



# Matt's Missive

January 2024

## A Lenten Study of Baptismal Promises

By Diane Woods

Plans are underway for a Lenten study, and you are invited. The study chosen for this year is *"Will You?"* from Forward Movement. From the Introduction of the study "The first three questions of our Baptismal Covenant are about belief, a restatement of our creeds. The last five questions, the "will you" questions, are about action, and these action questions are the focus of this Lenten study."

The book we will use is divided into five chapters with a focus on one of the "will you" questions per chapter. Each chapter is divided into seven brief reflections, which are perfect for daily engagement during the week. The reflections include personal stories, history, theology, and material from common church resources such as scripture, hymns, and liturgy. You can read a sample of the study [here](#). We will begin the study on Wednesday, February 21. Please pick up your book no later than Ash Wednesday, February 14, so you can begin the daily reflections before our first night.

We will begin each Wednesday with a light meal at 6:00 p.m. in Creasy Hall. Our discussion will start at 6:30 p.m. We will share leading the discussion with the group as well as providing a light meal. A leader guide is available and will be given to the leaders. A sign-up sheet will be available in the Narthex or you can call the office during the week.

*"My prayer is that this book will inspire you to think in new ways about the promises we make to God, to each other, and to ourselves in our baptisms."* (Author Amanda Perkins McGriff)

### PLEASE JOIN US!

**Dining Out on Thursday, January 25th, at 6:30 p.m.**

**Noy's Bistro**

**976 Coronado Blvd., Universal City, TX 78148**

**RSVP by January 23rd to Arlene Stalvey**



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Our Mission: We serve Jesus Christ as a community rich in the Episcopal tradition by welcoming the seeker, providing a caring family, encouraging spiritual growth, and reaching into our neighborhood and world.

## Priest's Point of View

There's a reason I've grown to love January. It's... baseball season?!?

For thirteen years now, I have volunteered as an athletics chaplain with a college baseball team; the last ten years have been at Our Lady of the Lake University here in town. It started as a way to get 'out of the box' and minister to the surrounding community, and it keeps being fruitful Christian ministry, so I keep showing up and volunteering.

After several years of doing that ministry, I started to study how athletics chaplaincy is done, which eventually led me to doctoral studies at Baylor (currently in progress). I've learned a great deal over the years, and I will have plenty to say about it as time goes on. Thinking theologically about something that the church has tended to ignore (or marginalize) has been fascinating.

My Saints play on Fridays and Saturdays (unless weather shifts the schedule), so there's almost never a conflict with Sunday worship or with a church event. I try to go to all the home games I can and stop by practice a couple of times a week to build relationships with the players and coaches.

I've made the same offer to my San Antonio friends for the last several years, and now I get to make it to my new friends at St. Matthew's: if you want to come see us play, I'll buy your first ticket (and a hot dog)! We play home games at Missions Baseball Academy on the southwest side of town, and the schedule runs from late January to early May.

(link to the schedule [here](#))

Fr. Cristopher

## St. Matthew's Dining Out Begins a New Year

By Kathy Ercoline

Every month from **January to October** the St. Matthew's Dining Out group meets at a local restaurant on the **last Thursday of the month** for food, fellowship, and fun. Thank you to **Arlene Stalvey** who agreed to host our **January** Thursday Night Dinner. This year we will NOT have a dining-out in March since the last Thursday in March is Maundy Thursday.

**We need six people to host our dinners** for April, May, June, July, August, or September. There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex and on the receptionist's desk for anyone willing to be a **host**. The responsibilities for hosting the dining out include securing a restaurant for the meal and taking reservations. The hosts should notify the church office as soon as a restaurant is secured so notices can be put in the church bulletin and blasts can be sent out. Also, it is a good idea to call the restaurant the day before to give them a final count of those who will attend.

Our first dining-out for this year is **January 25, 2024, 6:30 PM. Our host is Arlene Stalvey 203-767-9763. See the Sunday bulletin for details.** Hope to see you at St. Matthew's last Thursday Night of the month Dining-out!

**Bon Appetit!**

## Hospitality Notes

By Melissa Mudge

*Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.*

*Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. (Romans 12:9-13)*

### Many Thanks

Thank you, people of St. Matthew's, for who you are and all you do for others. You truly are God's hand and feet on earth. (thanks St. Teresa of Avila)

### On-Going Hospitality

- ◆ Morning Coffee Fellowship after each Sunday Service.

**8:00 Service**—morning coffee and snacks will be ready about 8:45.

**10:00 service**—coffee and snacks will be ready about 10:45.

Thanks host families. You make every Sunday a special occasion in the Parish Hall. The snacks are delightful and the conversations compelling. Every Sunday is something shared.

- ◆ Hospitality Committee – Volunteers are needed to prepare food, set up, serve, and clean-up at some of our church related activities. If you would like to be “hospitality on call,” please let me know.

### Give it – To Go

Please pick up a bag to give away to someone who needs it. These bags can travel in your car and then be given as you like.

Finished bags are available in Creasy Hall with a water bottle, snacks, a wash cloth, soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, and black socks.

There is room to add anything else, such as: long sleeved tee shirt/sweatshirt, sunscreen, feminine hygiene products, an additional pair of socks, or a gift card to a fast-food establishment. The person to whom you might give this bag is experiencing difficult times and has limited resources, so think about portability.

Items needed at this time include small shampoo/conditioner, body lotion, and sunscreen. No hotel samples please, not much product and too much trash. If you are cleaning out closets in the next few weeks, some gently used adult sized sweatshirts would make great additions to the bags. Thanks so much.



*(Continued on next page)*

## Hospitality Notes (Continued)

### Special Events (Some dates to look forward to)

- ◆ January 24—Belly Laugh Day. Hope you had laughter throughout your day which rippled into the lives of others.
- ◆ February 13—Shrove Tuesday. (Really) Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper – Shrove Tuesday comes from the word “shrive” which means to give absolution after hearing confession. So Shrove Tuesday is the day when people went to confession to prepare themselves for Lent, which begins on the following day, Ash Wednesday. The custom of eating pancakes began around 600 CE when Pope St. Gregory prohibited Christians from eating all forms of meat and animal products during Lent. So Christians made pancakes to use up their supply of eggs, milk, and butter in preparation for Lent. Sign up sheet coming soon. Looking for pancake flippers, bacon handlers, sausage grillers, servers, set-up, and of course clean-up.
- ◆ February 14—Ash Wednesday, beginning the season of Lent. Also Valentine’s Day.
- ◆ March 10—Start Daylight Saving Time.
- ◆ March 25 – 31—Holy Week
- ◆ March 31—Easter Sunday – Easter Egg Hunt and Finger Food Luncheon



### Military Outreach Ministry

By AGCS Arlene Stalvey, USN (ret)



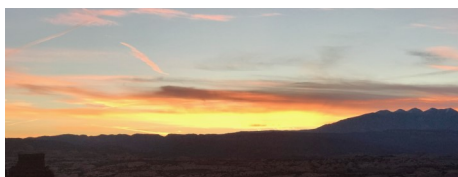
**1 Corinthians 13:7** describes the qualities of love: patient, kind, not envious, not boastful, not proud, not rude, not selfish, not easily angered, and not resentful. It also says that love **bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things**. This means that love is always supportive, faithful, optimistic, and resilient.

**February 3 - Four Chaplains Day** is a day set aside to honor the four U.S. Army chaplains who gave their lives to save others when the troop ship *USAT Dorchester* sank during World War II. Lieutenants George Fox, Alexander Goode, Clark Poling, John Washington were from different faiths. They opened a storage locker and began distributing life jackets. When there were no more lifejackets in the storage room, the chaplains removed theirs and gave them to four frightened young men (as witnessed by Engineer Grady Clark).

**February 11-17, 2024 (Week of Valentine's Day) - National Salute to Veteran Patients** Go visit some this week!

### February Birthdays

*May he give you the desire of your heart and make all your plans succeed. (Psalm 20:4)*



Jan Dooling	Holly Crouch
Susan Walker	Melissa Mudge
Deb Hynes	Jackie Schafer
Ivy Keane-Dawes	Carolyn Hull
Susan Brown	Molly Baskin
Memo Bjoring	Joan McClain

## RACAP NEWS

by: Kathy Ercoline

### HAPPY NEW YEAR!

#### RACAP'S 'SOUPER' BOWL ANNUAL FOOD COLLECTION:

During the month of **JANUARY**, and until Super Bowl Sunday on February 11<sup>th</sup>, please donate **CANNED SOUPS**, **CANNED FRUITS**, and **CRACKERS** to fill RACAP pantry shelves. Cash donations are always graciously accepted.

#### COMING UP IN the Lenten Season ...“FORTY CANS FOR LENT”

On February 14<sup>th</sup>, Ash Wednesday, we will begin our annual “40 Cans for Lent” Program. More information about this program will be included in the Sunday Bulletin and February Matt’s Missive.

#### Current Pantry Needs:

Cereal	Muffin Mixes	Dry Pasta Products	Spaghetti Sauce
Canned Tomato Products		Tomato Sauce	Meat Helpers
Dish Soap	Shampoo	Toilet Paper	Toothpaste
Toothbrushes	Feminine Products	Diapers (newborn-6 months)	
Pull-Ups (Size 4, 5, & 6)		Pet Food	

#### A SUMMARY of RACAP'S DIRECTOR Lisa Loftus's JANUARY MESSAGE:

“I am excited to be back at work on a regular basis.”

*RACAP's 2023 Christmas Meal Basket Program provided meal baskets to 239 Families. A huge thank you to all the churches, businesses, schools, organizations, clubs, groups, and individuals that help to make what we do at RACAP possible.*

*With the start of a new year RACAP, we will continue to help our clients and offer them hope. Our client base has grown drastically in the last six months Whether it's a food drive or monetary donations, we appreciate it all! Every contribution can make a difference!*

*In 2023, RACAP assisted 1,398 families. We fed 3,835 people. Cost for groceries was an estimated \$206,049.15. We helped 593 clients with their rent, and 442 clients with their utility bills.*

Thank you to all the members of St. Matthew's for your continued support to fulfill RACAP's mission to “Feed My Sheep” (John 21:15-17). Without your generous contributions of food items and monetary donations, RACAP would not exist. God Bless you all! **Have a Happy, Healthy and Blessed 2024!**

#### **December 2023 Pantry Assistance**

# of Families assisted: 108

# of People assisted: 307

# of Pantry Visits: 72

# of People fed: 209

Estimated value of food given: \$17,641.91

*“Thank you for helping us help others.”*



## “Sealed by the Holy Spirit in Baptism and Marked as Christ’s Own”

On Sunday, January 7, we were honored to witness the baptism of twins, Callan Ryker and Brixton Joyner Simmons (both held by Fr. Cristopher). Their mother, Shanae (4th from right, front row), and several members of their St. Andrew’s, Brackettville, family traveled to St. Matthew’s for this special occasion.



## Diocese of West Texas Annual Council 2024

Council 2024 will convene in-person February 22 - 24, at the Convention Center in San Marcos, TX. Clergy and lay delegates will assemble to hear ministry reports, conduct the annual business of the Diocese, worship together, participate in workshops, and share fellowship.

### **Pre-Council Meetings: January 25, 29-30**

The Episcopal Diocese of West Texas will host three Pre-Council meetings for clergy, lay delegates, and lay alternates, via Zoom, in 2024. These meetings will be required for clergy as well as lay delegates and alternates, in order to practice using the online voting system and to review Council business items including the proposed diocesan budgets, resolutions, and nominations for elected offices of the Diocese. Click [here](#) for more information.

### **Guest, Exhibitor, and Childcare Registration for the Diocese of West Texas Council 2024 is Open**

All members of the Diocese are invited to attend Council 2024 in person as a guest to hear ministry reports, learn more in the Exhibits Hall, participate in Holy Eucharist and Morning and Noontime prayers, and to reconnect with friends from across the diocese. **Guest registration is open through February 1**, click [here](#) to register.

Our onsite childcare, Kid's Wonder Zone, will be available for infants through children up to the age of ten of lay delegates, alternates, clergy, and Council volunteers during Council Business sessions and activities; **pre-registration is required by February 1**, click [here](#) to register.

Ministries, Episcopal organizations, small businesses, and committees are invited to **register as exhibitors by February 1** and host a booth in the Council Exhibit Hall. Click [here](#) to register as an exhibitor.

## Good Samaritan Community Services Designated as Council in Action Recipient

Council in Action is a giving program that occurs annually in association with Council. It is an opportunity for the Diocese of West Texas members and Council participants to serve a community within the diocese, opening our hearts and walking as God has called us to do by assisting those in need.

In 2024, Council in Action will collect clothing items needed the most for the people served by the Good Samaritan Community Services (Good Sam) in San Antonio. In what began as a ministry of the Episcopal Church on the west side of San Antonio in 1951, Good Sam now reaches more than 4,700 individuals and 1,800 families around South Texas.

Good Sam actively serves as a place of change, supporting thousands who are working to improve their lives and overcome the challenges of poverty. Every gift makes a significant difference by supporting programs that enable children, teenagers, adults, and families to improve their lives. These services include early childhood and youth and teen services programs, as well as the only nationally accredited senior center in South Texas.

This is a wonderful opportunity for every church to participate in spreading God's love in a tangible way to those in need. Congregations are invited to bring the following items with them to Council 2024 in support of the mission of Good Sam:

- ◆ Infant shoes (sneakers) and socks from size 1-12.
- ◆ Youth shoes (sneakers) and socks from size 1-12 and adult sizes from 8-12 for older youth.
- ◆ Hoodies/sweaters for infants up to age five, children from age 5 through 18, and some adult sizes.

A booth will be set up in the Exhibit Hall to receive in-kind donations for Good Sam.

Additionally, items may be purchased through [Amazon Wish List](#) or [Walmart List](#), with items delivered directly to Good Sam.

Please visit [goodsamaritancommunityservices.org](https://goodsamaritancommunityservices.org) to learn more about this vital community organization.

NOTE: If you are not planning to attend Council but wish to support Council In Action, please bring your donations to Creasy Hall no later than Sunday, February 18, and a council delegate will take it to San Marcos.

**GOOD  
SAMARITAN**  
Community Services





## Diocese of West Texas Celebrates 150th Anniversary

In 2024, the Diocese of West Texas (DWTX) celebrates a significant milestone, the sesquicentennial of our diocese. Plans are in process to commemorate 150 years of our rich history. Special event dates will be announced at this year's Council.

A special 150th logo has been created for use throughout the year and is reflected at the top of this newsletter. This beautiful logo, designed by Andrea Thompson, Graphics and Social Media Manager at DWTX contains the following elements:

In the upper left, the Alamo, cradle of Texas liberty, represents the planting of the Church banner in the new world.

- ◆ The star in the upper right represents the Lone Star of Texas and the star of Bethlehem.
- ◆ In the lower left is the lion of St. Mark, signifying the first cathedral site in San Antonio and the wild nature of Texas.
- ◆ In the lower right, the ox represents St. Luke the Physician and the cattle of Texas.
- ◆ Six capped flags remember the number of flags over Texas during its history with the seventh being that of the Church.
- ◆ Within the bishop's miter, a spray of lilies (for St. Anthony of Padua), and a field of bells (for St. Anthony of Alexandria) are reminders of the namesake of San Antonio, the diocesan center city.
- ◆ Pearls for truth adorn the miter, and tabs for the Old and New Testament hang from the miter.
- ◆ The motto, in Greek, from Mark's Gospel, 9:23, reads "Everything is possible to one who has faith."

A logo package will be sent to church offices for utilization in 2024. The logo does not permanently replace the current diocesan logo to be utilized beginning in 2025.





## *Happenings Around The Diocese*

**Couple's Weekend Getaway:** February 2 – 4, at Mustang Island.

Escape to the island for weekend with your Sweetheart. The weekend includes two nights lodging, 5 meals, a special Saturday dinner, and campfire. A relaxed schedule allows time together for resting, reflecting, and renewing with God and each other in His coastal creation.

**Mustang Island Beautification  
Weekend:** February 16 – 18.

A service-oriented weekend for adults to help Mustang Island Conference Center and experience an enjoyable weekend away. Projects such as grounds clean-up or gardening will be coordinated by Mustang Island Conference Center staff to match the volunteer skills and what is most needed at that time.

**Father & Son Retreat:** February 16 – 18, at Camp Capers.

A retreat for fathers, grandfathers, father-figures, and their sons to share a weekend at Camp Capers, away from the responsibilities of everyday life playing games, doing fun outdoor adventure activities, studying the Bible, and sharing delicious meals. Spend a weekend in the hill country, to focus on growing and kindling that unique bond fathers and sons share while participating in fun and faith centered activities.

*You can find more information and registration on these and other events at <https://www.dwtx.org/events>*

The submission **DEADLINE** for the Missive is the 15th of the month. Any late submissions will be in the next month's issue.



EPISCOPAL  
DIOCESE  
of West Texas

## From the Blog

### **The Rt. Rev. David M. Reed's Epiphany Letter to the Diocese**

"I give thanks to God always for you..." In his final letter to the diocese as our Bishop, Rt. Rev. David M. Reed's message writes, "As we move into retirement with all its possibilities and uncertainties, Patti and I carry and hold close so much that we have received from you, the people of West Texas—the blessings of shared life and friendship and ministry." Read more [here](#).

### **DWTX Announcements**

Diocesan Immigration & Refugee Ministries has issued an urgent request for adult winter coats, baby clothing, bottles, infant formula, other supplies, and volunteers for the Plaza de Paz Respite Center in response to increasing numbers of families with toddlers and babies at the center. New and gently used adult coats as well as infant and toddler clothing (sizes Preemie to 4T) can be delivered to the Bishop Jones Center. Needed items may also be purchased through their [Amazon List](#) and [Walmart List](#). The delivery address is: Plaza de Paz, 111 Torcido Dr., San Antonio, TX 78209-5642. Click [here](#) to contact Flor Saldivar, Director of Immigration Ministries, for more information and to volunteer.

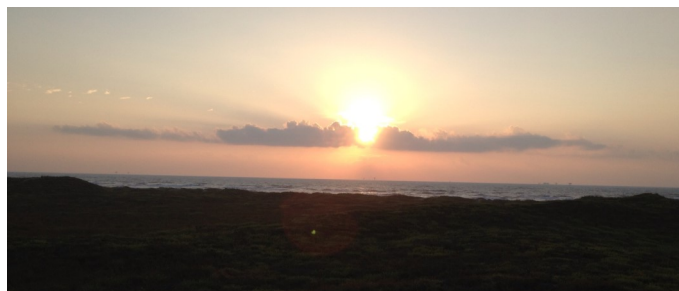
### **From The Episcopal Church**

**Presiding Bishop Michael Curry has been released from the hospital following surgery January 6** for a reoccurrence of a subdural hematoma. He will continue his recovery at home under the supervision of his doctors. Further updates will be provided as they become available. Please continue to hold Bishop Curry, his family, and medical team in your prayers. [Click here](#) for more information.

## FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 AA Meeting 8-9pm (CH)	2	3
4 Worship 8 & 10am (C) Sunday School 9:15am (L) Kiwanis 5-6pm (CH)	5 Staff Meeting 9am (L) Prayer Meeting 12pm (L) AA Meeting 8-9pm (CH)	6	7 HOME 10am-3:30pm (CH, C, CEB) Eucharist 11am (ARC)	8 AA Meeting 8-9pm (CH)	9	10
11 Worship 8 & 10am (C) Sunday School 9:15am (L)	12 Staff Meeting 9am (L) Prayer Meeting 12pm (L) AA Meeting 8-9pm (CH)	13 Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper 5:30-7:30pm (CH)	14 Ash Wednesday Services 7am & 7pm (C) HOME 10am-3:30pm (CH, C, CEB) Eucharist 11am (ARC)	15 AA Meeting 8-9pm (CH)	16	17
18 Worship 8 & 10am (C) Sunday School 9:15am (L) Kiwanis 5-6pm (CH)	19 <i>Office Closed No Prayer Meeting</i> AA Meeting 8-9pm (CH)	20 Staff Meeting 9am (L) Vestry Meeting 6pm (CH)	21 HOME 10am-3:30pm (CH, C, VEB) Eucharist 11am (ARC) Lenten Study 6pm (CH)	22 DWTX Annual Council (San Marcos TX) AA Meeting 8-9pm (CH)	23 DWTX Annual Council (San Marcos TX)	24 DWTX Annual Council (San Marcos TX)
25 Worship 8 & 10am (C) Sunday School 9:15am (L)	26 Staff Meeting 9am (L) Prayer Meeting 12pm (L) AA Meeting 8-9pm (CH)	27	28 HOME 10am-3:30pm (CH, C, VEB) Eucharist 11am (ARC) Lenten Study 6pm (CH)	29 AA Meeting 8-9pm (CH)		

C – Church; CH – Creasy Hall; VEB – Vellom Ed Building; L – Library  
ARC – Army Residence Community



## FEBRUARY 2024 SUNDAY MINISTRY SCHEDULE

Ministry	February 4	February 11	February 18	February 25
Altar Guild	Tarawanda Howard Diane Woods	Ted Whittier Diane Woods	Janet Clere Suzanne Milton	Terry May Suzanne Milton
8 AM Reader	Jayne Dunlap	Suzi Hopkins	Joan McClain	Max Hopkins
8 AM Greeter/Usher	Ben McClain	Shawn Cooksey	Jayne Dunlap	Jayne Creasy
8 AM Coffee	Jayne Dunlap	Suzi Hopkins	Tarawanda Howard	Joan McClain
Server	Mendell Morgan	Wayne Mudge	Sean Francis	Terry May
10 AM Reader	Janet Clere	Liz Sampson	Mendell Morgan	Melissa Mudge
10 AM Greeters/Ushers	Maribeth Likins Arlene Stalvey Ted Whittier	Kathy Ercoline Bill Ercoline	Diane Woods Terry May	Maribeth Likins Arlene Stalvey Ted Whittier
Prayers of the People	Liz Sampson	Susan Brown	Sean Keane-Dawes	Janet Clere
Newcomer Visits	Ellen Yelverton	Terry May Diane Woods	Ellen Yelverton	Terry May Diane Woods
Home Communion	Mendell Morgan	No Home Communion	Ellen Yelverton	No Home Communion
Prayer Ministry	Ellen Yelverton	Mendell Morgan	Maribeth Likins	Ellen Yelverton
10 AM Coffee	Melissa Mudge	Kathy Ercoline	Diane Woods	Melissa Mudge
Audio Visual	Wayne Mudge	Terry May Kristina Robinson	Wayne Mudge	Terry May Kristina Robinson
Lockup/Security	Terry May	Arlene Stalvey	Janet Clere	Richard Guerrero

**There will be two Ash Wednesday services at 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. on February 14. We will need volunteers to serve in the ministries in the chart below. Please contact Ellen Yelverton to volunteer.**

Service Time	Altar Guild	Reader	Greeter/Usher	Prayers of the People	Server
Morning 7:00 a.m.	Diane Woods Tarawanda Howard Ted Whittier			Not Needed	Not Needed
Evening 7:00 p.m.					

## DECEMBER 2023 FINANCIAL REPORT

Monthly	Pledge	Plate	Other	Total	2023 YTD	Pledge	Plate	Other	Total
Operating Income Received	\$13,741	\$1,906	\$1,403	\$17,050	Operating Income Received	\$191,224	\$20,694	\$67,871	\$279,789
Operating Income Budgeted	\$15,132	\$1,917	\$1,466	\$18,515	Operating Income Budgeted	\$181,589	\$23,000	\$15,165	\$219,754
	Monthly	YTD				Monthly	YTD		
Overall Operating Expenses	\$18,269	\$250,141			Outreach	\$2,116	\$11,761		
Budgeted Operating Expense	\$15,480	\$259,463							

**ST. MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
 810 Kitty Hawk Road, Universal City, Texas 78148  
 210-658-5956      [www.stmatts-uc.org](http://www.stmatts-uc.org)