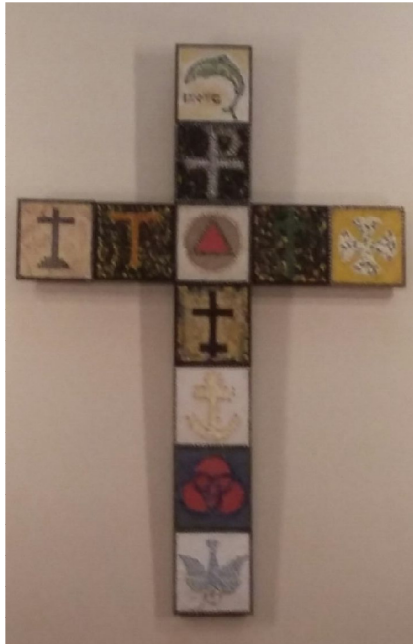


ST. MATTHEW'S TURNS 50!



Mosaic cross in the sanctuary at St. Matthew's

Mosaic Cross

The tiles for this cross were created by 6th grade Sunday school children at Good Shepherd, Corpus Christi in the late 1960s. St. Matthew's was in its infancy at the time, holding services in a storefront in Schertz. Fr. Bob Creasy spotted the tiles, asked what the plans were for them, and learning they were to be thrown away asked and received permission to bring them home. A parishioner, Capt. Steve Newell, put the tiles together as a cross and it was used in the storefront as the main sanctuary cross. When the church building was built in Universal City it resided in the sanctuary, eventually taking its rightful place once again as the sanctuary cross.

**September 19, 2015 - In honor of
the Golden Anniversary of**

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

810 Kitty Hawk Rd.

Universal City, TX



St. Matthew's Episcopal Church History:

St. Matthew's history began in 1964, when Episcopalians in and around the Randolph AFB area began discussions of the need for an Episcopal church to serve the Converse, Universal City, and Schertz communities. Initial services were held on January 17, 1965, in a storefront location in Schertz, TX. On January 29, 1965 an organizational meeting was held with the Rt. Rev. Everett Jones presiding at which time Bishop Jones accepted the church as a mission and proclaimed the name to be St. Matthew's.

In 1968 the Episcopal Diocese of West Texas purchased the land on Kitty Hawk on which our church stands today. Ground was broken on June 17, 1970, with Bishop Harold Gosnell manning the shovel for the ceremony, and the final service in Schertz was held on January 24, 1971. The following Sunday, January 31 heralded the first services in the brand new church building. A week later, Feb. 7, 1971, and just over six years from the initial services in Schertz, St. Matthew's was dedicated by Bishop Gosnell.

The design of the church is very unusual, but not without purpose. To honor the original membership from Randolph AFB the church overlooks the base and many a 4th of July picnic gathered to see the fireworks display from that place. Outside, the church is white stucco paying homage to the Spanish appearance familiar to the greater San Antonio area. Rough red brick and a large wooden cross in the narthex (entryway to the church) continue that feel. In early days those passersby on Loop 1604 who looked toward the church saw what resembled a plane, once again a nod to the early Air Force influence to the church.

Entering the sanctuary the layout of the church is designed to allow a full church service or a small chapel depending on the particular need at that time. The altar was created square, in order to allow for either service need, by simply moving the freestanding cross and candles. To the right of the altar is a single pulpit/lectern, affectionately called the "pultern" from which readings are shared.

To the left of the altar area, near the organ, resides the baptismal font given by Fr. Mike and Betsy Davis in thanksgiving for their children Michelle and

Jonathon. Upstairs there is a room which was, in the early days of St. Matthew's, used for Sunday school classrooms. It later became a loft for the youth group for many years, and still today houses the sound equipment used to amplify and record the sermon and readings each Sunday. Adjacent is a room with windows facing out to the altar in the sanctuary. The small room was designed to serve slide and movie presentations in the era in which those were used.

Within the sanctuary windows are placed to allow the "light of the world" to enter, and the "light of St. Matthew's" to shine for the world. The two windows on the sides to the front each hold an interior frame designed as a large cross. The tower at the rear provides soft lighting for the altar area, and functions as an atypical church spire pointing toward God. The architects who designed the building wanted to provide a gift, and so developed and provided the lighting fixtures. They hand punched the copper plates against the ceiling to tie the Southwestern design elements together and it was so well liked that other uses were developed and placed throughout the main body of the church. Every indentation and "punch" was done by hand.

What is now the current day Christian Education and nursery building was brought into the plans later when a need for separate gathering and office space became important. It was originally the upper half of an old barracks building which was transported from Lackland AFB, and served for many years as the parish hall, nursery, Sunday school rooms, and kitchen; providing the location for many pancake suppers and congregational meetings. In 1997 ground was broken for the new parish hall and with much joy and excitement the new building, complete with a state of the art kitchen, a suite of offices, a library, and large open meeting space was dedicated to God's glory in 1998.

In recent years the old St. Francis' garden at the back of the property had fallen into disrepair and a landscaping committee began to lay plans for what is today known as our Reflection Garden. Design elements were thoughtfully planned to offer room for contemplative time and the ever present cool breeze. A children's playground was offered by Derek and Mary Bartholomew in memory of their son Simon Peter; an adjacent volleyball court was created as an Eagle Scout project by Kyle Cooksey. Trees have been planted to honor the memory of loved ones and paver bricks and benches are still being donated in thanksgiving and memory of many gone before.

The candle torches and altar were created by Mr. Henechy and donated by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Woods and Mr. and Mrs. H.H. Murrell. The processional cross was given by Mr. and Mrs. J.R. Loucks in memory of “those men of the 283rd” a med-evac team in the Vietnam war. The aumbry, a box to hold sacred elements for worship, was donated by John and Wilma Heberling and Jesse and Joanne Quisenberry.

Note the punch work on the cross, the aumbry, and the front of the altar and credence table, tying to the design of the original ceiling light fixtures.

Various gifts of altar linens, vessels, other items used in worship have been donated over the years in thanksgiving and memory of loved ones. Each one ties the cloud of witnesses gone before to the present day service in love and memory.





All copper work, including the Paschal candle stand, the baptismal font, the altar, the outside lights on the front of the sanctuary, and the processional cross were hand tooled by church architect Bill McDonald and were given in memory of William Dukes by Mr. and Mrs. McDonald.

The piano was a gift from Bill and Kathy Ercoline and the icons above it came from Fr. and Mrs. Vladimir, visiting clergy family from Russia. They were purchased and donated to the church by Fr. Bob.

The flower stand was donated by The Marthas (the group of church women who sold James Avery jewelry in the early days of the church.

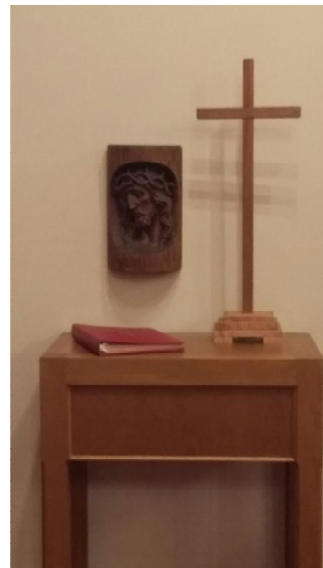
Still today flowers (and candles) are provided by donation in memory or thanksgiving of loved ones by parishioners.





This figure of Christ was given by David Swift. He brought it back from Oberammergau, Germany. Legend tells us that he hand carried it back on the plane, unwilling to allow it to be shipped as cargo. Discussion was given to mounting the figure on a cross and Fr. Bob's wish and the ultimate agreement was that Christ was no longer on the cross; it was a statement of faith as it is displayed.

The head of Christ (below) was another gift from David Swift and brought from Europe. The table and Book of Remembrance were donated by Shirley Wade and brought in from Mexico.





The carved cross on the stone pillar was a gift from Mr. and Mrs. Roger Boston and purchased and brought in from Oberammergau, Germany.

The credence table is made from the same timbers as the cross in the Narthex. (see page 10 for detail)

The case below it is a music storage dresser which came with the organ. (see page 8 for detail).

This organ (right) was donated to St. Matthew's in early 2008 by Brigadier General George Webster and his wife Margaret, residents at the Army Retirement Community who had long appreciated the worship services held at the ARC which were begun by Fr. Bob and continued by Fr. Tim. The organ this one replaced was given as a memorial from many. It was announced in church one Sunday morning that a new organ was needed and gifts from the congregation came in immediately. It was paid for in full before it arrived.



The diocesan shield (above) was created by Debbie Maurer and was used originally in processions when the bishop came to visit.





The above display case came from The Martha's store selling James Avery jewelry. The nativity set on the top shelf was donated by Martha Vogel; a gift from her husband when they were stationed in Germany. The figurines of Christ with the children and Christ as a carpenter were donated by Shirley (Lionberger) Wade. The two American flags were from funeral services for Larry Lionberger and Liz Duvall, and the rocks were picked up on the road to Ephesus in travels by Bob Jones from Jesus' mother's house and from the road to Ephesus. The olivewood figurine of Christ carrying the cross was purchased in Jerusalem by Fr. Bob and donated to the church.



This icon was purchased by Fr. Bob and brought back from his tour "Following the Footsteps of Paul" in Greece. The icon came from the Greek Orthodox Church.



The materials for this cross came from the Eton College chapel in England. The beams were used as cross ties in the roof at the school in the 1440 to 1460 era. During roof repairs the father of a St. Matthew's parishioner, who was caretaker there, had been using them for firewood. Legend says that the ties were originally from an old sailing ship. Look carefully at the nails; they are old square ones. The pieces were hand carried back to the States by a pilot once stationed at Kelly AFB. The work to create the cross was given by Cecil Tilghman, an early parishioner and Master Sergeant in the Air Force, in memory of his brother.

The table was the original altar at the storefront church, and was made by Cecil Tilghman. The diocese originally loaned St. Matthew's an altar; it was replaced by this table when the 1979 Book of Common Prayer called for a free standing altar.



The Last Supper (below) was created by a priest at a monastery in Quernevaca. Fr. Bob attended a conference there, purchased it, and brought it back to the church.

The following three essays were provided by Bidda Reed, in whose home the initial meetings to start the fledgling Episcopal church were held; Beki (Creasy) Treadway, daughter of the Rev. Bob and Jayne Creasy; and Andrea (Pyle) Bielefeld, young parishioner from the days of the storefront church and later member and lay leader of the church.

St. Matthew's at its inception: by Bidda Reed)

A meeting of 13-17 people was held in the early fall of 1964 at the home of Howard E. and Bidda Reed, 202 Beechwood Avenue of Universal City. A second meeting was held about ten days later when it was decided to ask Fr. John Daniels of St. Paul's on Grayson in San Antonio to help us. He held two services at the Reed house where their Telefunken (television), covered by Bidda's best bridge cloth, served as an altar. A private baptismal service of their grandson, Justin Howard Reed, was also held there.

Before Christmas the church had moved to an old store, next to Ace Plumbing, on Main Street in Schertz. No heat, filthy, and with one light fixture it was swept, scrubbed, and dusted and ready for use. Howard Reed was one of the first vestrymen and served as treasurer. The name, St. Matthew's, after many suggestions was decided by popular vote.

The Reeds left the following spring and the church developed into what it is today.

St. Matthew's History - Part One: by Beki (Creasy) Treadway

I was six years old in 1966 when we moved to Universal City. Daddy, Fr. Bob Creasy, had been appointed to serve as the vicar at St. Matthew's. The church was located in an old store front building in Schertz. It was a large grey building with three front steps that led to tall doors. The large room inside had a partition running the length of the building separating the worship area from the fellowship hall. The worship area was modest in appearance, with wooden folding chairs and a simple wooden altar. I do not remember what hung behind the altar initially. At some point Daddy acquired some square foot mosaic tiles made by the youth of The Church of the Good Shepherd in Corpus Christi, and had some of those tiles placed in the shape of

a cross which then was hung behind the altar. I can still picture some of those specific because I spent so much time contemplating them during services. They were colorful symbols of faith. There were several of the tiles that were hung along the walls of the worship area as well. It was a nice connection since Daddy had been at the Church of the Good Shepherd when I was born and baptized. Eventually the wooden chairs were exchanged for metal folding chairs with thick padding.

On the other side of the partition were tables and dividers to form areas for Sunday School, a work room, and socializing. In the way back of the building was the restroom and a storage area. It comes to mind that the flushing of the commode in that restroom was a little loud and sometimes disruptive during services! The loudest disruption however, was from the noon train that came through town. The tracks were directly across the street, and the building would literally shake as the train came through blowing its shrill whistle. I recall hearing that the time of church services was set in accordance with the train schedule to ensure the service was over, and particularly the sermon, long before the train came through. It was a thrill for us youngsters to be outside on the sidewalk when the train came by.

Daddy had a work space where he kept the mimeograph machine. He typed the bulletin at home and would bring the film to the church building to run off the copies. Carl and I were often enlisted to help with the cranking of the machine. I still remember the smell of those copies. The storage area in the back was a bit mysterious to me, especially since I recall that the teenagers used it for a haunted house at Halloween. I was afraid, so I did not go in there. Many of those same older kids became adults with their own children in the community of St. Matthew's.

Mom, Jayne Creasy, made banners for the church seasons that matched the vestments she made for Daddy. Mom served on the altar guild, and sometimes would enlist my silent help, until as an adult I took the same role. Mom taught women and girls every year how to fold palms into crosses for Palm Sunday. Mom brought her extensive collection of bunnies to decorate the church every Easter for the luncheon.

Ol' Bossy Dairy had a store across the street from the church. We bought our milk in glass bottles there, and sometimes we would go in for ice cream cones after church. Mom's favorite Ol' Bossy ice cream was called White House and had cherries and nuts. I probably had vanilla.

The thing I remember most about the church in Schertz was the sense of family. I can still recall the names of the people with whom we shared worship, meals, and special occasions. We were all family.

At some point, land was purchased in Universal City for a new church building. It was five acres on a gravel road, alone at the top of a hill adjacent to Mr. Ward's farm. Some of the men must have gone out and mowed a portion of the property, and on the 4th of July, 1969, (I think) we had a church picnic on the grounds. It was so much fun and very exciting to share in this new location. For a week or so after the picnic, it remained painfully fresh in everyone's mind. Nearly everyone left the grounds with new friends: chiggers. Everyone had the itch of the new property.

Robert Morris and Bill McDonald were the architects who designed the new building. They built a cardboard model which we had on display at the church. It was so modern, and the tower so impressive. You could lift the roof off the model and look inside; I loved that model. Watching the construction of the new building was seeing that model take shape. The steel framing was massive; church members all signed on the beams. And we moved in. There was a copper plaque on the original front door with the date of the dedication, January 1970. Blue carpet went up the stairs in the narthex and in the altar area. Upstairs was a room with windows to use for a projector. A balcony was used for Sunday School. The altar, pulpit, cross and flower stand were designed by Robert Morris and made of native mesquite wood and punched copper and tin, hand punched by Bill McDonald. Just inside the door that leads into the vestments room, the wall was painted with brightly colored angles beginning at the window and running along that facing wall. It was again the genius of Robert Morris to represent the sun's rays moving through the window over the course of a day. The very quiet new bathroom in the back corner was painted red, white, and blue! The padded chairs were moved from the old church as well as the cross of mosaic tiles.

Early on the morning of the first service in the church, Daddy opened a desk drawer in the narthex and was greeted by two peering eyes. A skunk had come in during construction and taken up residency. Somehow that situation was resolved without any residual odor.

At some later date, a portable building was placed behind the tower. One third of the building was Daddy's office, which had previously been at the rectory. The other side served for a while as a shop for James Avery jewelry,

which had been sold in the narthex. In that time James Avery jewelry was originally sold through local Episcopal churches. The shop later became the nursery, where I spent much of my time caring for the littlest members of the church. Sometime in the 1980's the church obtained an old barracks building from Lackland AFB, which is the current education building. Originally it housed Daddy's office, a nursery, and a fellowship hall. Around 1989, the padded chairs in the church were traded for new wooden pews.

Our church family celebrated at this new church. The 4th of July picnic became an annual event that concluded with the beautiful fireworks of Randolph AFB. I spent every 4th of July of my youth at St. Matthew's. Halloween became a gathering of costumed children and a chili cook-off for the adults. Every Easter, Daddy made sure there were freshly baked hot cross buns to enjoy after the early service. The bluebonnets always appeared as a joyful participant in Easter, and the pot luck luncheons were bountiful. Christmas Eve was always a big family celebration. Excited joy was always imminent at these events we shared.

Like so many other St. Matthew's family members, I experienced much of my life in this church. I was confirmed in the new church building, I was married, I shared as my husband was confirmed, I cherished my babies being baptized, and I celebrated the life of my father after his death.

St. Matthew's is and has always been my family.

St. Matthew's History - Part two: by Andrea (Pyle) Bielefeld

In 1965, I was 11 years old. My mom had taken a teaching job in some strange town called Schertz, Texas. We were living in San Antonio, and Schertz seemed like a strange and faraway place. My family settled in and before I knew it we had found a church!

Well, it didn't look like any church I had ever seen on the outside, and even more unlike a church on the inside. That was before my father and others turned an old hardware store on Main St. in Schertz into a place of worship that I will never forget. With tall dividers, folding chairs, an altar, and a cross. Some very passionate, focused, and loving families turned that old building into a place of worship.

There were two sides to this place of worship; on the left hand side was church and on the right hand side was a Parish Hall. I will never forget the

bathroom back behind the altar. My father dared us to excuse ourselves to use the restroom during church. To my memory none of us ever took him up on the dare! Every once in a while there would be a flush in between the Amen and Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

And in my memories, this house of worship was filled every Sunday. Sunday school classes squished and divided by folding walls. Lots of talking, laughter, and even some shouting occurred during Sunday school. I fondly remember how the ladies would take turns selling James Avery jewelry before and after church.

And then there was the most wonderful place across the street. Ol' Bossey's, a dairy store with ice cream cones, cokes, and even burgers. A little piece of heaven to go to after church, but only if you behaved. Ice cream cones were our reward for being "good" in church. There wasn't a nursery and everybody was in church!

I also have the wonderful memory of my confirmation class being led by Fr. Gerry McAllister, later to be known as Bishop Gerry many years after that. He would be waiting on the front steps of the church with a Coke and cigarette in his hand. There were a few of us who showed up there after school and sat around him listening to his stories. I don't remember too much of anything about those classes except I knew that God loved me. This was the first explanation I understood about God's love for us all.

Well, my next memories of church include a long ride to another part of the world as far as I was concerned, to a large piece of land with lots of weeds, rocks, and snakes and it was in Universal City. I remember my father and others being very excited stepping onto this land, and for a while it was a place we all ended up having picnics, playing baseball, and just running around. But all of the sudden, my brothers and I were out on this land, and we were picking up rocks. Rocks and more rocks clearing the land for a "Real Church". That's what our childish minds thought. A real church building!

And who could forget the barracks moving in and becoming our Parish Hall. Many meals, coffee times, receptions, and meetings took place in those important buildings. The barracks still serve this church well.

Going back to my memories of clearing the field of rocks and weeds came

back to me several years later when Creasy Hall was constructed. Once again I had the honor with my husband and son to lay the grass, plant the trees, and landscape around the building. Several evenings were spent as Troy and I watered the new grass, trees, and flower beds. It was an honor for me to have my husband taking over the grounds keeping for this special place.

But above all of my memories I have of this church it is the man who led so many people through the years, Fr. Creasy. A true man of God and a wonderful leader to so many in this church and the community.

I did leave St. Matthews during the 80's, living in different places in Texas, but I promise my heart was always with my church - my St. Matthew's, as it has been all these years. I was able to come home in the 90's and became a member of St. Matt's for real! Welcoming a new priest, serving as treasurer, serving as Christian Ed. chairman, and on the Vestry. Fortunately, or not, I still begin many sentences with "at St. Matthew's we....." I know it drives people wild, but I can't help it. St. Matthew's has been and always will be my "baseline" for church.

There is one other piece of my story about St. Matthew's and that is my mother and father both asked that their ashes be left on these grounds. I realized at the time of my father's death just how much this church meant to my father and mother. Thank you Mom and Dad for bringing me to this wonderful place, this home, St. Matthew's.

Here's to another 50 years for St. Matthew's! God Bless this church for ever and ever.

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St. Matthew's Episcopal Church Memories:

When I came to Texas I knew God had sent me here. After two years of living with my son and Michelle I knew I needed something more. I was going to the gym five days a week and met John Heberling there. He invited me to come to his church and have breakfast so I came. It was the best thing that happened to me since I had gotten to Texas. As soon as I walked into Creasy Hall I felt like I was home. Then I went to Sunday School, and to the 10:30 service. As soon as I heard the "Our Father" sung, I knew I was home and would never leave St. Matthew's. The funniest thing is that Fr. Tim was on sabbatical when I came, but there was so much love in the church I didn't care who was the priest. I became a member and no one will take me away from St. Matt's. I owe so much to my church family; I have never felt so close and loved with a church. **(by Mary Dunham)**

My favorite memory from Saint Matthew's would have to be how I got started with music. I got my first guitar when I was 14 years old. I learned a little to start from my dad, but my actual guitar lessons started with Deb McCaslin our youth leader at the time. I had been doing choir with her at first, voice lessons and she helped with my choir at school. After taking lessons on the guitar for a while and practicing with friends I finally got up the nerve to ask if I could play during the church service. As I had just started playing I wasn't comfortable enough to sing and play at the same time so I worked out a couple of songs I could play but not have to sing. So the time came, it was Sunday morning and here comes communion. I played an acoustic version of a Metallica and Nirvana song. As I started playing I saw my older brother Chad and Brandon Ercoline both pop their heads up in surprise. It wasn't until after the service that Mom found out what I had actually played! To this day I don't know how many people know what I really played that first morning that Saint Matthew's had its youngest guitar player make his debut! **(by Patrick Duffield)**

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I am a cradle Episcopalian....well, actually, I am a cradle Anglican.--I was baptized Church of England, but I was confirmed Episcopalian in California when I was 14. My relationship with Saint Matthew's began in 1971, when

Ron Dunlap and I were looking for an Episcopal priest to officiate our upcoming wedding in early 1972. We did not live here at the time, but we had decided to celebrate the event at Randolph Air Force Base because Ron's parents had retired here. As an Air Force family, we came back to San Antonio often to visit, and we attended church services at St. Matthew's. In 1980, we asked Father Bob to officiate the baptism of our daughter, Catie, at Randolph Air Force Base. (Our son, Tike, had been baptized in California in the church where I was confirmed).

It was only natural that when we were moving to San Antonio from North Dakota in the fall of 1987, I called Father Bob to ask if he needed a teacher for kindergarten Sunday School. He said yes immediately and so I was committed. On our first Sunday back at Saint Matthew's, we ran into Bill Ercoline who we had met the day before when signing Tike up for soccer – he was the team's coach.

After my marriage to Ron dissolved in 1995, Saint Matthew's was my support system because my family lived so far away. Then in 1999, John Sampson proposed to me on the grounds of Saint Matthews, where the Memorial Garden is now, and in 2000, Father Tim officiated our wedding here at Saint Matthews.

I've always been involved with children, volunteering as Sunday School teacher, scout leader, classroom parent, soccer mom, swim meet official, and band booster, but it was at Saint Matthew's that my ministry to children has truly been fulfilled. I have been involved with several Christmas pageants over the years, I served as Christian Education Director for 5 years and I developed the Children's Church format when my grandchildren were small. I continued to teach the little ones in Sunday School until very recently, and I am still on call as a substitute when needed. I have helped to chaperone the Youth Prayer Vigil on Maundy Thursday since 2012, and for the last 3 years, John and I have both been involved with the summer Vacation Bible School that Saint Matthew's holds in conjunction with Church of the Resurrection.

Saint Matthew's is a warm and friendly congregation, and it will always have a very special place in my life and in my heart. **(by Liz Sampson)**

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St. Matthew's changed our lives. We came to Live Oak in 1975 having been very occasional "members" of another congregation at a large, older and rather cool Episcopal church in Dallas. They never really welcomed us, needed us, and noticed when we came or when we moved away. They got along without us before they met us and get along without us now! Upon arrival in San Antonio we did some church hopping and shopping but we kind of became more regular at St. Matthew's after a year or so. It was near our home, we liked the congregation, and Fr. Bob and Jayne. It was a small and friendly bunch in a kind of odd all-purpose building. And, after all, we had a ten year-old who needed to have a proper church home. We began to come often enough that when the Every Member Canvas was conducted, a lady made an appointment to visit us in our home. Her name was Judy Fichter and she made the trip over to our home one fall evening for a very pleasant visit and chat. As the conversation was drawing to a close, she said that she was glad to get to know us and that we were attending St. Matthew's. As she was getting up to leave she looked us straight in the eyes and said very directly: "We hope you will consider making a pledge to support our church. St. Matthew's is a small church and every gift is important. Your pledge will make a difference." And it dawned on us: St. Matthew's actually needed us. Our little gifts mattered there. That realization began a transforming journey over time. We did make a modest pledge that year and made sure to have that check in the offering plate each month. As time went forward we attended a series of meetings on proportional giving – the idea was to take our current giving as a starting point and to view it as a percentage of our income with the idea to begin increasing that gift as a percentage of our income until we could reach the level of the Biblical standard: a ten percent tithe. It was a scary goal back then but we saw it as an important priority. It took some several years - and it was always a little breathtaking to promise an increase of that percent amount each year - but we did. And, as the Bible tells us, somehow there was always enough to meet that commitment and to pay our other obligations as well. Furthermore, our income began to increase when my late wife, Jean, took a job and some other resources came our way. She insisted on making a tithe gift with each paycheck and also insisted that the church check was always the very first she wrote. I followed her example. We prospered and experienced financial peace. That journey of faith with stewardship of our "treasure" also brought us both into more conscious use of our time and talent in service to the church. It's true "For **where your treasure is, there**

your heart will be also". Judy's visit was truly a turning point in our religious lives. It helped us focus on what is important and to become much more involved in the life of St. Matthew's in a number of different ministries over the years. It made us feel we belonged and warmly included in a faith community that really did become our church family. It enriched us in every way: emotionally, spiritually and even financially. With the hard times that come, including illness and death, St. Matthew's was always there 110% for us in every possible way. My memories of St. Matthew's are so inextricably linked to Judy's simple witness and invitation it is my strongest memory of St. Matthew's over a 40 year span of time. How said it would have been if Judy didn't take time to make that visit and let us know we mattered. Thank you, Judy, and all our dear friends who have been such an important part of our St. Mathew's church family over these eventful years. You are in my heart and I shall forever be grateful. **(by Mendell Morgan)**

Bob and Phyllis Jones came to our area on a job assignment. After his retirement from Randolph Air Force Base in 1976, they became active parishioners at St. Matthew's. Bob was hired as our first organist when St. Matthew's received the gift of an old organ from an Episcopal church in Corpus Christi. The congregation was grateful for this gift but it was well-used and suffered the results of many years of abuse by salt and sea water being so near the coast. It had no flutes or other interesting features, only three levels of play: loud, soft and stop. It would often stop right in the middle of a hymn and Bob would nimbly hop over to the nearby piano to finish the piece! It eventually gave out completely just before Easter Sunday one year. Two organs were sent out on trial for Easter Sunday and one was selected. There was no organ fund and the congregation took a great leap of faith to buy the replacement which cost around \$2,000. The call went out and donations poured in. The complete sum was raised and the new organ was paid for completely in less than one month! Bob had to resign as organist because of a job transfer but the new organist quit after a year and Bob returned to the job driving each Sunday from Austin for another year to play before they moved back to Windcrest. Many years later the current organ was donated by a retired General at the ARC. It was originally a theater organ with all the "bells and whistles". It was modified to serve as a wonderful church organ which is currently being enjoyed each Sunday. Another early leap of faith was the purchase of an old barracks building from Lackland AFB which was moved into place behind the church to serve as the

Christian Education building with the first church kitchen, restrooms, classrooms and rector's office. It replaced the old trailer Fr. Bob used for his office and meetings. Bob also served on the Bishop's Committee and was Senior Warden when the congregation took another leap of faith by deciding to purchase pews to replace the folding chairs with kneelers that were the original equipment. A committee evaluated several possibilities and chose a design in conformity with that of the building and with wood to match the woodwork in the church. On the designated Sunday, at the conclusion of the service, everyone took his chair to the balcony to store so the new rug could be laid Monday under the pews which were installed over the following days and ready for services the next Sunday. Bob Jones was also the Senior Warden again in 1989 when a calling committee was appointed to choose a new priest for St. Matthew's when Fr. Bob retired. In another leap of faith, Bob had the honor to call Fr. Tim on the Committee's recommendation, asking him to come to St. Matthew's. There were several priests serving on an interim capacity between Fr. Bob and Fr. Tim. The wife of one fell on the sacristy step and threatened to sue the church! Others had somewhat radical ideas and instituted some controversial changes so Fr. Tim was welcomed with enormous relief! He was also Senior Warden when another leap of faith resulted in design and construction of the current Parish Hall, named to honor Fr. Bob Creasy. Bob and Phyl recall that each St. Matthew's milestone has been achieved by a leap of faith and hope that these leaps will continue.

(by Bob and Phyllis Jones)



Almost from the first service I attended at St. Matthew's I was aware of being surrounded by caring, considerate, and friendly people who soon added a new dimension to my life. For spiritual and daily inspiration I need only to look around and see the St. Matthew's members that continue to embrace the fullness of life while soldiering through all kinds of life changing events. **(by Pat DePasquale)**



"50 years of God's Spirit moving through Saint Matthew's." As we celebrate this momentous occasion, I have been reflecting back on the (almost) forty years that we have been part of the Saint Matthew's family.

In 1974, Bill a Captain in the Air Force, had just returned from Southeast Asia (Viet Nam). His new assignment was with the Instrument Flight Center at

Randolph Air Force Base. We moved into a brand new home in Live Oak and immediately looked for an Episcopal Church. What is now Kitty Hawk Boulevard was a dirt road from 1604 towards Pat Booker Road up to the top of the hill where the St. Matthews Church now stands. It was paved from the top of the hill to Pat Booker. At the time, St. Matthews Church was one of the few buildings along Kitty Hawk Boulevard.

Being a “cradle” Episcopalian from a very traditional ‘high’ Episcopal Church, we were destined to find an Episcopal Church to our liking. It was evident by just walking into Saint Matthews that it was not like any church I had ever attended...the pews were chairs...there were no stained glass windows...no stations of the cross on the walls...the priest stood in front of the altar to give his sermons! This was nothing like I had been used to seeing. There was little building behind the church that was a combination of parish hall, church office, and Christian Education Building. That building later became the Martha’s building where the women of the church sold James Avery jewelry.

The first Sunday we attended happened to be a Morning Prayer service. Bill liked the service...it was short! ☺ Everything was very different from what I was used to, but as an Air Force wife...I was getting used to things being different from what I was used to. Even though things were different there was something special about this place.

Bill, Erin and I were convinced that Saint Matthew’s would be our place of worship when we had a visit from Father Bob Creasy later that week. Father Creasy spent time telling us about the mission (not yet a parish), the congregation, and his own family. We became regular attendees on Sunday and quickly became part of a wonderful church family. Our son, Brandon, was born not long after our decision to make St. Matthew’s our home church, and shortly after his birth Father Creasy baptized him during one of the church services.

Since the church was so near an Air Force base we had many military families attending. Lots of coming and going; hails and sad farewells. As it turned out we bid a sad farewell to Saint Matthew’s just two years after we moved to San Antonio. Bill was selected to teach physics at the Air Force Academy. Before that he had to obtain a graduate degree at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, OH, in the Air Force Institute of Technology. So off we went to Ohio for two years, and then on to the AF Academy, thinking we would never see Texas again. WRONG!

After being gone for almost seven years we found ourselves back in San Antonio and Bill's assignment this time was with the 560th Flying Training Squadron. We found a home in Coronado Village (the sub-division across the street from the church). Kitty Hawk was now a paved road, but there still weren't many new buildings on either side of it.

We quickly resettled at Saint Matthew's. At that time Erin and Brandon were in fifth and second grade, so Sunday school became a very important part of our Sundays. I taught Sunday school and Bill did too. Eventually I served as Sunday School Superintendent and Bill and Barbara Duffield taught the junior/senior high school group. What a great group of kids and teachers! I remember an adult Sunday school class that we regularly attended. It was held in an all-purpose building, which is now the Christian Education Building. The building was added to the property while we were gone. It was an old Lackland barracks building that was moved to the church property and revamped into a mini parish hall/Sunday school building). We had a big group every Sunday...there were always lively discussions about the scripture lessons. If you wanted a good seat you had to get there early. The pillars in the building blocked the view so the late people had to sit behind the pillars.

Erin and Brandon have fond memories of their Sunday school/youth group days...chili cook off; haunted houses; picnics; vacation Bible school; Camp Capers. Anyone who spent the night at our house on Saturday night knew that they would be going to our church on Sunday morning. Some of these kids became active members of our youth group. I was in charge of the acolytes for a short period... Brandon served as an acolyte for many years.

St. Matthew's was still a mission church when we returned from the AF Academy. Unfortunately for Bill the Morning Prayer short services were no longer. Throughout the years Bill and I served on the Bishop's Committee at different times. Always, the number one goal of the Bishop's Committee was to reach parish status. That goal was finally reached, and St. Matthew's became a parish. After that, both of us served on the Vestry at different times. We both served as Senior Warden. Bill continues to serve as co- chairman of the Every Member Canvas as he has for several years. I have been Events Chairman and Chairman of the pew committee. Currently, I am serving on the RACAP Board of Directors ...Father Bob Creasy was one of the charter members of the RACAP board and St Matthew's was a charter member church. RACAP came into being over thirty years ago. As time went on, it was

obvious that we needed a larger parish hall. Our current parish hall was a big undertaking for our little church, but we all knew it was something that had to be built. Since then, it's hard to imagine a time when we didn't have it. So much of our life has been connected to St Matthew's Church and the parish hall activities.

In the midst of the construction we had to face reality. The parish hall would be ushering in a new generation. Father Creasy and Jayne were our spiritual leaders and also good friends for so many years. Realistically, we knew Father Bob wouldn't be our spiritual leader forever, but when he announced his retirement, I think we all felt a sense of loss. As a member of the search committee, I remember meeting in the Christian Education Building discussing the selection of our new spiritual leader. One weekend a few members of our search committee went to Del Rio for a weekend and attended services led by Father Tim Vellom. Everyone who attended came back with positive comments and a glowing report. We pursued Father Tim and we were very grateful that our prayers were answered when he, Ann, and their sweet daughters accepted our call for him to be our new leader. Father Tim has been a blessing to our congregation and to our family, personally. He and Father Bob officiated at Brandon's wedding. Our daughter Erin and our son-in-law Gabe were blessed to have Father Tim officiate their wedding and baptize both of their children, Gabby and Louie. The Ercoline's 'circle of life' is very evident in our ties with Saint Matthew's

My current work as lay ministry coordinator has been both a blessing and a challenge. This position and my time serving on the Vestry have made me aware of the inner workings of the church and the day to day operation. I am so grateful to the many who are serving in ministries and those who have taken on a lay leadership position. There are so many who are dedicated to Saint Matthew's and are working to insure it's success...*'to 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'*

Saint Matthew's has been blessed with two wonderful priests leading us on our spiritual journey. Bill and I feel very blessed to have known so many people who were a part of making Saint Matthew's. The numbers of those who have graced our congregation with their presence and are no longer with us are legion...far too many names to even try to name but you are remembered. We are blessed to have known them, to have been a small part

of their life's journey, and we feel blessed to be a part of those who continue to serve Christ through our St Matthews Church. "50 years of God's spirit moving through Saint Matthew's." The Ercolines are blessed to be a part of it! **(by Kathy Ercoline)**

I remember Fr. Bob Creasy arriving on my doorstep at Randolph AFB one fall morning in 1986. We were in the process of moving in and I was mortified at his arrival as I had a vacuum cleaner in the middle of the floor and was surrounded by boxes, various piles of belongings, and not a place cleared to sit down. He invited us to attend services and though it took us a while, the following spring we arrived at Sunday morning services and never looked back.

I vividly remember the first person to make me feel welcome in the church. Kathy Ercoline took me under her wing and introduced me to a number of the adults. She introduced my eldest son Chad to her son Brandon, Patrick and Jeremy to children their ages, and we all quickly discovered a family connection and began a regular attendance on Sunday mornings.

Over the years, amidst life's ups and downs, I discovered the value and truth of a "church family." I began to discover what Christ's love means in a life of hardship and joy; finding people who understood the value of sharing that gift of faith and trust in God to new comers who didn't yet understand the importance of it. I began getting "involved" and gradually found my way into lay leadership of my own. Vestry, Sunday school teacher, Lay Eucharistic ministry and Lay reading; whatever needed to be done I tried. Fr. Bob was the one to whom I went when my marriage ended, asking him to just tell whoever needed to be told. The boys and I were enfolded in what became our support system. I thought the world would end when Fr. Bob announced his retirement and yet God's providence is, of course, larger than one family. We missed Fr. Bob and Jayne terribly, but we were sent the next generation of pastoral leadership in Fr. Tim and his family. Fr. Tim ushered in the era of Alpha and prayer ministry, and eventually Cursillo. New opportunities for lay leadership and ministry were encouraged and I have discovered a passion for pastoral care through the years.

In the blink of an eye I have become one of the "old timers" in the church; 28 years this past spring. I see the old and the new in our church facilities; in the buildings, grounds, and the neighborhood in which we live. I remember with

gratitude so many of those who have gone home before us. Beryl Dodson, Flo Mulligan, Tommy and Margaret Goodrich, Martha Vogel, Jean Morgan, Fr. Bill and Laverne Brown, Fr. Allen and Nancy Price, and of course our beloved Fr. Bob. The problem with beginning a list like this is that it is always and inevitably incomplete. There are those who came and left before my time. Others whose names are known to God alone now. Those individuals who made a difference in the lives of all of us – there is just no way to name them all. But each of them, those known to us individually and those known only to God, have made a difference. All have had a hand in creating the remarkable family that we know affectionately as St. Matt’s.

I pray that as we begin the next 50 years we will all find a way to welcome the seekers in our midst to join us in worship, fellowship, and praise of our Father. **(by Barbara Duffield)**

Stories taken from *Cooking With Grace*: a St. Matthew’s cookbook. Authors of the pieces are unknown but Beki (Creasy) Treadway headed the effort for creation of the cookbook.

First Visitor

During the latter stages of construction it became apparent that some form of wild animal was inhabiting the new church building. Remains of construction workers lunches were found nibbled, and other debris which indicated a creature within the walls. The Sunday prior to moving into the new building, January 24, 1971, an attempt was made to rid the animal from the church. Sand was sprinkled on the door stoop and the door left open. When footprints leading out were found in the sand, it was assumed the creature had left and had not returned. The next week, everything was moved into the new church building. On Sunday, January 31, 1971, the first Sunday of services in the new location, Father Bob was looking for something early that morning and opened the drawers of a small desk in the narthex. From the bottom drawer, out popped a small skunk peering back at a surprised Father Bob. Realizing that he could contain the animal in the narthex and coerce him out the door, Father Bob raced to close the doors downstairs and up, since there was evidence that the creature had been residing in the upstairs mechanical room. The skunk made three desperate attempts to go upstairs, all with Father Bob frantically trying to “shoo” him out of the door. Finally, the skunk left in a scurry, but not before leaving

behind a fragrant reminder of his presence. The congregation, upon hearing the tale that morning (and smelling the tail?) decided to name our little skunk "Matthew." There was even a wooden memorial of "Matthew" the skunk which was used as a yard ornament on occasion.

Furry Orphans

When St. Matthew's first located to the property on Kitty Hawk in the early 1970s, the road was unpaved and the area surrounding the church property was undeveloped. It seemed to be the perfect location for individuals to drop off pets that were no longer wanted. Dogs and cats who were unafraid of people, thus obviously not wild, often were found on the church property hungry and looking for shelter. Many of these animals were adopted by members of the congregation. "Matthew" was recurrently a popular name choice for animals rescued on the church property. The problem became bigger than the congregation's ability to adopt and care for these strays, and through the concern of members and the Universal City community, a shelter for stray pets was begun which came to be known as "Homes for the Homeless." Though the shelter and St. Matthew's were not connected, it was largely due to stray animals found at St. Matthew's that the animal shelter was founded.

Why "Ten O'Clock?"

(Note: At the time of this cookbooks creation, the later service began at 10 am, not 10:30 am)

Why are the church services at 8:00 and 10:00 am on Sunday mornings? The original location of St. Matthew's in the storefront building in Schertz was directly across the street from the railroad tracks. There was a regular train which passed on Sunday mornings, sure to interrupt any service in progress with the clatter of the tracks, the shrill blow of the whistle, and the shaking of the walls and all else in the church building. On occasion when Father Bob's sermons ran late or the church was ahead of schedule, the congregation was reminded why services began at 10:00 am.

