

Elizabeth "Liz" Arras

Our family joined St. Martin's Church in January of 2010, after searching for the right-fit-church. Jim and I were both raised within strong faith-filled families... but different religions and we needed to find a common ground. We had been attending St. Francis Episcopal Church in Eureka since 2006, after I moved back to St. Louis from Philadelphia. St. Francis is the parish that my Mother and Step-Father call home.

Jim and I were actually married at St. Martin's Church on October 6, 2007, since our parish did not have a church building (and we didn't want to be wed in the elementary school cafeteria, where services were held). Ironically, it took us over two years to come back to St. Martin's to attend a Sunday service. The sermon that day touched us both, and we knew that this was a place we could grow our family surrounded and nurtured by faith and friends. As we came back week after week, we were and continue to be amazed by all that this community has to offer.

I work full time as an Architectural Lighting Designer with Randy Burkett Lighting Design, in Webster Groves. I have been a designer there since 2006, previously working at Grenald Waldron Associates in Philadelphia. My Bachelor Degree is in Architectural Engineering, with an emphasis in Lighting and Power Systems Design, from the University of Kansas (Rock Chalk!), 2003. I specialize in creating artistic and calculational visual images – to help our clients fully understand design concepts and intent. I'm responsible for our social networking (Facebook and Twitter), and have my hand in a lot of our marketing materials (postcards, flyers, and newsletters) – print and online.

As a St. Louis native, I have to answer the ol' question - where'd you go to High School – with, Nerinx Hall. (I'm obviously big on life circling back on itself – and Nerinx is right across the street from where I now work.) I was raised in the Catholic Church, where I was a reader, choir member, band member (when I played violin, but I haven't touched it in over 15 years, so don't ask me to squeak at you now), and youth group member among other involvements. Now, my "free" time is filled with being a proud momma to Ethan, and "doting" wife to my best friend, Jim. I write two online blogs – one about cooking casseroles... the other about our family. If I could add four more hours to every day, I'd fill it with sewing, painting, photography, and reading.

Ethan was baptized at St. Martin's on Easter Sunday 2010; and Jim and I took the Confirmation Class during fall of 2010. We're here to stay (it's such a relief to not be searching any longer), and are trying to find our place in this active community. So once I got over the initial shock of the suggestion at being a member of Vestry – I realized that this might be the "gentle" push I needed to jump in. I have to be honest that I'm afraid of letting everyone down, since my time is so limited, and I still feel very new to St. Martin's and the Episcopal faith. But I'm not too modest to admit that I know I have talents and abilities that will complement our community. I look forward to this opportunity.