



Matt's Missive

March 2024

The Bishop is Coming!

St. Matthew's "Celebration of a New Ministry" Service April 30

Save the date! Bishop Read will be with us on April 30th for an event we've only seen once so far in our parish history. At the conclusion of a search process and the calling of a new rector, the bishop comes to visit the parish and formally welcome the new priest. (The service is also colloquially called the "installation," which makes me feel like some sort of odd kitchen appliance.)

The service is better understood as a time of celebration of the ministry of St. Matthew's as a parish, as we begin a new chapter in our parish history. We'll have a guest preacher (who you'll love, I promise), visiting clergy from other congregations, and (of course) a party!

The service will be Tuesday evening, April 30th. This will probably also be our official Episcopal visit for 2024. (Please understand that, until we elect and consecrate a new suffragan bishop to help him out, Bishop Read is doing the work normally undertaken by two people, so he will probably use our scheduled regular Sunday visit to go see a different congregation.) I mention this because I don't know of anyone who is waiting to be confirmed or received into the Episcopal Church, but if you are, please let me know soon.

Fr. Cristopher+

Holy Week and Easter Happenings

Palm Sunday – March 24 – 8:00 & 10:00 a.m. services start on the patio.

Maundy Thursday – March 28 – 7:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist with foot washing and stripping of the altar.

Stations of the Cross – March 29 – 12:00 p.m.

Easter Sunday – March 31 – 8:00 & 10:00 a.m. services with flowering of the cross.

Following the 10:00 a.m. Service

Easter Egg Hunt and Finger Food Luncheon

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.

St. Matthew's Dining Out

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. Our February dinner had thirty people!

There will be NO dining out in March, since the last Thursday is Maundy Thursday.

We still need hosts for a few months. There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex and on the receptionist's desk for anyone willing to **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 eblasts can be sent out. It is a good idea to call the restaurant the day before to give them a final count of those who will attend. Please consider hosting a dinner and sign-up.

Our host for the April 25th dining out is Maribeth Likins. There will be more details in your Sunday bulletin in April. Bon appetit!

New Sunday Bible Study: The Book of Acts

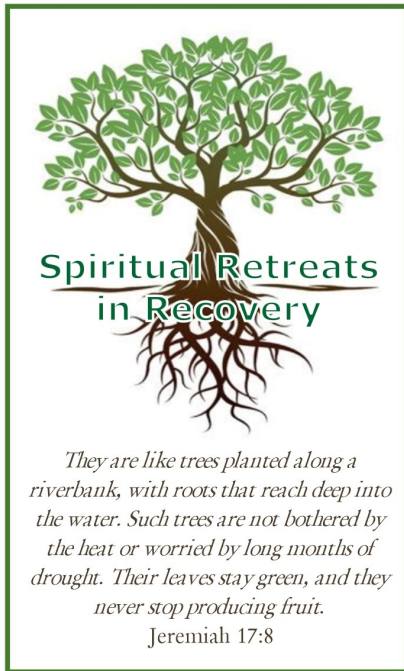
The weeks right after Easter will be a great time to jump into a new Bible study offering. We meet on Sundays in between the two worship times, from 9:15-9:45, in the parish library. Each of the last several years, our bishop has asked the diocese to read and study a particular book of the Bible. At our most recent council meeting, Bishop Read tasked the church with studying the book of Acts.

Acts is the 'second half' of the larger Luke/Acts narrative in the New Testament, written by the same author(s), and from the same point of view. It covers some of the events from immediately after Jesus' resurrection and the following thirty or so years, with special emphasis on the journeys and witness of Peter and Paul. It gives us a pattern of growth of the early church.

Rather than use a published study guide, we will use the Bible as the primary text to guide our journey through the book. There is an abundance of good resources, both video and print, that we will use along the way. There will be no homework (other than things to take away and think about) and no preparation necessary, so feel free to jump in at any time. Bring your own Bible to take notes in or borrow one of the many copies readily available in the parish library.

Fr. Cristopher+

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



Spiritual Retreat in Recovery #121

Spiritual Solutions for Emotional Sobriety

May 3-5, 2024



Spiritual Retreats in Recovery provides a safe place to deepen one's spiritual journey – open to all in recovery from alcoholism or other abuses, as well as to families and friends affected by the disease of addiction. All members of twelve-step programs (AA, Al-anon, NA, CA, ACA, etc.) are welcome to share their experience, strength, and hope with each other in a community of love and support, exploring *what it was like, what happened, and what we are like now.*

Retreat Leader Joan Ellis Thompson, M.A., LPC, LCDC, is a 51-year private practitioner specializing in addictions and addiction-related problems. She will guide us through the retreat's recovery theme, *Spiritual Solutions for Emotional Sobriety*. Rev. Bryn Caddell, Vicar of St. Michael and All Angels' Episcopal Church in Blanco, will be our Spiritual Leader, as Celebrant for worship services, and provider of topical spiritual insight and pastoral care. In addition to various break-out session offerings, ample time is set aside for individual exploration. All friends in recovery are welcome, and no church affiliation is required.



Idyllic Camp Capers offers accommodations in comfortable Lodge rooms or in the Cabins used for youthful summer campers (with AC/heating and indoor plumbing!). Come enjoy warm hospitality, comfortable lodging, delicious food, and thoughtful presentations in this beautiful hill country setting along the Guadalupe River.

"Recovery happens in community. At this retreat, I enjoyed the awesome presence of God through others in recovery – and in a beautiful setting. It doesn't get any better!"

† † †

"A great, relaxing weekend. I experienced the spiritual healing of the group, and enjoyed quiet time with my Higher Power in one of His most wondrous creations. In comfort with great food!"

Pricing includes 2 nights accommodations and 5 meals (Fri-Sun): Lodge, \$450 for single occupancy, \$255 per person for double; Cabin, \$165 per person (4-6); Commuter day rate (no lodging), \$105 per person. Registration information can be found at dwtx.org/events, scrolling down to the Spiritual Retreat in Recovery dates.

Registration opens Wednesday, March 20 and closes Monday, April 29.

Limited scholarship funds are available based on need on a first-come-first-served basis. Scholarship recipients will be expected to contribute a portion of their own funds to this program. Please contact the Registration Coordinator at 210-367-9584.



RACAP NEWS

by: Kathy Ercoline



St. Matthew's Lenten program, "40 CANS FOR LENT" continues until Good Friday. Our contributions are being donated to RACAP to help families in our local area.

There have already been **over 500 pounds** of food items delivered, from St. Matthew's parishioners. Thank you to those who donated. If you have not already done so, please donate **one can of food per day** (40 items). Bring your cans of food and/or paper products to **Creasy Hall** at any time during office hours or on Sunday morning, until Good Friday.

We will have a special in-gathering of one extra can per person on Easter Sunday, March 31, 2024.

Cash donations for RACAP are welcomed and appreciated. Make your checks payable to St. Matthew's Episcopal Church and write "40 Cans for Lent" in the memo line. If you donate cash, please put it in an envelope and label it specifically for RACAP, "40 Cans for Lent Program."

Current Pantry Needs:

Spaghetti	Tomato Products	Jelly	Rice
Cereal	Boxed Meat Helpers	Feminine Hygiene Products (pads, tampons)	
Toilet Paper	Dish Soap	Shampoo	Bar Soap
Deodorant	Toothpaste/brushes	Diapers	Pull-Ups
Cat Food	Dog Food	Brown Paper Grocery-sized Bags	

REMINDER TO CHECK THE DATE: Before donating food to RACAP, please check the expiration date. RACAP volunteers always check the dates when the food comes into the pantry, but it makes their task easier if they receive food that can be distributed.

The continued support to the RACAP pantry from St. Matthew's' parishioners has been amazing! RACAP is a very busy place these days. You can rest assured that your donations are being shared with those in need in our community. Thank you so much!

Month in Review

February 2024 Results

of Families assisted: 97

of People assisted: 152

of Pantry orders prepared: 70

of People fed: 152

Estimated value of food given: \$14,573.00

"Thank you for helping us help others."

Hospitality Notes

By Melissa Mudge

Almighty God, who has restored our human nature to heavenly glory through the perfect obedience of our Savior Jesus Christ: Enliven in your Church, we pray, the passion for justice and truth, that, like your servant Frederick Denison Maurice, we may work and pray for the triumph of the kingdom of Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen (Collect from Lesser Feasts and Fasts, 2022)

Many Thanks

Thank you, people of St. Matthew's. Easter eggs joyfully prepared, stealthily hidden, and then enthusiastically retrieved. There is never too much chocolate!! Followed by the Finger Food Luncheon featuring an assortment of delicious sandwiches, sides, and delicious desserts (including celebration cupcakes).

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.

The second service would welcome a fourth host to have a turn in the Coffee Hour rotation. Let me know if you are interested. Thanks host families. You make every Sunday a special occasion in the Parish Hall. The snacks are delightful and the conversations stimulating. 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.

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.

Special Events (Some dates to look forward to)

- ◆ April 8—Solar Eclipse
- ◆ April 22—Earth Day
- ◆ April 26—Arbor Day
- ◆ May 2—National Day of Prayer

120th Diocesan Council



Fr. Cristopher, Melissa, Terry, & Kathy ready to do council work with Arlene & Richard looking on.

The group enjoyed dinner out in San Marcos.



Church Banners on display for Bishop's Luncheon at Council



April Birthdays

Because you are my help, I sing in the shadow of your wings. (Psalm 63:7)

Arlene Stalvey	Billy Baskin
Greg Coolidge	David Tidwell
Howard Tidwell	Brian Crouch
Margie Benson	Fr. Chuck Woehler
Suzi Hopkins	Shawn Cooksey
Alethia Dooling	Cathy Oakley
Kyle Cooksey	

It was a group effort by Shawn, Suzi, and Susan to change the clock in the parish hall on Sunday, March 10.





Happenings Around The Diocese

The Good, the True, & the Beautiful Retreat: April 5 – 7 at Camp Capers.

This is a storytelling and spirituality retreat hosted by the Rt. Rev. David M. Reed, tenth bishop of West Texas and the Rt. Rev. Dr. David G. Read. Participants will have the opportunity to explore the restorative power of storytelling, songwriting, and creativity through the lens of faith.

EclipseFest at Camp Capers: April 7 – 9 at Camp Capers.

On April 8, 2024, a total solar eclipse will occur over Texas—the first to be seen in North America since 2017. Don't miss this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity — the next total solar eclipse visible in the contiguous 48 states won't occur until August 2044! Day passes are available as well as overnight lodging.

Nails & Prayers - Service Retreat: April 12 – 14 at Camp Capers.

A special service-oriented weekend designed as an opportunity to give back and beautify Camp Capers. This is a great opportunity for high school students to earn service hours. If you are unable to stay the whole weekend, we invite you to come for the day on Saturday.

Stewardship Webinar: "Legacy Giving: Creating Revenue Streams for Life": April 15.

Legacy or Planned Giving is the path forward to help your members make meaningful contributions toward the future of your congregation. Join us on April 15 at 11:30 a.m. on Zoom to learn best practices to reinvigorate or begin legacy giving in your congregation. We'll help you get familiar with the most common planned giving vehicles and their benefits to your members and your church.

The Diocese of West Texas, Order of the Daughters of the King Spring Assembly:

April 12 -13, at St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Kerrville.

The theme for their program is, "How good & pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity." Psalm 133:1. The Rt. Rev. Dr. David G. Read will be the guest speaker on Saturday.

Cursillo #292: May 2 - 5 at Mustang Island Conference Center.

Join Libby Templeton from St. Michael and All Angels, Blanco, the lay rector and Spiritual Directors Fr. Matthew Bloss from St. John's, New Braunfels and Fr. Ernest Buchanan from St. James, Hebronville for a weekend of study, reflection, fellowship, and worship.

Mustang Island Meditative Yoga Retreat: May 10 - 12.

Escape to your island home for a weekend centered on the healing, rejuvenating, life-giving practices of yoga, meditation, and contemplative Christian prayer. This retreat is open to all, no matter your yoga or meditation experience.

Mustang Island Beautification Weekend: May 17 – 19.

A service-oriented weekend for adults to help Mustang Island Conference Center and experience an enjoyable weekend away. Work projects may include grounds clean-up, boardwalk maintenance, storage construction, or gardening.

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



From the Blog

Holy Week Boxes

In 2023, St. Mark's, San Marcos, Director of Children and Family Ministries Tamara Talasek created Holy Week boxes for families to use at home together. The Holy Week Boxes started with an activity for Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, and Easter Sunday included in the box. [Click here](#) to read more and download materials to create your own boxes.

Celebrating 150 Years, Bishop Read Encourages a Return to Roots by Embracing Missional Spirit

Over the course of Council 2024, attendees were inspired, moved, and educated as they gathered to hear ministry reports, conduct the annual business of the Diocese, worship together, participate in workshops, and share fellowship. This year's Council Recap includes an overview of Council highlights, as well as access to all videos and slides presented at Council. These resources are designed to help share the messages and reports from Council 2024. Read more [here](#).

Douglass Scholarship Applications Open for 2024-2025

The Douglass Foundation Scholarship Program seeks to encourage qualified college graduates to pursue advanced degrees in the fields of theology, business, and psychology. Applications are now being accepted for educational scholarships from the Douglass Foundation Scholarship Program for the 2024-2025 academic year. These scholarships are offered to qualified seminarians as well as graduate-level or postgraduate-level students. Read more [here](#).

DWTX Announcements

The diocesan office at the Bishop Jones Center will close Friday, March 29, in observance of Good Friday and reopen Monday, April 1 at 9:00 a.m. If needed, the staff email directory is available online, at dwtx.org/staff.

Looking to help those affected by the Texas Panhandle wildfires? St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Amarillo has set up a Panhandle Fire Relief Fund. All funds will be distributed to the needs of suffering families, and supplies like bottled water, Gatorade, eye drops, and meals will also be supplied for area fire fighters. [Click here](#) to learn more.

Thank you to the volunteers from our host church, St. Luke's, San Antonio, for their amazing work to make Council 2024 a success!

From The Episcopal Church

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry underwent a procedure on March 1 to implant a pacemaker as part of his ongoing treatment for atrial fibrillation. The surgery was successful, and he was discharged from the hospital on Saturday, March 2. He will continue recuperating at home. [Click here](#) to read more.

Around 125 bishops, including the Rt. Rev. Dr. David G. Read, gathered for The Episcopal Church's House of Bishops annual spring retreat from February 28 - March 4 at Camp Allen in Navasota, Texas. The Rt. Rev. Wendell Gibbs chaired the meeting while Presiding Bishop Michael Curry continued recuperating at home from recent health procedures. [Click here](#) to read more.

APRIL CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Office Closed No Prayer Meeting</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">AA Meeting 8-9pm (<i>CH</i>)</p>	2	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">HOME 10am-3:30pm (<i>CH, C, VEB</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Eucharist 11am (<i>ARC</i>)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Choir Practice 5pm (<i>C</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AA Meeting 8-9pm (<i>CH</i>)</p>	5	6
<p style="text-align: center;">7</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Worship 8 & 10am (<i>C</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sunday School 9:15am (<i>L</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Kiwanis 5-6pm (<i>CH</i>)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">8</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Staff Meeting 9am (<i>L</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Prayer Meeting 12pm (<i>L</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AA Meeting 8-9pm (<i>CH</i>)</p>	9	<p style="text-align: center;">10</p> <p style="text-align: center;">HOME 10am-3:30pm (<i>CH, C, VEB</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Eucharist 11am (<i>ARC</i>)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">11</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Choir Practice 5pm (<i>C</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AA Meeting 8-9pm (<i>CH</i>)</p>	12	13
<p style="text-align: center;">14</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Worship 8 & 10am (<i>C</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sunday School 9:15am (<i>L</i>)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">15</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Staff Meeting 9am (<i>L</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Prayer Meeting 12pm (<i>L</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AA Meeting 8-9pm (<i>CH</i>)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">16</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Vestry Meeting 6pm (<i>CH</i>)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">17</p> <p style="text-align: center;">HOME 10am-3:30pm (<i>CH, C, VEB</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Eucharist 11am (<i>ARC</i>)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">18</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Choir Practice 5pm (<i>C</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AA Meeting 8-9pm (<i>CH</i>)</p>	19	20
<p style="text-align: center;">21</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Worship 8 & 10am (<i>C</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sunday School 9:15am (<i>L</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Kiwanis 5-6pm (<i>CH</i>)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">22</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Staff Meeting 9am (<i>L</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Prayer Meeting 12pm (<i>L</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AA Meeting 8-9pm (<i>CH</i>)</p>	23	<p style="text-align: center;">24</p> <p style="text-align: center;">HOME 10am-3:30pm (<i>CH, C, VEB</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Eucharist 11am (<i>ARC</i>)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">25</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Choir Practice 5pm (<i>C</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AA Meeting 8-9pm (<i>CH</i>)</p>	26	27
<p style="text-align: center;">28</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Worship 8 & 10am (<i>C</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sunday School 9:15am (<i>L</i>)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">29</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Staff Meeting 9am (<i>L</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Prayer Meeting 12pm (<i>L</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AA Meeting 8-9pm (<i>CH</i>)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">30</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Celebration of a New Ministry</i> 6pm (<i>C</i>)</p>				

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

APRIL 2024 SUNDAY MINISTRY SCHEDULE

Ministry	April 7	April 14	April 21	April 28
Altar Guild	Suzanne Milton Tarawanda Howard	Terry May Diane Woods	Janet Clere Suzanne Milton	Terry May Suzanne Milton
8 AM Reader	Joan McClain	Max Hopkins	Jayne Dunlap	Suzi Hopkins
8 AM Greeter/Usher	Ben McClain	Shawn Cooksey	Max Hopkins	Joan McClain
8 AM Coffee	Suzi Hopkins	Tarawanda Howard	Joan McClain	Jayne Dunlap
Server	Sean Francis	Sean Keane-Dawes	Mendell Morgan	Terry May
10 AM Reader	Mendell Morgan	Melissa Mudge	Liz Sampson	Maribeth Likins
10 AM Greeters/Ushers	Maribeth Likins Arlene Stalvey Ted Whittier	Wayne Mudge Melissa Mudge	Kathy Ercoline Bill Ercoline	Diane Woods Louise Ginesi
Prayers of the People	Sean Keane-Dawes	Janet Clere	Ted Whittier	Bill Ercoline
Newcomer Visits	Ellen Yelverton	Terry May Diane Woods	Ellen Yelverton	Terry May Diane Woods
Home Communion	No Home Communion	Ellen Yelverton	No Home Communion	Sean Keane-Dawes
Prayer Ministry	Ellen Yelverton	Mendell Morgan	Maribeth Likins	Ellen Yelverton
10 AM Coffee	Melissa Mudge	Diane Woods Terry May	Kathy Ercoline	Melissa Mudge
Audio Visual	Wayne Mudge	Kristina Robinson	Terry May	Wayne Mudge
Lockup/Security	Richard Guerrero	Jayne Dunlap	Maribeth Likins	Terry May

Open the eyes of your Church, O Lord, to the plight of the poor and neglected, the homeless and destitute, the old and sick, the lonely and those who have none to care for them. Give us that vision and compassion with which you so richly endowed your servant William Augustus Muhlenberg, that we may labor tirelessly to heal those who are broken in body or spirit, and to turn their sorrow into joy; through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen (Collect from Lesser Feasts and Fasts, 2022)

FEBRUARY 2024 FINANCIAL REPORT

Monthly	Pledge	Plate	Other	Total	2024 YTD	Pledge	Plate	Other	Total
Operating Income Received	\$14,316	\$1,007	\$628	\$15,951	Operating Income Received	\$29,958	\$2,304	\$1,114	\$33,376
Operating Income Budgeted	\$13,869	\$1,652	\$455	\$15,976	Operating Income Budgeted	\$27,739	\$3,303	\$835	\$31,877
	Monthly	YTD				Monthly	YTD		
Overall Operating Expenses	\$15,325	\$34,377			Outreach	\$300	\$2,845		
Budgeted Operating Expense	\$22,164	\$40,388							

ST. MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
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