

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

EDINBERG, TEXAS



Welcome to the Family....

Like the statue of Christ the Redeemer in front of the church,
St. Matthew's arms are opened wide.

Varied in age, race and political persuasion, our congregation ranges
from the very young to the very old. Children are always welcome at
St. Mat's. Most of the congregation became involved with the church
by way of the school. (More on the school in a bit.)



Our Heritage



AS ST. MATTHEW'S STARTED

On May 15, 1960, Harry Quin wrote Bishop Everett Holland Jones of the Diocese of West Texas, asking for permission and aid in establishing a mission of the Episcopal Church at Edinburg. Bishop Jones instructed the Rev. Mr. Clay Puckett, then rector of St. John's at McAllen, to name a committee to work with Edinburg Episcopalians. Mr. Puckett and Quin had been friends at the University of Texas School of Journalism. Committeemen were Waldo Greene, Bill Lyles, Tom Webb and Quin. The first service for the new group was held Dec. 16, 1962, with Mr. Puckett officiating in the Chevron Room of the Echo Motor Hotel. Twenty-one persons attended, eight from Edinburg: Robert and Lyle Gandy, Shirley and Dan Newey, Larry O'Rourke, Ed Albrecht and Harry and Betsy Quin.

Dec. 15, 1963, Bishop Jones came to the Quin home, 1306 S 13, accepted the group as a mission, pending diocesan approval at the next Church Council and approved the name of St. Matthew's. In the picture are those persons at the meeting with Bishop Jones. Front, 1 to r: Harry Quin, Marty Bills, Craig Bills, Robert Gandy III, Steve Ware, Bishop Jones, Mrs. A.Z. Lloyd, Mrs. Jennie Lee Alston, Lillian Ware, Bill Ware; back, Robert Gandy Jr., Pamela Bills, Ky Ware, Mark Bills, Betsy Quin and William Prosser.



We are flexible in worship, utilizing Rite 2 most of the time and Rite 1 occasionally, Morning Prayer and Holy Eucharist. Sunday morning we gather. Service is lively, music joyful and children have their own chapel mid service with games, activities and their own lesson.

We are active in our community. The TGIF Ladies have a craft room in the Parish Hall. They use it to create lovely items which they sell, raising funds for the local Women's Emergency Shelter. We take part in local events in Edinburg like Fun Runs, Festivals and Food Fests.

Committed to the Baptismal Covenant. We recently added 5 new members to the Christian family through baptism. Our promise to share the love of Christ to all people, to continue in the Apostle's teaching, to fellowship, to share the Good News, to pray for all, are promises we take seriously.

We have the St. Anne's Chapter of the Daughter's of the King, an active College and Young Adult Ministry and, of course, our school.

SMES is alive, loud, joyful, kind, studious, smart, giggly, prayerful, and happy. Each day just about 80 children attend the school. From our littlest 18 month olds to our big 5th graders we start each day with chapel. The children study English Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, and History in all grade levels. They also have Phys Ed, Spanish and ASL daily and Music twice a week. First Grade through Fifth Grade have Sacred Studies once a week. Each week closes with Praise and Worship Chapel full of singing, dance and prayers. Our kids can join the Chess Club and the Robotics Club from Kinder through 5th grade. Our School facility includes the main building with 9 classrooms, the offices and a teacher workroom. We also have two portable buildings, one used as classrooms and one used for extra curricular Activity space. Our grounds have a large covered pavilion, a baseball and soccer field and an athletic training walking course. Two separate playgrounds allow for age appropriate recess time for both the upper and lower schools.



The Nickel Tour of the Grounds





Diocese of West Texas

On Oct. 26, 1874, the General Convention voted to divide the Diocese of Texas and form the Missionary District of Northern Texas and the Missionary District of Western Texas. The primary convention of the Missionary District of Western Texas met at St. Mark's Church, San Antonio, on May 6-8, 1875. The primary convention of the Diocese of West Texas met at St. Mark's Church, San Antonio, on May 10-15, 1904. The 1910 General Convention formed the Missionary District of North Texas from the Diocese of Dallas and West Texas.

†The Rt. Rev. David M. Reed, Bishop of West Texas.

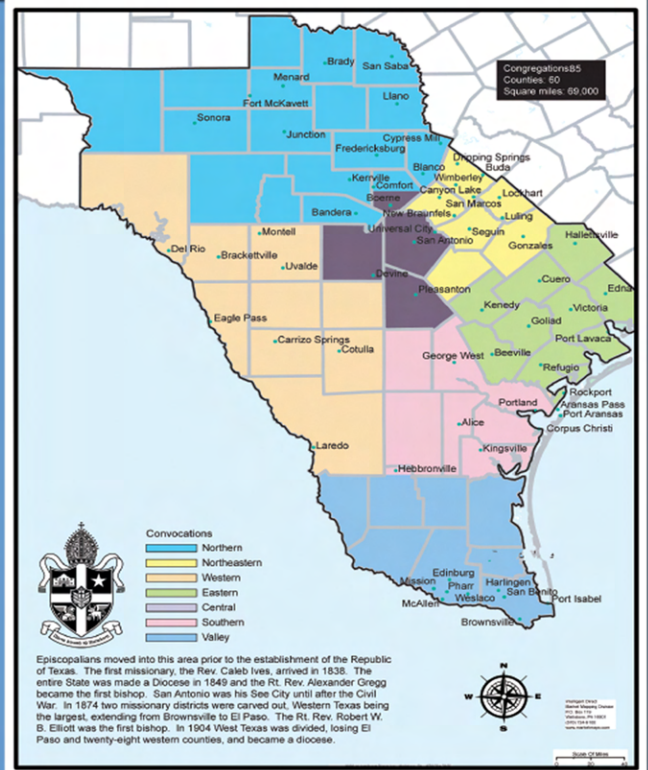
David Mitchell Reed was born in Brownsville, Texas, on March 9, 1957, to William Wesley Reed, Jr. and Olive Helen Polley Reed. The third of six children, he was baptized and confirmed at Church of the Advent, Brownsville. He attended elementary school at the Episcopal Day School and graduated from Homer Hanna High School in 1975.

He earned a Bachelor of Journalism degree from the University of Texas at Austin in 1978 and taught school for two years before going to seminary.

He graduated from Seminary of the Southwest in Austin in 1983 with a Master of Divinity degree. He was ordained to the diaconate by Bishop Stanley Hauser in Church of the Advent, Brownsville, on June 12, 1983. He was ordained a priest by Bishop Scott Field Bailey in St. Alban's Church, Harlingen, on January 13, 1984.



EPISCOPAL DIOCESE *of West Texas*



Home to more than 100,000 residents, Edinburg is more than just a wonderful place to live. In Edinburg, we celebrate diversity, from our residents to our key industries. Discover our wonderful city when you explore Edinburg's exceptional entertainment, arts & culture, and recreation. Immerse yourself in our community and enjoy special events that highlight this region's vibrant culture. Watch a live United Soccer League game or enjoy live performances at The H-E-B Park sports facility.

Venture outdoors and Explore Edinburg's many parks, and trails, as well as the Edinburg Scenic Wetlands & World Birding Center with 40-acres of scenic wetlands. Edinburg offers a Museum of South Texas History, South Texas Motorcycle Museum and The South Texas International Film Festival.

We offer a Mountain Bike Hike and Bike Trail and numerous water parks for the kiddos.

The University of Texas RGV has a student population of over 30 thousand students. Offering Undergraduate, graduate and doctorate degrees in more than 125 disciplines.

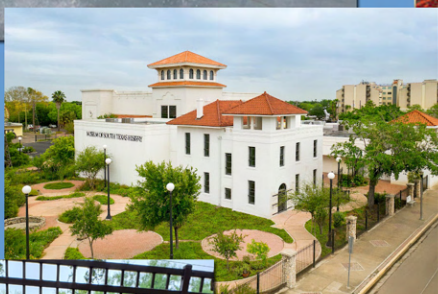
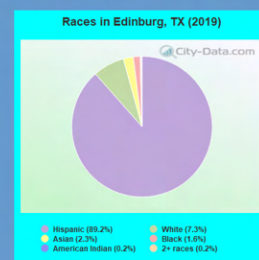


Photo by: Larry Ditto



Fiesta



Bar-B-Q



There's Good News and there's Bad News...

St. Matthew's has been without a full time priest since the spring of 2015. That period has produced a strong lay leadership, with folk stepping up to help lead Morning Prayer, Lector, and LEM on those weeks when we do have a priest. Even our children take part in the service regularly with some as young as 7 yrs old Lectoring on Sunday morning. St. Mat's is really good about reaching out to one another, and lifting those in need in prayer. We are good at providing food for our homebound, transportation when needed and regular call or text contact.

St. Matthew's is closely involved with Scouting, have Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts meeting each week in the Parish Hall. We have had several Eagle Scout projects done on the grounds'. We have a close relationship with our school, sharing two major fund-raisers a year and supporting the school in two others.

But there have been difficulties too. Without having communion each week, some have fallen away. Our Sunday attendance is sporadic, some times being more than 30, sometimes as few as 12. And while, as stated above, we truly do look out for one another, it doesn't replace one on one time with a priest when members are in crisis.

Financially, the good news is that the bills are paid each month, payroll is covered and there is a balance in the check book. That being said, each year after our annual drive we will have only a dozen or so confirmed pledgers. We always have a balance in the check book but never into 6 figures. Our two main fund-raisers are Fiesta in the Fall, with the entire campus being turned into a carnival and BBQ in the Spring. We generally serve over 1500 plates of slow cooked Top Round with all the fixings. Our Junior Wardens have been wonderful about staying on top of maintenance issues. The roof is sound and good for at least another decade. One of the AC units is new, one is probably going to need replacing in the next few years.

Kingdom Work Ahead...

St. Matthew's members recently filled out an All-Parish Survey to help us define our hopes and dreams. Results of that survey show that we are a welcoming and loving group, challenged by not having a full time priest to celebrate the Eucharist each week. We have a longing to grow and to share the love and joy that we find in Christ with the community around us.

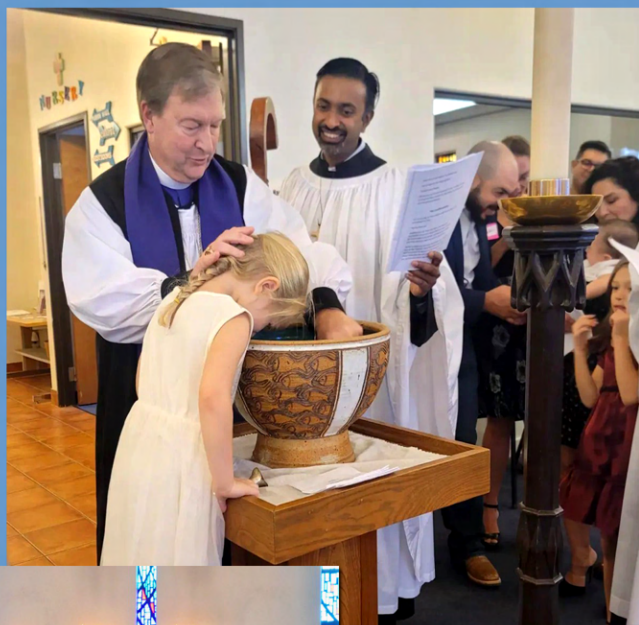
From our survey results:

"What should everyone know about St. Matthew's? Have you ever been to a place where the environment and people are just one of a kind? You know the kind where you just feel safe and never want to leave? This is what St. Matthew's is made of. St. Matthew's Episcopal Church is not just a church, but is a family. St. Matthew's is one of the most welcoming and warm-hearted places to be. The community members are not only humble people, but they treat you and make you feel important. The St. Matthew's family, are very grateful people. I feel St. Matthew's is the best place to be for Sunday services. My family and I are very grateful and could not be more blessed that we have discovered St. Matthew's. I will forever be grateful to the church and the loving community the church is made out of. My daughter has been reading as a lector for the past year and looks forward to her Sunday readings. My son, Liam, gets so excited for Sunday school with Mrs. Grace. He is always excited to tell me what he learned about."

We want to see more young families join us, while maintaining the loving relationship we have with our elder members. The children in our congregation love their mid-service Children's Chapel where they play games, do crafts and have their own lesson on the Gospel of the day. Our elders members are involved in out reach ministry and care of one another.

But wait, there's more!

St. Matthew's has dreams of doing even more in our community. From starting a tutoring program to creating an alternate food bank or food service, the ideas bubble up around the tables at coffee hour. St. Matthew's is seeking a priest who will join us in accomplishing the many dreams we have of being the hands and feet of Jesus in our community. As we seek a priest to join us in these endeavors, the survey results show that St. Matthew's is looking for help in developing more programs for our youth and families. We want to hear sermons that bring the Gospel story into relevance with our lives. St. Matthew's wants someone who wants to get to know and love the community of Edinburg as we do, and to support and engage with our school students, staff and families. We hope for a priest that will help us learn to better invite, welcome and connect with the people of our community.





**Welcome to Trinity Episcopal Church
Pharr, Texas**




TRINITY
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
WELCOME



“Actively proclaiming to all—the grace and love of God, the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit, in order that lives can be transformed.”



Who we are and who we seek...

Trinity Pharr is a small church with a desire to grow. While we realize that every church wants to grow and add new members, we also do not see ourselves as “less of a church” because we are small. We have been in transition for a good while and we have been blessed by our interim priest and his wife who have both been very faithful to us. COVID-19 lengthened our transition time quite a bit, and we have spent a good amount of time thinking about who we are and where we are going. We understand that this is a critical time in the life of Trinity and we must move forward in a positive direction.

Our church does hospitality very well and we are a close knit community of faithful people. We love one another and we are always open to welcoming new people. We will always respond to the pastoral needs of our community when we are made aware of them.

As you can see from the pictures in the profile, our church buildings and grounds are beautiful. It's not unusual to see people from our community taking wedding pictures, prom pictures, and family portraits on our property. You can sense that you are in the nearer presence of God whenever you are in our church as you are surrounded by beautiful architecture and stained glass windows.

We do not let our size prohibit us from doing what we can to reach out to our community. We offer a food pantry for those needing food, we work with Good Samaritan, and also work with local AA groups.

One word that best describes us is “family”. We enjoy worshipping together, spending time together, and fellowshiping with one another whenever we can. Coffee hour, luncheons, and hospitality after church are very important to us and we long for their return once we are past the COVID-19 restrictions that do not yet allow for this. Our church family has worked hard to keep things going so that we may forge ahead into our future.

We understand that our next rector will not be able to do everything. However, our prayer is that God will lead a priest to Trinity, Pharr who will preach from the heart, who will bring some dynamic energy, and who will inspire us to discern God's vision for our church. We hope our next rector will want to get to know us and will want to develop relationships with us since we are after all, a family. Our next rector will need to know that we are a conservative church and that we would ask that all political perspectives be respected. Highly charged political sermons have not been met well in the past. We also want our next rector to know that we will work together with him/her in accomplishing goals, pursuing a vision, and doing God's work.



Challenges...

Our long transition has presented us with some challenges along the way, and it has also given us an opportunity to think about where we've been, where we are right now, and where God may be leading us in the future. At this point in our life together, our greatest challenges are:

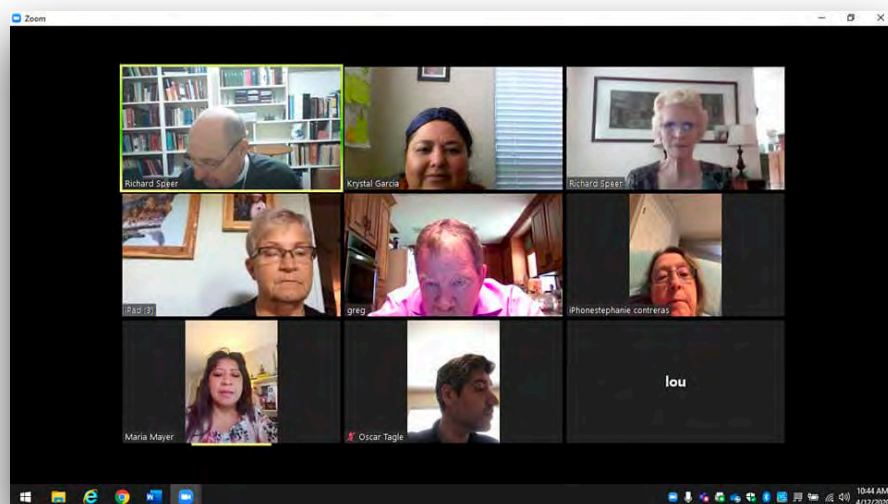
1. We are in need of a plan to invite, welcome, and connect new people to our church.
2. Our beautiful buildings and grounds are aging.
3. COVID has prohibited many of our members from coming for in-person worship which has caused budget restraints and fewer resources. We have managed to keep things fairly stable, but we have also felt the constraints.
4. We have very few young people/families. We would like to explore ways in which our church becomes more attractive to younger people as our congregation is aging.
5. We do not have a sense of vision for our future.

We see these challenges as opportunities to partner with our next rector to meet these challenges head on!

Our next rector...

Our members were given surveys in early 2021 to give us an opportunity to provide input that was used to create this profile. In that survey, we were asked to review a list of "rector gifts/qualities" that are important to us. Here were the top priorities:

- Planning and leading a program of new member recruitment.
- Visiting the sick, shut in, and bereaved and visiting members in their homes.
- Emphasizing the spiritual development of members.
- Actively and visibly supporting the church's stewardship program.



Beginnings...

Trinity was the first Protestant Episcopal Church to be erected in Hidalgo County and had its inception in a meeting of the members of this faith at the Presbyterian Church at Pharr, Texas in June of 1925.

Following this service, a few meetings were held in City Hall and then regularly at the Methodist Church in Pharr. During this period the services and activities of this parish were under the direction of the Rev. R.O.McIntosh, Rector of Church of the Advent, Brownsville, Texas. The Parish included the towns of Donna, Alamo, San Juan, Pharr, McAllen, Mission, and Edinburg.

At the time of the erection of the church building, the congregation was composed of about 125 members.





Pharr

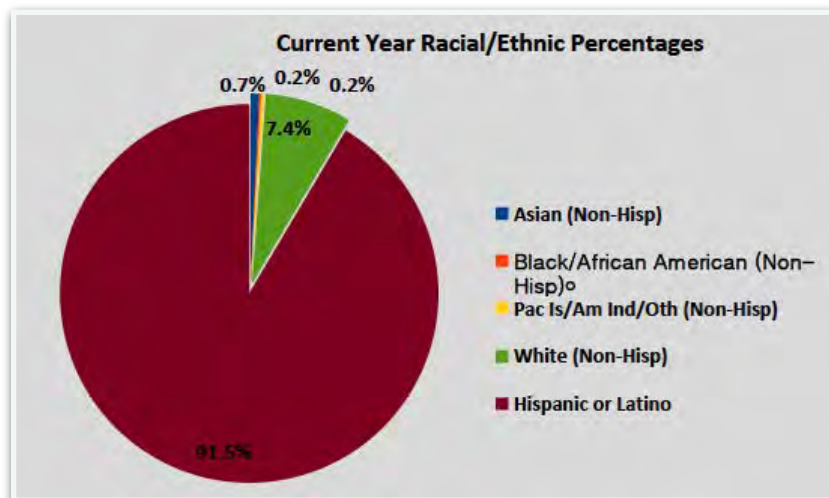


Named after Henry Newton Pharr, our city is part of the Rio Grande Valley and extends south to the US-Mexico Border. Located in Hidalgo County, Pharr has grown substantially from a population of just over 51,000 in 2000 to just over 67,000 in 2019. According to “Missioninsight” demographics, Pharr is forecasted to experience “significant growth” during the next decade.

The City of Pharr received the “All America City” award in 2006 (2016 *US World News Reports*).



Pharr offers much in the way of culture, food (including Delia’s Famous Tamales), and activities. We are served primarily by the Pharr-San Juan ISD. The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (enrollment of 30,000) is located in neighboring Edinburg, and the South Texas College (enrollment of 31,000) is located in neighboring McAllen. There are over 1,200 retail stores and restaurants within the city limits. The crime rate in Pharr is 13% below the national average and was named as one of the 25 safest places to live in Texas in 2020.





The Rio Grande Valley

McAllen



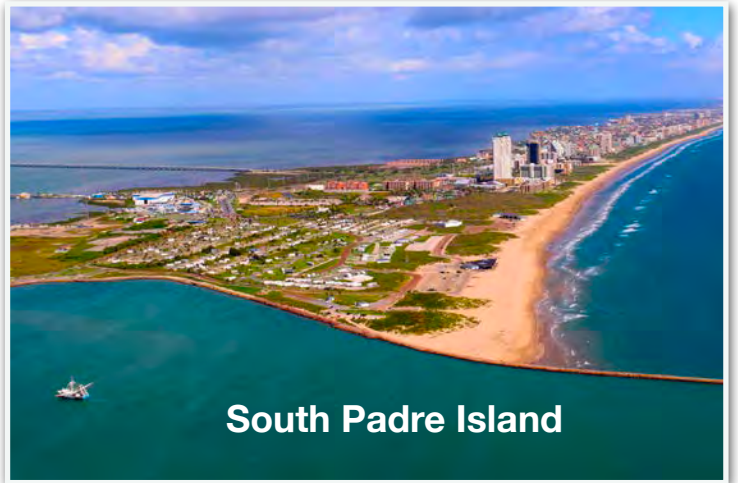
Harlingen



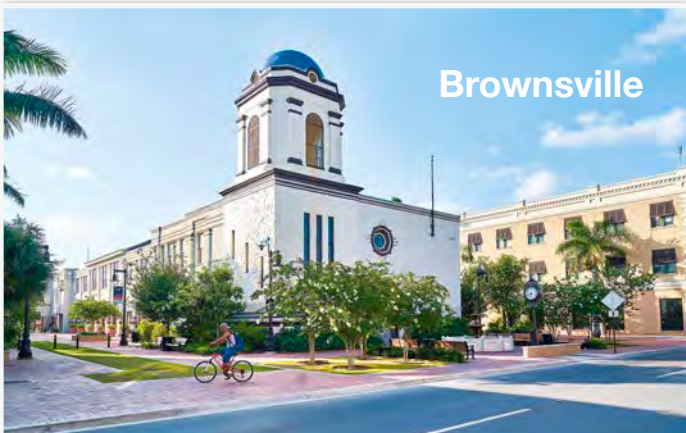
Port Isabel



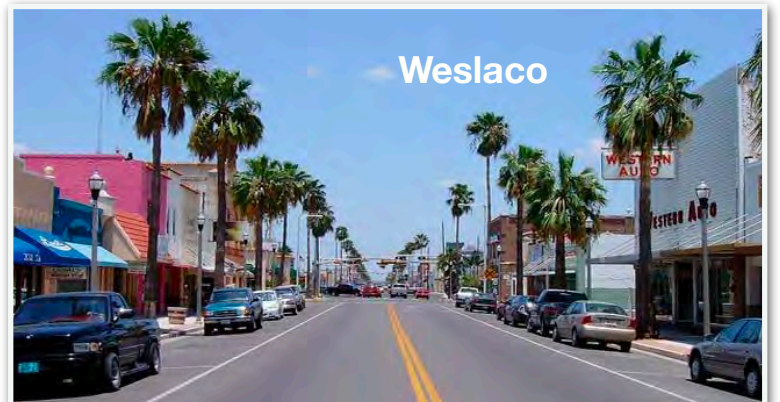
South Padre Island



Brownsville



Weslaco



Trinity Pharr by the Numbers

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
<u>Membership and Attendance</u>		
Membership	114	114
Comm. in Good Standing	89	89
ASA	30	20
Easter Sunday	48	No service/COVID
Baptisms	0	0
Confirmations	0	0
<u>Stewardship and Finances</u>		
Pledge Cards	13	21
Amount Pledged	\$132,020	\$134,860
Total Operating Revenue	\$224,865	\$168,394
Total Revenue	\$511,850	\$262,614
Operating Expenses	\$174,932	\$140,053
Total All Expenses	\$174,932	\$140,053
Total Cash in checking/savings	\$64,821	\$91,750
Total Investments	\$584,440	\$678,660

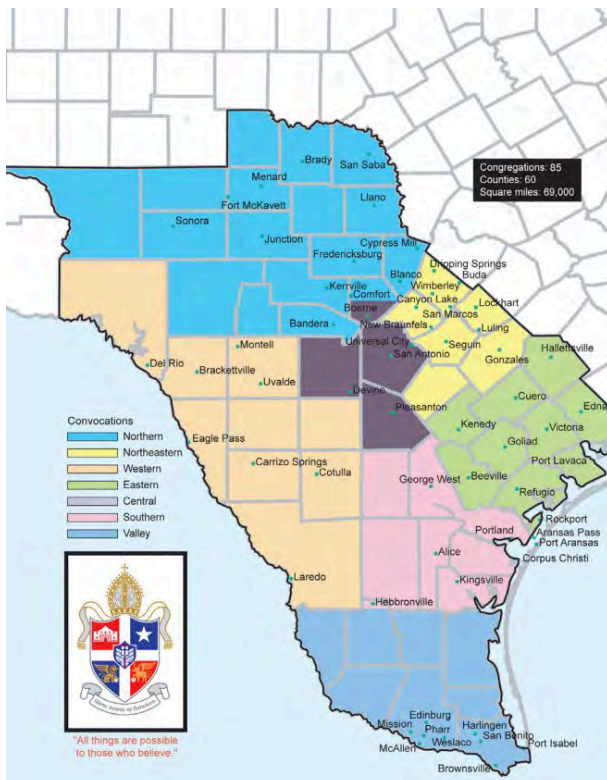


EPISCOPAL DIOCESE

of West Texas



The Right Reverend David Reed, Bishop of the Diocese of West Texas, leads our Diocese in living into its core values of faith, scripture, prayer, sacramental worship, evangelism, mission, and reconciliation. Bishop Reed was born and raised in the Diocese (Rio Grande Valley) and truly loves the people and congregations he serves.



Trinity Pharr is part of the Diocese of West Texas, which is made up of 85 congregations spread out over almost 70,000 square miles. From Brady and San Saba to the north, the Texas Hill Country, to the coastal bend, to the Rio Grande Valley, you will find faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ doing the work that God calls us to do!



TRINITY
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

WELCOME

SANCTUARY



PARISH HALL



OFFICE



Trinity Episcopal Church
210 West Caffery Ave.
Pharr, Texas 78587