

St
Martin
in
the
Fields

September -
November 2025

In partnership with
CHURCH TIMES

Autumn Lecture Series 2025
Here I Stand
Where Do You Stand?

MARIANN EDGAR BUDDE • ROWAN WILLIAMS
SAM WELLS • CASSA PANTHO • MARIANA MAZZUCATO
GWEN ADSHEAD • CHRIS BRYANT
MICHAEL IGNATIEFF • MICHAEL ROSEN • ELIF SHAFK
MARY BEARD • CAROLINE LUCAS

www.smitf.org/lectures • 020 7766 1100



Here I Stand

St Martin-in-the-Fields Autumn Lecture Series 2025 investigates those things in which we believe deeply – and for which we would be prepared to make a costly stand. We have assembled an inspirational line-up of speakers from the world of faith, politics, literature, poetry, dance, economics, psychology, history and academia. Each lecture addresses this question through the lives and perspectives of people who have advocated and often faced opposition for the things they believe in: individuals who have not just written or spoken about, but lived the values they have professed. Each of these speakers through their lives offer insight, prophecy, challenge, controversy, hope, warning, courage and vision.

Where do you stand?

As the world faces an increasing threat from the erosion of democracy, trust and truth and the rise of populism and nationalism, our 2025 lecture series addresses a world divided by conflict and a planet in crisis. Through these compelling and diverse voices it asks the question: Where do I stand? What are the things that hold my life together, and lie at the very core of all I am? What are the values that I will not renounce and are there beliefs that I hold that I would give my life for?

We believe there is something inspiring and transformative about listening to a person explain, simply and humbly, 'These are the principles on which I have built my life, and these are the values I will not forsake.'

Martin Luther believed salvation was a gift for the guilty not a reward for the righteous. When he faced excommunication and death, he said, 'To go against conscience is neither right nor safe. Here I stand. I can do no other.' It's an awesome thing to behold a person making such a declaration whatever befall. This autumn we listen to and learn from figures who have faced criticism and hostility for where they stand but have stood firm nonetheless. We invite you to join them and reflect on where and how you might be called to do the same.

- Revd Dr Sam Wells
Vicar, St Martin-in-the-Fields



For tickets: www.smitf.org/lectures
or call 020 7766 1100

Mariann Edgar Budde

Sunday 14 September, 7.00 - 8.30pm



The Right Rev Mariann Edgar Budde made world headlines after she used her sermon, at the National Cathedral in Washington prayer service for the inauguration of President Trump, to implore him 'to have mercy' upon immigrants and LGBTQ+ individuals. Tonight she comes to St Martin's to speak about what it means to strive for Christian justice and to speak truth to power.

Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde is the first woman to serve as the Bishop of Washington, leading the Episcopal Diocese of Washington since 2011. Before this role, she served for 18 years as Rector of St. John's Episcopal Church in Minneapolis. Mariann Budde has shown great courage in speaking truth to power believing Jesus calls all who follow him to strive for justice and peace, and to respect the dignity of every human being. Bishop Budde is an advocate and organiser in support of justice concerns, including racial equity, gun violence prevention, immigration reform, the full inclusion of LGBTQ+ persons, and the care of creation.

She gained significant public attention for her address during a post-inauguration prayer service for President Donald Trump. During her sermon, she directly appealed to President Trump to 'have mercy' on vulnerable populations, specifically mentioning immigrants and the LGBTQ+ community. This plea garnered both praise for its courage and criticism from Trump and his supporters. Bishop Budde stood by her message, stating she would not apologise for advocating for compassion.

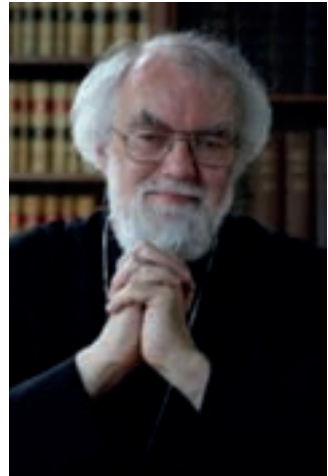
Rowan Williams

Monday 15 September, 7.00 - 8.30pm

Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury, author, theologian and spiritual guide, is interviewed by Sam Wells on the things he believes in and stands for, as he reflects upon his life and the struggles, threats, hopes and conflicts our world faces today.

Rowan Williams is a Welsh Anglican bishop, theologian, and poet, who served as the 104th Archbishop of Canterbury from 2002 to 2012. Educated at Christ's College, Cambridge, and Wadham College, Oxford, he held academic posts at Cambridge and as Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at Oxford before becoming Bishop of Monmouth in 1992 and Archbishop of Wales in 2000. Rowan Williams is renowned for his intellectual depth, spiritual insight, and prayerfulness. He is a man of great wisdom, humility and insight.

Rowan Williams is a prolific author on theology, philosophy, and spirituality. Since stepping down as Archbishop, he has served as Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge, and remains a prominent public intellectual, theologian, writer and speaker. His latest book *Discovering Christianity: A Guide to the Curious* was published in February 2025. He is the spiritual guide for St Martin-in-the-Fields' Nazareth Community.



Sam Wells

interviewed by Julian Worricker

Monday 22 September, 7.00 - 8.30pm



Sam Wells is interviewed by veteran BBC broadcaster Julian Worricker about his faith, beliefs, influences and theology and the things he stands for as he reflects upon his life, the Church and what it means to be Vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields.

Sam Wells is Vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields. He is a widely known preacher, broadcaster and author. He spent ten years in areas of significant deprivation in Newcastle and Norwich in the early part of his ministry. From 2005-2012 he was Dean of Duke University Chapel US. He was also Research Professor of Christian Ethics at Duke Divinity School. He appears regularly on 'Thought for the Day' on Radio 4's Today programme. He has published 50 books, including scholarly works on ethics, studies in ministry, liturgy, discipleship and preaching. In 2025 he published *Constructing an Incarnational Theology: A Christocentric View of God's Purpose* which challenges the traditional notion of the reasons for Christ's incarnation. He is also Visiting Professor of Christian Ethics at King's College London.



Julian Worricker is a highly experienced and familiar voice in British broadcasting, with a career at the BBC spanning over 35 years. He has presented numerous prominent programmes, including "Weekend" on the BBC World Service, "Any Answers?" and "Last Word" on BBC Radio 4, and has been a presenter for BBC News and "The Media Show." Known for his warm yet incisive style and his ability to draw out fascinating perspectives this promises to be an exciting interview.

Cassa Pancho

Monday 29 September, 7.00 - 8.30pm

Cassa Pancho, the inspirational and innovative director and choreographer of Ballet Black, speaks about the stand she has taken to challenge the traditional landscape of classical ballet and to found a dance company for the talent and expression of black and Asian dancers.

Cassa Pancho MBE is the pioneering founder and inspirational artistic director of Ballet Black, a professional ballet company established in 2001. After studying classical ballet and recognising a lack of opportunities for Black and Asian dancers in the UK, Pancho founded the company to provide a platform for these artists and to challenge the traditional landscape of classical ballet.

Under Cassa Pancho's leadership, Ballet Black has commissioned numerous new works, performed at prestigious venues, continues to advocate for greater diversity and inclusion in the dance world and has been internationally critically acclaimed. Cassa Pancho has also commissioned a wide range of choreographers to create new ballets for the company. One of her most recent significant inspirational works as a collaborator and artistic director was *Say It Loud* in 2022. This ballet was created in collaboration with the Ballet Black Company artists to commemorate the company's 20th anniversary and won Best Dance Production at the 2022 Black British Theatre Awards. Ballet Black has consistently provided inspiring opportunities to showcase diverse talent in the classical ballet world. Cassa Pancho was awarded an MBE in 2013 for her services to classical ballet.



Mariana Mazzucato

The Christian Aid Annual Lecture

Monday 6 October, 7.00 - 8.30pm



Professor Mariana Mazzucato, a world-renowned and highly influential economist, brings new vision and humanity to an economics that can tackle the global issues of our time and confront the vast international inequalities of our threatened planet.

Mariana Mazzucato is Professor of the Economics of Innovation and Public Value at University College London, where she also founded and directs the UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose. She is an inspirational author and speaker and her work challenges conventional economic thought, advocating for a more active role of the state in driving innovation and shaping markets for public good. In 2022, Pope Francis appointed her to the Pontifical Academy for Life, believing her insights could bring 'a fresh breath of humanity' to discussions on critical global challenges like inequality and climate change. Her most ground breaking books include *The Entrepreneurial State* (2013), which debunks the myth that innovation is solely a private sector phenomenon, demonstrating the crucial, often unacknowledged, role of public investment; *The Value of Everything* (2018), which critiques how modern economies often confuse value extraction with value creation; and *Mission Economy* (2021), advocating for 'moonshot' thinking to tackle grand societal challenges through purposeful public-private collaboration.

Gwen Adshead

Monday 13 October, 7.00 - 8.30pm

Dr Gwen Adshead speaks about her work as a forensic psychiatrist working with some of Britain's worst offenders. She talks about the nature of violence and the balance between public protection and punishment, and whether rehabilitation and restorative justice and even forgiveness is possible.

Dr. Gwen Adshead is a distinguished forensic psychiatrist and psychotherapist with nearly three decades of experience in the NHS, including work in prisons and secure hospitals like Broadmoor. In her role as both a forensic psychiatrist and psychotherapist, Professor Adshead has tried to understand the psychological mechanisms that give rise to violence and life-threatening behaviour toward others. She is a strong advocate for a more therapeutic, compassionate and rehabilitative approach to working with offenders, focusing on understanding the underlying psychological factors contributing to their behaviour rather than simply punitive measures.

Gwen Adshead is deeply engaged in discussions about the ethical dilemmas faced by forensic psychiatrists, particularly regarding issues of responsibility, free will, and the balance between public protection and individual rights. She has published over 100 academic works and holds an MA in Medical Law and Ethics, as well as an honorary doctorate from St George's Hospital Medical School. A highly respected lecturer, she has been a visiting professor at Yale and Gresham College. In 2013, she received the Royal College of Psychiatry's President's Medal. She is also the co-author of *The Sunday Times* bestseller *The Devil You Know: Encounters in Forensic Psychiatry*. In 2024 she gave the BBC Reith Lectures.



Chris Bryant

Monday 20 October, 7.00 - 8.30pm



Sir Chris Bryant MP is a politician who is both a member of parliament and a Christian. In this lecture he talks about his life first as a priest and now as an MP and how his faith influences his politics and what happens when the two come into conflict.

Chris Bryant MP has served as a Labour Member of Parliament since 2001. He left the Anglican priesthood in 1991 because he concluded that being gay and being a priest at that time were incompatible. He held various ministerial roles in government from 2008 to 2010, including Deputy Leader of the House of Commons. Knighted in 2023 for political and public service, he currently holds roles as Minister of State for Data Protection and Telecoms, and Minister of State for Creative Industries, Arts and Tourism.

Chris Bryant's Christian faith has always been a foundational aspect of the values that has stood for and has directly influenced his life choices and his ongoing advocacy for social justice, and for the LGBT+ community, even when it puts him at odds with the institution of the Church. Chris Bryant has written many books including: *The Glamour Boys: The Secret Story of the Rebels who Fought for Britain to Defeat Hitler* 2020; *Code of Conduct: Why We Need to Fix Parliament* (2023) and *Parliament: The Biography* (two volumes) In August 2025 he published his new memoir *A Life and A Half: The Unexpected Making of a Politician*.

Michael Ignatieff

Tuesday 28 October, 7.00 - 8.30pm

Michael Ignatieff is a staunch defender of liberal democracy, viewing it as a fragile but essential achievement that requires constant vigilance and effort to preserve. Ignatieff is a leading thinker of our time and in this lecture he speaks about the values he stands for and which are threatened by our present world order and the break down of that order.

Educated at the University of Toronto and Harvard, he held prominent academic positions at Cambridge, Oxford, and Harvard, specialising in human rights, international affairs, and political philosophy.

Ignatieff emphasizes the importance of the rule of law, protection of individual rights, and free and fair political competition. He has expressed concern about the rise of populism and authoritarian tendencies that challenge the foundations of liberal democracy. He sees these movements as exploiting the inherent tensions within democracy, potentially leading to a 'politics of enemies' rather than a healthy competition among adversaries.

His extensive bibliography includes influential works like *Blood and Belonging* and *The Lesser Evil*. Between 2006 and 2011 he served as an MP in the Parliament of Canada and then as Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada and Leader of the Official Opposition. After leaving politics, he returned to academia, serving as President and Rector of the Central European University, where he championed academic freedom and critical thinking. He is currently a professor of history at CEU in Vienna, Austria.



Michael Rosen

Monday 3 November, 7.00 - 8.30pm



Michael Rosen is an inspirational poet and passionate advocate for children's literature, reading, and writing. He has been instrumental in making poetry accessible to everyone, especially children. His poetry also tackles issues of social justice and the vital importance of creativity. In this lecture he speaks about the importance of the imagination and storytelling and the things he cares passionately about.

Renowned for his vibrant performances and engaging storytelling, Michael Rosen has authored over 140 books, including the beloved picture book *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*. He served as the UK Children's Laureate from 2007 to 2009, championing children's literature and poetry. Rosen is also a familiar voice on BBC Radio 4, presenting "Word of Mouth." His work often draws on his own childhood experiences and uses accessible language, making him a significant figure in contemporary children's literature. In 2023, he received the PEN Pinter Prize for his "fearless" body of work.

He believes in the joy of language and encourages children to play with words and explore their own voices. While known for his humour, Rosen also tackles sensitive subjects in his work, such as bereavement for example Michael Rosen's *Sad Book*, written after the death of his son and *The Missing*, which explores the impact of war and persecution through his family's experiences during the Holocaust. Through his poetry Michael Rosen has commented on social and political issues, particularly concerning education, human rights, and the treatment of refugees and migrants and the vital importance of human dignity, creativity and equality.

Elif Shafak

Monday 10 November, 7.00 - 8.30pm

Elif Shafak's writing has always challenged norms and explored diverse voices, and inspired through the power of story. Her writing reflects a deep spiritual wisdom and in this lecture she speaks about the beliefs she stands for, why she writes and the stories she wants to tell as one of Turkey and Britain's most famous and influential novelists.

Elif Shafak is a Turkish-British bestselling novelist, essayist, academic, and activist. She writes in both Turkish and English, and her work has been translated into over 50 languages. Shafak is best known for her novels, which often explore themes of identity, culture, history, and politics. Drawing on Sufi mysticism and writing with a great spiritual sensitivity and depth she emphasizes the importance of unlearning dogmas and embracing doubt as a healthy aspect of faith and understanding. Her work is inclusive, empathetic, and brilliantly creative- she challenges norms, and explores diverse voices. Her unique narrative voice bridges cultures and highlights the unheard in captivating stories that defy easy categorization.

Some of her most acclaimed works include *The Forty Rules of Love*, *Three Daughters of Eve*, and *10 Minutes 38 Seconds in This Strange World*. She is a passionate advocate for women's rights, LGBTQ+ rights, and freedom of speech, and she often incorporates these themes into her writing. Elif Shafak has been nominated for the Booker Prize several times and is a recipient of many literary awards.



Mary Beard

Monday 17 November, 7.00 - 8.30pm



Dame Mary Beard is a preeminent British classicist, author, and television presenter, renowned for making ancient history accessible and engaging to a wide audience. Mary Beard has always challenged ingrained societal biases, particularly related to power and gender with historical insight and an honesty that illuminate contemporary issues. In this lecture she speaks about some of the lessons we need to learn from history.

Mary Beard stands for a rigorous, accessible, and critically engaged approach to history and the classics. Educated at Newnham College, Cambridge, she became Professor of Classics at Cambridge University and a Fellow of Newnham College.

Mary Beard's extensive bibliography includes acclaimed works like *SPQR: A History of Ancient Rome* and *Women and Power: A Manifesto*. She is a regular media commentator, celebrated for her insightful yet often provocative perspectives, and has presented numerous BBC documentaries, solidifying her role as a leading public intellectual and a refreshingly direct, challenging and insightful voice in academia.

Caroline Lucas

Monday 24 November, 7.00 - 8.30pm

Caroline Lucas is a highly influential politician, speaker and writer, widely remembered as the UK's first Green Party Member of Parliament. For many years she has courageously warned about the dangers of global warming and the perilous threat to our planet. Her latest book explores the rise of nationalism. In this lecture Caroline Lucas speaks about where she today stands and why we need to stand with her.

Caroline Lucas represented Brighton Pavilion from 2010 to 2024. Prior to her parliamentary career, Lucas served as a Member of the European Parliament for ten years. She also held leadership roles within the Green Party of England and Wales, twice serving as leader or co-leader. A passionate advocate for environmental protection, social justice, and human rights, Lucas is a consistent voice for progressive change and a champion of a fairer, greener future.

Caroline Lucas has held numerous roles in All-Party Parliamentary Groups, including Chair of the Climate Change and Limits to Growth groups, and Co-Chair or Vice Chair of groups on issues such as fuel poverty, democratic participation, Brexit, drug policy reform, refugees, and proportional representation. She has also been an officer in groups addressing domestic violence, hate crime, and sustainable farming. She holds a PhD in English literature. Caroline is the author of *Honourable Friends*, detailing her first term as an MP, and her book *Another England: How to Reclaim Our National Story*, was a Sunday Times bestseller in 2024.



Booking a ticket for the Autumn Lecture Series

Tickets to attend these lectures in St Martin-in-the-Fields

£10 for each lecture to help cover the costs of the series.

Free tickets also available.

Tickets to watch the lectures livestreamed

£10 for each lecture to help cover the cost of the series.

Free tickets also available.

You can also help us to make this programme available to all by paying for a place for someone else which helps us to provide free places.

For tickets: www.smiff.org/lectures

Also available from: The Box Office, St Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square, London WC2N 4JH

The Autumn Lecture Series is part of the education programme at St Martin's. Each year we bring together leading theologians, practitioners and speakers to discuss the big questions facing us. We strive to make the series accessible to all – guests can attend in the building or online. While there is a requested contribution of £10 towards each lecture, free tickets are available for all the lectures.

We would like to thank St Martin-in-the-Fields Trust for their financial support in helping to make this Autumn Lecture Series possible. If you would like to support the Autumn Lecture Series and the work of St Martin-in-the-Fields you can make a donation when booking your place or you can also donate to St Martin's Trust online at:

<https://www.stmartin-in-the-fields.org/support-us/>

We would like to thank you for your support.

We are **planting trees** with the European Festivals Forest to work towards net zero. Please join us when you book tickets.

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