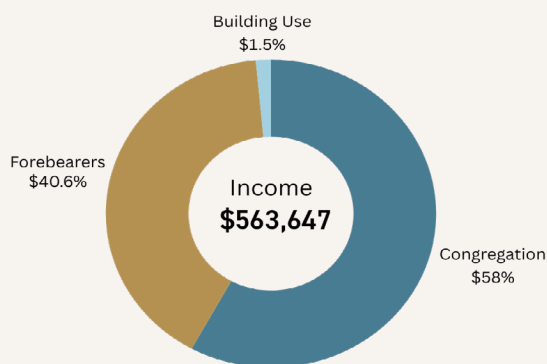
Our church is extremely active with a variety of activities that are primarily led by the following committees:

Worship	Scholarship Committee
Adult Education	Stewardship
Hospitality	Dinner Groups
Altar Guild	Pastoral Care
Becoming Beloved	Building & Grounds
Community	Personnel
Strategic Planning	Finance
Music/Recitals	Engraved Bricks
Technology	Men's Discipleship Group
International Student Picnic	Counters & Deposit Coordinators
Flower Guild	

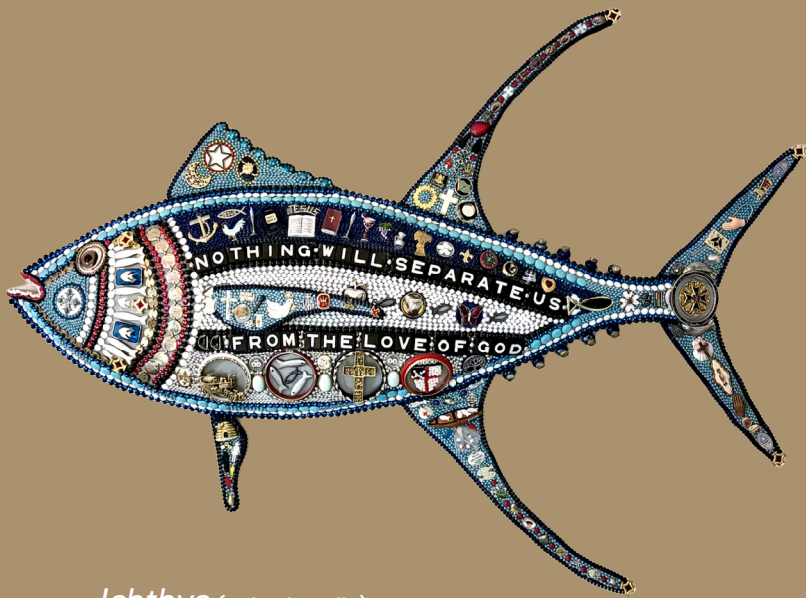
Staff

Supply Priest	Diane Tomlinsom
Director of Music	Dave Kemper
Administrative Assistant	open
Sexton	open

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT



As can be seen by the above pie charts of projected 2026 income and expenses, St. Martha's is in a strong financial position. Our pledge and plate contributions have increased every year since Covid, as has our average attendance. We can attribute most of our financial success to the generosity of our congregation and forebearers. We have \$744,000 of unrestricted funds in The Diocese of Delaware Master Fund A; the dividends from which are used to supplement the operating budget. We also have \$4.85 million in restricted funds in the same Master Fund A; the dividends from which are used to fund our Diocesan pledge, various outreach ministries, and long-term capital improvements.



Ichthys (mixed media)
-by parishioner Christina Edgar
displayed on Narthex Wall

St. Martha's
Episcopal Church of Bethany Beach
Growing together in faith

St. Martha's is located at
117 Maplewood St. in Bethany Beach.
Our mailing address is
PO Box 1478 Bethany Beach, DE
19930.

Office hours are 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.,
Tuesday through Thursday.

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Email: admin@stmarthasbethanybeach.org