Like our namesake Martin, St. Martin’s is devoted to outreach, which it could be said, is the true passion of the church. Our outreach mission is to provide support to the neediest populations in Providence—where we can make the greatest impact and a real difference in people’s lives. Helping women, children, the homeless, released prisoners, asylum seekers, and struggling arts organizations are central to our mission of giving to smaller organizations that may not have large fundraising initiatives. From providing space in our building at no cost or reduced rates to the work beyond our walls, we strive to make a difference in the world.

As the Cottage Meetings throughout 2019 revealed, our goal is to reimagine our community priorities beyond the fabric of the building, anticipating the needs of the century stretching before us. This capital campaign’s vision addresses the needs of our members, present and future; through our commitment to robust and meaningful outreach, and our investment in strengthening worship in our community and beyond, and opening our doors to the future.

EASTER 2020

By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established.

Proverbs

The following giving opportunities emerged from the conversations and surveys of the parish’s Cottage Meetings in 2019 and church leadership.

Capital Campaign 2020

Church $1.2M
- Bell Tower and Sanctuary renovations (completed)
- Pay down the line of credit ($1m) and repay the endowment ($200k).

Building Maintenance Fund $300K
- A reserve that will be used to handle the unexpected costs of caring for a 100 year old building.

Outreach Growth Fund $200K
- For example: Open Doors, Better Lives RI, St. Mary’s Home for Children, The Cloak DCYF gifts, AA/Al-Anon

Equipping Facility for the Future $300K+
- Health and Safety (i.e. fire alarm system)
- Air Conditioning—first floor of Parish House
- Audio-Visual Equipment for live streaming worship
- Lighting

TOTAL GOAL $2.0M

Cover art by Emily Gray
St. Martin’s community traces its origin to a gathering on March 3, 1895 in the living room of James Estes at 247 Waterman Street. Later, the growing congregation met in the Moses Brown farmhouse on Humboldt Avenue, and then in the wooden Calvary Church on the current site on Orchard Avenue. On November 11, 1917, the people gathered to celebrate a new stone church dedicated to Martin, fourth-century Bishop of Tours, legendary for his inclusive view of the world and his generosity. These ideals continue to inspire our re-imagining of the St. Martin’s community. The people who gathered in 1917 witnessed the physical culmination of an abiding vision, initially imagined in small groups, then in a growing worship community, and sustained over many years, creating a place of beauty, peace, and inspiration.

In three different centuries, St. Martin’s has nurtured generations of Rhode Islanders who have sought to imagine and build a community of worship
and faith, in service to Providence, to Rhode Island, and to the world. Each new generation has worshipped and envisioned a future for St. Martin’s. Amidst history’s swirling calamities, including the worldwide pandemic of 1918, two World Wars, and the challenges of our own time, the church community has been a focus of renewal and hope. Generation after generation, the church has transformed itself to meet the urgent needs of the times.

In 1996, the year of the last capital campaign, the people of St. Martin’s raised almost $1.5M to create a new entrance and the visually stunning atrium joining the sanctuary and the Great Hall. New accessible entrances, bathrooms, and an elevator were added, along with renovations to the church school rooms and kitchen. At that time, both the church and the parish house were added to the National Register of Historic Places. The purpose of that campaign was to enhance the safety, utility, and appearance of the space to accommodate an expanding worship community. A quarter of a century later, St. Martin’s twenty-first century community has once again been actively reimagining the place, the vision and the work of the church, shaping all three to be increasingly fit for God’s purpose in our own challenging time.

“We show forth your praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to your service…”

The General Thanksgiving, BCP

The challenge of re-imagining the building’s role in the life of the current community was made evident by the devastating rain and snowstorms of 2019, which exposed weaknesses in the roof and caused serious
damage to many parts of the building—demanding urgent and timely attention. For example, extensive repair and restoration of the bell tower were necessary and required many enhancements to provide significant protection against future damage from water penetration and humidity. Several parishioners worked tirelessly with a general contractor and our insurance company to procure an insurance settlement of $350K to go toward the construction costs. We have the advantage of knowing the costs from this phase of construction not through a glass darkly, but clearly, since these renovations have been completed.

The renovations are visible in the beautifully restored chapel, in the great east window behind the high altar, and in our impressive red doors, as well as in countless unseen areas of the building, which have been repaired and strengthened, preserving its structure well into the future. In order to pay for the repairs, the vestry approved taking a line of credit for $1M from Bank RI. The goal of this capital campaign is to repay the borrowed amount, raise funds for other much-needed projects, and to establish two dedicated endowment funds. One will be reserved for future building projects beyond the normal operating budget, and the other will be reserved for outreach in order to sustain our good works in the community.
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