

## **Vestry Candidate Bios**

### **Beckie Strobel – 3 year term**

I was baptized and confirmed as an Episcopalian as a child; however, I explored many other denominations as an adult. None felt quite right for me, though, and a faint voice in my heart calling me back to my roots grew increasingly louder in the last few years. Eventually, after driving past St. Martin's countless times, I decided to attend a 5:05 service and felt at home right away. I joined the St. Martin's choir almost immediately after attending my first service, and I have been a member ever since.

While I didn't know Kay Fletcher, I was saddened to learn of her death and welcomed the opportunity to serve out the rest of her term. I am looking forward to continuing to serve on the vestry for a full term, and I plan to leverage my background in communications, marketing, web design, and project management to help in any way I can. Thank you all for being so welcoming and for allowing me the opportunity to give back to a community that is such a blessing to me.

### **Debbie Matthews – 3 year term**

Debbie Matthews joined St Martin's when her parents got married in March of 1970. She has fond memories of playing soccer in the back yard of our church. She was involved in the youth group and later volunteered in the nursery guild and taught Sunday school for 14 years. Her biggest, but most fun, failure was offering a glitter craft on Transfiguration Sunday. Her sense of humor gets her through those moments. Today she volunteers where she can, and helps with the Beacon.

Those of you from St. Louis want to know what high school Debbie attended. Debbie graduated from Parkway West, then Maryville University with a major in business and minor in information systems. Her first job was at Southwestern Bell, where she became project manager and continued for over 20 years in various telecommunications companies. She is now retired and works part time as a coach for Osteostrong.

The loves of her life are her children, whom some of you may remember: Zach, Ali, and Sam. Debbie tries to go to Chicago at least once a month to see Ali, her husband, Jake, and their "feral boys", Bob (2.5yrs) and Teddy (14 mo). Sam and his wife, Courtney, live in St. Louis and will be welcoming their miracle baby in July. Debbie is looking forward to having a St. Louis grandchild.

Debbie's hobbies are gardening, stained glass, sewing, and water sports. Debbie looks forward to joining the St. Martin's garden group this year, as well as getting her own yard/garden back on track. Yes, 2024 was a rough year for her garden due to that pesky hip replacement and subsequent restrictions. But, baby, she's back and she's looking forward to serving her St. Martin's family.

### **John Alden – 1 year term**

By way of introduction,

Baptized at birth in 1961 by my great grandfather the Rt. Rev. Edwin J. Randall, the Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago (hence my middle name), I began my journey in the Episcopal faith. Growing up, my now late uncle was an Episcopal minister serving as the Rector to various congregations throughout the greater Chicago area. I was Confirmed at St. Peters in Ladue where both of my parents had served on the Vestry in the 1970's.

A resident of Ballwin, an empty nester, and a previous member the Vestry of St. Martin's (2017-2019, 2022-2024), I'm currently our Diocesan back-up Delegate, a participating congregational delegate for the Diocese of Eastern Missouri's Requiem or Renaissance discernment project and am a frequent Usher.

As a longtime Business Development executive in the technology industry, and as a previous/current member of the Vestry, I offer a modern stance of growth, critical thinking, and steady stewardship, with a strong respect for history and tradition.