

# Matt's Missive

November 2025



## REMINDER

St. Matthew's Thursday Night Dining Out group does not meet in November and December.

Looking forward to resuming the dinners on January 29th, 2026.

Kathy and Bill Ercoline will be hosts. Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas!

See you next year!

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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.

## Report From Clergy Conference

The annual gathering of diocesan clergy is always a delightful time. I get to spend a couple of days with some of my best friends; we spend some time talking about big-picture issues facing the church and our ministry together; and the clergy get to renew our ordination vows together. This year's speaker was Bishop Robert Wright from the Diocese of Atlanta, who talked to us about "preaching in challenging times." +Rob is a gifted speaker, and was a great encourager for all of us.

This year's clergy conference was followed by a preaching retreat with Dr. Eric Barreto from Princeton Theological Seminary, for which about 15 of us stayed.

Every year at clergy conference, our bishop gives some general instructions to the clergy of the diocese. Let me pass on a few notes:

The rebuilding efforts in Kerrville are underway, and it will be at least a three-year process. Episcopal Relief and Development is providing DWTX with a staff member for at least a year to help coordinate the efforts. Donations continue to come in from all around the country.

With the launch of the vocational deacon discernment track, there are more people involved in the vocations discernment process now than in the recent past, which is a happy thing. (If you want to explore a conversation about ordained ministry in the church, the first step is still to come talk to me.) Alex Holloway is the new dean of the Iona School for ministry education. There are six congregations in West Texas in a search process for new rectors/vicars.

The theme for Council 2026 in Corpus Christi will be "Let Your Love be Genuine" from Romans 12:9. There will be two sets of learning workshops again this year. Bishop Craig Loya of Minnesota will be the luncheon speaker.

Fr. Cristopher+

## RACAP NEWS

By Kathy Ercoline

St. Matthew's Harvest Sunday contributions of food and cash far exceeded expectations!

**Thank you to all who contributed** to the Holiday Basket Program! The program continues through December 14<sup>th</sup>. If you did not have an opportunity to contribute to the Harvest Sunday collection, the following items will be accepted for Christmas baskets:

**Chicken Broth, Brown Sugar (1 lb.), Canned Green Beans and Corn, Evaporated Milk; Stuffing Mix, Canned Pumpkin, Yams, Fruit Cocktail, and Cranberry Sauce.**

Monetary contributions provide fresh produce, gift cards, and perishable items for the food baskets. Cash donations should be in an envelope marked "**RACAP Christmas**." Checks should be made out to St. Matthew's and marked "**RACAP Christmas**" in the memo line.

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## **RACAP NEWS** *(Continued)*

Our Harvest Sunday Luncheon was a huge success. Several delicious soups, salads, and desserts contributed to making a very hardy, delicious meal. It was a time for food, fun, fellowship, and giving thanks for RACAP. Thank you to all who brought food and/or helped clean up...the kitchen was spotless in less than an hour! The help was very much appreciated!

### **RACAP REMINDERS:**

- ♦ Check the expiration or 'use by' dates on the food items donated
- ♦ RACAP always accepts cat and dog food donations
- ♦ RACAP pantry is open on Monday through Friday, 1:00-3:00PM

### **Current Pantry Needs:**

Canned Fruits	Tomato Products	Ramen	Dried Beans
Rice	Canned Meats	Muffin Mix	Mac 'n Cheese
Meat Helpers	Jello	Canned Beans (not green beans)	
Toothpaste	Shampoo	Laundry Detergent	Dish Soap
Feminine Hygiene Products			

As the pantry continues its mission to "Feed my sheep," remember RACAP and their clients in your prayers. We are blessed to have the RACAP pantry in our community. We **give thanks** for the staff and the volunteers, and we are **grateful** for the many churches, organizations, and individuals who support RACAP with food and cash donations. As a board member, I am especially grateful for St. Matthew's congregation's commitment to RACAP and its mission. Your support is greatly appreciated.

## **HAPPY THANKSGIVING!**

### **RACAP Month in Review**

#### **October 2025 Assistance Results**

# of Families Assisted 136 ~ # People 353  
# of Pantry Visits 95 ~ # of People fed 264  
# of Rent Pledges 48 ~ # of Utility Pledges 47  
# of REPEAT Clients 56  
# of NEW Clients 80  
Estimated Value of Food Given: \$21,531.00  
Value of Rental Assistance Given: \$5,448.00  
Value of Utility Assistance Given: \$5,719.22

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## **RACAP NEWS** *(Continued)*

### **RACAP Year to Date in Review**

#### **January-October 2025 Results**

# of Families Assisted 906 ~ # People 2,336  
# of Pantry Visits 677 ~ # of People Fed 1,795  
# of Rental Assistance 334 ~ # of Utility Assistance 325  
# of NEW Clients 479  
# of REPEAT Clients 427  
Estimated Value of Groceries Given: \$161,444.00  
Value of Rental Assistance Given: \$29,851.02  
Value of Utility Assistance Given: \$33,184.58

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

### **Hospitality Notes**

By Melissa Mudge

#### **Many Thanks**

Thank you, people of St. Matthew's. Always ready and willing to share your time and talents. We get things done because you care enough to make it happen.

Thanks, families, for sharing your Saints in our Parish Hall.

The Harvest Sunday collections will certainly make Thanksgiving meals special occasions for so many people. Thank you for generously providing for the members of our community.

#### **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, for the ever-evolving goodness that comes out of our kitchen.

- ♦ 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. I have a list!
- ♦ Kitchen Clean-up – Looking Good! Cleaning up after every activity helps keep the area clean and sanitary. Please wash your hands before touching anything in the kitchen, even coffee and ice scoop. This keeps us all safe and healthy.

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## Hospitality Notes *(Continued)*

### Give it – To Go

*Pray for all poor and neglected people whom it would be easy for us to forget: the homeless and the destitute, the old and the sick, and all who are broken in body or spirit. Turn their sorrow into joy.*

Thoughts and prayers lead to contemplation. Contemplation opens hearts to listen to God. Listening can result in action on behalf of those for whom we pray.

### Special Days/Events

- ♦ **November 30—First Sunday of Advent. Tamales and Trimmings.** Come enjoy a Potluck Luncheon and Deck the (Parish) Hall after the 10:00 a.m. service. Tamales will be provided. There will be a sign-up sheet for everything else. Plan to help decorate the Christmas trees in the hall and in the vestibule, as well as spreading Christmas cheer throughout the building.
- ♦ **December 1—Saint Andrew, Apostle.**
- ♦ **December 7—Second Sunday of Advent. (Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day.)**  
“Merciful God who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way of our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. *Amen.*”
- ♦ **December 12—Virgin of Guadalupe.**
- ♦ **December 14—Third Sunday of Advent. (Hanukkah Begins at Sundown.)** *Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient.* (James 5:7-8a) “Our patience in tending to our own lives requires just as much proactive and diligent attention as our anticipation of the coming of the kingdom.” (Bp Dorothy Sanders Wells, *Forward Day by Day*, November | December 2025 | January 2026)
- ♦ **December 16-24—Los Posadas.**
- ♦ **December 21—Fourth Sunday of Advent. The Rt. Rev. Dr. David G. Read, D.D., Bishop of West Texas, visits.** *An angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.”* (Matthew 1:20b) “Even in this season of long, dark, cold nights, perhaps ones filled with grief and burdens, an angel among us encourages us to fear not and to trust the Holy Spirit to direct us in all things.” (Bp Dorothy Sanders Wells, *Forward Day by Day*, November | December 2025 | January 2026)
- ♦ **December 25—Christmas Day**—first day of the 12 days of Christmas.
- ♦ **December 26—Kwanzaa Begins. Boxing Day.**
- ♦ **December 27—Feast Day of Saint John, Apostle and Evangelist.**
- ♦ **December 29—Feast of the Holy Innocents.**
- ♦ **December 31—New Year’s Eve.**



## *Happenings Around The Diocese*

### **Already Missing Camp Capers? Join us for Mid-Winter 2026!**

Mid-Winter I: January 2-4, 2026 - Current  
6th through 12th graders.

Mid-Winter II: January 9-11, 2026 -  
Current 2nd through 5th graders.

**Father/Son Retreat:** February 6-8, 2026,  
at Camp Capers.

Join us at this year's 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.

**Couple's Weekend Getaway:** February  
13-15, 2026, at Mustang Island Conference  
Center.

Escape for the weekend with your  
Sweetheart. The schedule is intentionally  
very relaxed, so you can spend time  
together resting, reflecting, and renewing  
with God and each other in His coastal  
creation. Each room has a private deck view  
of the sea and boardwalk access to beach.

**A Weekend to Discern and Explore  
God's Call:** April 24-26, 2026, at Mustang  
Island Conference Center.

Discovery weekends focus on the concept of  
vocation. They explore God's call in our  
lives as Christ followers as it applies to both  
lay and ordained persons. Whether this is a  
first or tenth step toward learning more  
along your journey with discernment, this  
weekend is open to all who are interested in  
learning and discovering more!

*You can find more information and registration  
on these & other events at [https://  
www.dwtx.org/events](https://www.dwtx.org/events)*



EPISCOPAL  
DIOCESE  
of West Texas

## **From the Blog**

### **Overwhelming Participation in the 20th Annual Bishop's Golf Classic.**

The tournament, which started on  
November 13, 2006, by the Rt. Rev. Gary  
Lillibridge, D.D., 9th Bishop of West Texas,  
supports the Diocese of West Texas Camp  
Scholarship Fund. The event has grown in  
participation each year. This year the  
tournament topped 2024's total, raising  
over \$66,000 to send children and families  
to one of the diocese's three camps: Camp  
Capers in the Texas Hill Country, Mustang  
Island Conference Center along the Texas  
Coast, and Duncan Park in the Colorado  
mountains. TMI Episcopal had a stellar  
performance, taking the team winner's  
trophy! Read more [here](#).

### **Registration for 2026 Summer Sessions is Open!**

Don't miss your chance to enjoy these fun  
and exciting camping experiences.  
Register for 2026 Summer sessions for  
[Camp Capers Summer Camp](#), [Mustang  
Island Family Camp](#), and [Duncan Park  
Summer and Family Camps](#).

### **Be a Part of the Diocese in Action.**

Learn how you can be a part of spreading  
God's love by participating in one of the  
various ministries of the diocese. Click  
[here](#) for more information.



The **DEADLINE** to submit Missive articles  
is the 15th of the month. Any late articles  
will be in the next month's issue.

## DECEMBER CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> <b>Staff Meeting</b> 9am (L) <b>Prayer Meeting</b> 12pm (L) <b>AA Meeting</b> 8-9pm (CH)	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> <b>HOME</b> 10am-3:30pm (CH, C, VEB)	<b>4</b> <b>Eucharist</b> 11am (ARC) <b>Choir Practice</b> 2-3pm (C) <b>AA Meeting</b> 8-9pm (CH)	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> <b>Worship</b> 8 & 10am (C) <b>Sunday School</b> 9:15am (L) <b>Tamales &amp; Trimmings</b> 11am (CH)	<b>8</b> <b>Staff Meeting</b> 9am (L) <b>Prayer Meeting</b> 12pm (L) <b>AA Meeting</b> 8-9pm (CH)	<b>9</b> <b>Vestry Meeting</b> 6pm (CH)	<b>10</b> <b>HOME</b> 10am-3:30pm (CH, C, VEB)	<b>11</b> <b>Eucharist</b> 11am (ARC) <b>Choir Practice</b> 2-3pm (C) <b>AA Meeting</b> 8-9pm (CH)	<b>12</b> <b>HOME</b> <b>Christmas Concert</b> 6-8:30pm (C)	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> <b>Worship</b> 8 & 10am (C) <b>Sunday School</b> 9:15am (L)	<b>15</b> <b>Staff Meeting</b> 9am (L) <b>Prayer Meeting</b> 12pm (L) <b>AA Meeting</b> 8-9pm (CH)	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> <b>HOME</b> 10am-3:30pm (CH, C, VEB)	<b>18</b> <b>Eucharist</b> 11am (ARC) <b>Choir Practice</b> 2-3pm (C) <b>AA Meeting</b> 8-9pm (CH)	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> <b>Bishop Visit</b> <b>Single Service</b> 9am (C) <b>Reception</b> 10:15am (CH) <b>No Sunday School</b>	<b>22</b> <b>Staff Meeting</b> 9am (L) <b>Prayer Meeting</b> 12pm (L) <b>AA Meeting</b> 8-9pm (CH)	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> <b>Christmas Eve Carols</b> 7:15pm (C) <b>Christmas Eve Service</b> 7:30pm (C)	<b>25</b> <b>Christmas Day Service</b> 10am (C) <b>Office Closed</b> <b>No ARC Service</b> <b>AA Meeting</b> 8-9pm (CH)	<b>26</b> <b>Office Closed</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> <b>Worship</b> 8 & 10am (C)	<b>29</b> <b>Staff Meeting</b> 9am (L) <b>Prayer Meeting</b> 12pm (L) <b>AA Meeting</b> 8-9pm (CH)	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> <b>New Year's Eve</b>			

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

# DECEMBER 2025 SUNDAY MINISTRY SCHEDULE

Ministry	December 7 Advent 2	December 14 Advent 3	December 21 Advent 4	December 28 Christmas 1
Altar Guild	Janet Clere Diane Woods	Tarawanda Howard Suzanne Milton	Maggie Barnes Stephenie McBride	Pat Clarke-Kempf Cindy Hull Diane Woods
8 AM Reader	Jayne Dunlap	Suzi Hopkins	Joan McClain	Max Hopkins
8 AM Greeter/Usher	Suzi Hopkins	Jayne Dunlap	Joan McClain	Shawen Cooksey
8 AM Coffee	Jayne Dunlap	Suzi Hopkins	Tarawanda Howard	Joan McClain
10 AM Server	Wayne Mudge	Terry May	Arlene Stalvey	Sean Francis
10 AM Reader	Maribeth Likins	Diane Woods	Melissa Mudge	Wayne Mudge
10 AM Greeter/Usher	Suzanne Milton	Kathy Ercoline	Wayne Mudge	Bill Ercoline
Prayers of the People	Janet Clere	Bill Ercoline	Maribeth Likins	Ellen Yelverton
Newcomer Visits	Terry May Diane Woods	Ellen Yelverton	Terry May Diane Woods	Ellen Yelverton
Home Communion	Ellen Yelverton	No Home Communion	Janet Clere	No Home Communion
Prayer Ministry	Maribeth Likins	Ellen Yelverton	Maribeth Likins	Ellen Yelverton
10 AM Coffee	Melissa Mudge	Diane Woods Terry May	Kathy Ercoline	Colleen Hubberd
Audio Visual	Kristina Robinson	Wayne Mudge	Terry May	Kristina Robinson
Lockup/Security	Terry May	Arlene Stalvey	Richard Guerrero	Janet Clere

## December Birthdays

*You have made known to me the path of life;  
you will fill me with joy in your presence,  
with eternal pleasures at your right hand.  
(Psalm 16:11)*

Faith Kenealy-O'Connor	Richard Guerrero
Lynn Tidwell	Maribeth Likins
Janet Clere	Jedidiah Barnes
Natalie Copley	John Sampson
Jennifer Bloodsworth	Willow Black
James Odom	Kathy Mulligan

“We remember today, O God, the slaughter of the holy innocents of Bethlehem by King Herod. Receive, we pray, into the arms of your mercy all innocent victims; and by your great might frustrate the designs of evil tyrants and establish your rule of justice, love, and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*”

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