

Discerning Together



DIOCESAN PROFILE

for the Diocese of West Texas



EPISCOPAL
DIOCESE
of West Texas

PRAYER FOR
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OUR BISHOP

WHAT IS A
SUFFRAGAN?

THE PROCESS

ABOUT THE
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THE DIOCESE

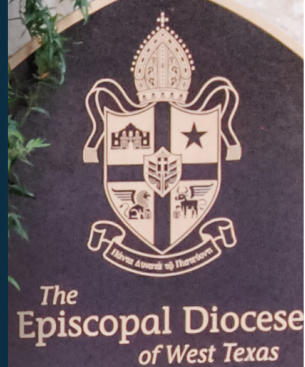
THE DIOCESE
IN ACTION

A PRAYER FOR THE ELECTION OF A BISHOP SUFFRAGAN

Almighty and everliving God, source of all wisdom and understanding, be present as we discern who you would call to serve as bishop suffragan of the Diocese of West Texas. Teach us in all things to seek first your honor and glory. Guide us to perceive what is your will, and grant us both the courage to pursue it and the grace to accomplish it; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

ORACIÓN PARA LA ELECCIÓN DE UN OBISPO SUFRAGÁNEO

Dios todopoderoso y eterno, fuente de toda sabiduría y entendimiento, esté presente mientras discernimos a quién llamas a servir como obispo sufragáneo de la Diócesis de West Texas. Enséñanos en todas las cosas a buscar primero tu honor y gloria. Guíanos para que percibamos cuál es tu voluntad, y concédenos tanto el coraje para seguirla como la gracia para llevarla a cabo; por Jesucristo nuestro Señor. Amén.





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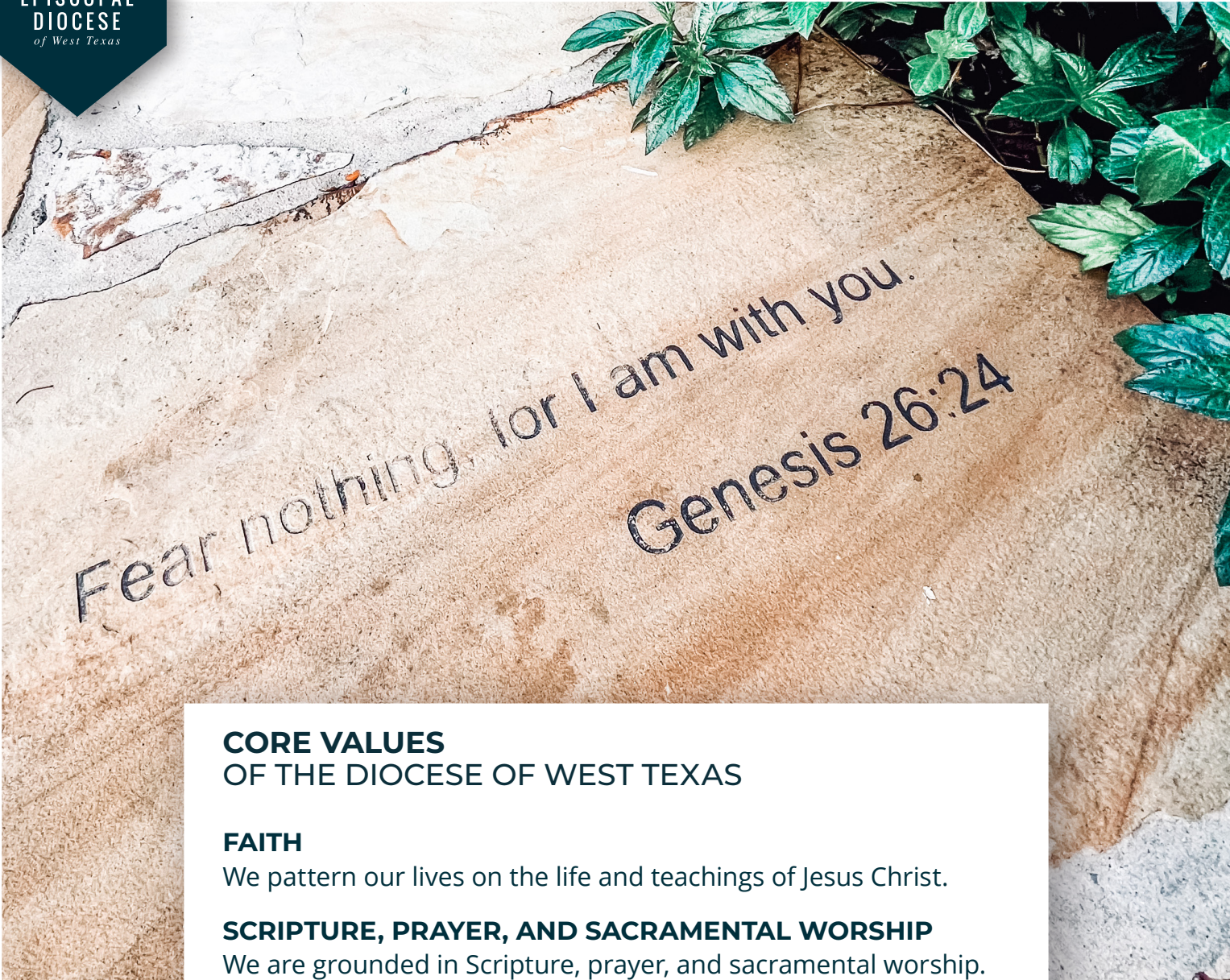
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Fear nothing, for I am with you.
Genesis 26:24

CORE VALUES OF THE DIOCESE OF WEST TEXAS

FAITH

We pattern our lives on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

SCRIPTURE, PRAYER, AND SACRAMENTAL WORSHIP

We are grounded in Scripture, prayer, and sacramental worship.

EVANGELISM

We proclaim by word and example God's saving love revealed in Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit.

MISSION

We reach beyond ourselves to serve all people in our communities and throughout the world.

RECONCILIATION

We are a community committed to living in reconciled relationship with God and all people.

OUR CORE PURPOSE

Be Jesus' witnesses.



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OUR BISHOP THE RT. REV. DR. DAVID G. READ

David Read was born in Winston-Salem, North Carolina on May 18, 1965 to Bill and Doris Read while Bill was on active duty with the U.S. Marine Corps. The third of three sons, he was baptized at St. Leo's Roman Catholic Church in Winston-Salem before the family returned to San Antonio. David was confirmed at St. Francis' Episcopal Church in San Antonio by the Rt. Rev. Scott Field Bailey. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in History from Texas State University in San Marcos in 1988.



He graduated from Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, VA in 1992 with a Master in Divinity degree. He was ordained to the diaconate by the Rt. Rev. Earl McArthur, Jr. at St. Francis' Church in San Antonio on June 14, 1992. On December 16, 1992 he was ordained a priest by the Rt. Rev. John MacNaughton at St. Paul's Church in Brady.

David married Jacqueline Cheeseman on June 29, 1991, at St. Mark's Church in San Marcos. The couple has two children, Amy and Aidan, and three grandchildren, Kaydence, Makenna, and Jameson David.

David served as rector of St. Paul's Church in Brady from 1992 to 1995; St. Francis Church in Victoria from 1995 to 1998; St. Helena's Church & School in Boerne from 1998 to 2009; and St. Luke's Church & School in San Antonio from 2009 to 2017. He returned to St. Helena's in 2017, serving as rector there until his election as bishop coadjutor. He earned a Doctor of Ministry in Congregational Development from Bexley Seabury Seminary in 2022.

He was elected bishop coadjutor for the Episcopal Diocese of West Texas at the 119th Diocesan Council in Corpus Christi, on February 18, 2023, and consecrated by Bishop W. Michie Klusmeyer in All Saints Chapel at TMI Episcopal in San Antonio, July 8, 2023. He is the sixteenth bishop to serve in West Texas (the eleventh diocesan) and 1159 in the American Succession.





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A LETTER FROM OUR BISHOP

Grace to you and Peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. At the 120th Annual Council of the Diocese of West Texas, I called for the election and consecration of a bishop suffragan for West Texas. Since 1955, the Diocese of West Texas has been served by both a bishop diocesan and a bishop suffragan. As you read this document, you will see that the expansive geography, the rich depth of diocesan ministries, and the unique opportunities before us make the need for a bishop suffragan abundantly clear.

Within the pages of this profile, you will read a brief description of the history, ministries, and culture of West Texas. Having served as a parish priest in West Texas for 30+ years before becoming bishop in 2023, I believe I can add a few words to these other descriptions that might help the reader understand West Texas and the unique role of bishop suffragan.

In the Diocese of West Texas, we are called to be a multi-cultural movement of missional people, following Jesus into neighborhoods near and far. The Diocese of West Texas is a healthy diocese. We have been blessed by the visionary leadership of a series of faithful bishops who have collaborated and persevered with clergy and congregations to hand a healthy diocese to this generation. We are financially healthy. While our clergy and congregations are diverse in theology and liturgical preferences, we are a community which values our relationships with one another, and with our bishops. While we do not all agree about everything, and our diocese is far from perfect, our Councils and clergy conferences are marked by a sense of mutual respect and common mission.

As we celebrate our 150th birthday this year and begin a new chapter in our life together, there is a sense of renewal in the diocese. We are beginning to understand the impact of the pandemic on our congregations and to emerge from it. We recognize that the culture, and the place of the Church within it, is rapidly changing. Some ministry practices that were once effective are no longer so. We are starting to experiment with new ways of developing relationships with our neighbors in the communities around our congregations.

At our annual council meeting in February, I proposed several priorities for the coming years. First, we must adopt the missional spirit of those early Christian settlers who established the Christian faith and the Episcopal Church in West Texas. Through faith, true grit, creative experimentation, generous giving, a strong sense of mission, and the power of the Holy Spirit they shared the good news of Jesus Christ on the frontier of the nation. We must recapture their

[Continued on page 6.](#)





A LETTER FROM OUR BISHOP, CONT.

sense of mission as we serve on the new frontiers of our time. Second, several counties in West Texas are among the fastest growing counties in the nation. West Texas must redevelop and implement a system for planting new congregations in the diocese. Third, I invited the diocese to study if and how the permanent diaconate might be reintroduced in West Texas. It has been many decades since the diocese incorporated this servant ministry bringing the needs of the poor to the Church and the Church to the poor.

Finally, I called for the election of a bishop suffragan to assist me in carrying out this new work and the ongoing ministries of the diocese. A bishop suffragan is a full bishop who will take his or her place in the House of Bishops. A bishop suffragan is elected to assist the bishop diocesan in the significant challenge of leading and shepherding the particular culture of the Diocese of West Texas. I believe a bishop suffragan must be a person of deep faith who is close to Jesus. A bishop suffragan must be an excellent leader, good pastor, and an effective teacher. She or he must be able to thrive in the second chair. He or she must be an energetic person because the ministry in West Texas demands it. The calendar and travel demands are real.

I will give several responsibilities to the new bishop suffragan:

- To join with me in weekly visitations in the 87 congregations of West Texas to preach and celebrate, confirm and receive, and celebrate the sacraments of the New Covenant.
- To assist the diocesan and diocesan staff in being a resource to clergy, vestries and bishop's committees and school boards in the midst of their opportunities and challenges.
- To assist the diocesan in the pastoral care of active and retired clergy, clergy families, and lay leaders.
- To serve on the Board of Trustees of Morningside Ministries.
- To oversee, support, and lead the development of lay ministries in the diocese.
- To oversee, support, and develop the diocesan Department of Christian Education.
- To oversee, support and develop Christian Discipleship initiatives and ministries.
- Other duties will be assigned depending on the charisms and passions of the bishop suffragan, and at the discretion of the bishop diocesan. One of the predictable things about serving in the diocese is that unpredictable things will happen. The bishop suffragan will assist the diocesan bishop in effectively responding to these.

This is an exciting time in the life of the Diocese of West Texas. Our diocese is strong and healthy, and the Holy Spirit is visibly at work here. I invite your prayers as the diocesan family enters this discernment process which will end with the election of our next bishop suffragan.

Love in Christ,
+David

The Rt. Rev. Dr. David G. Read
Bishop of West Texas



WHAT IS A BISHOP SUFFRAGAN?

A bishop suffragan is a bishop elected to support the diocese - a full bishop of the whole church who will take her or his place in the House of Bishops; yet, a bishop suffragan is elected for a specific geographical area.

DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS OF A BISHOP SUFFRAGAN:

- A person of **DEEP FAITH** and **DEEP PRAYER**
- **EXCELLENT LEADER**
- A **GOOD PASTOR** and **GOOD SHEPHERD**
- A **CO-PILOT** to the bishop diocesan
- **ENERGETIC** for the ministry of bishop in West Texas demands it!

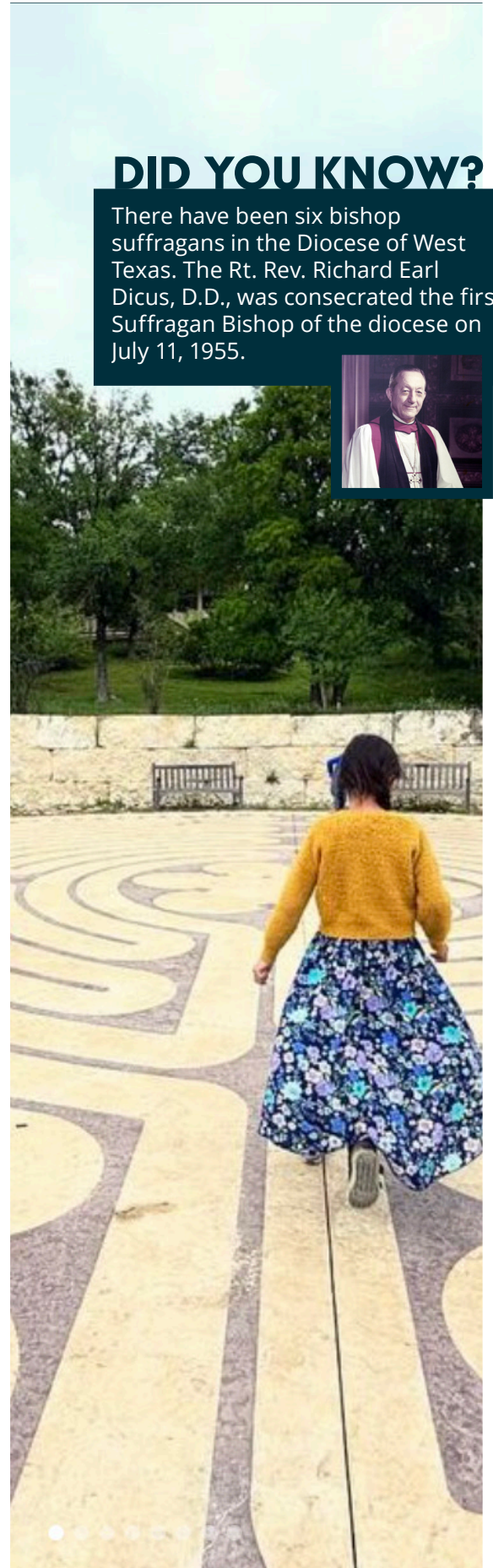
THE MINISTRY OF A BISHOP IN THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IS

- To represent Christ and his Church, particularly as an apostle, chief priest, and pastor of a diocese;
- To guard the faith, unity, and discipline of the whole Church;
- To proclaim the Word of God;
- To act in Christ's name for the reconciliation of the world and the building up of the Church;
- To ordain others to continue Christ's ministry.

from The Book of Common Prayer, page 855

DID YOU KNOW?

There have been six bishop suffragans in the Diocese of West Texas. The Rt. Rev. Richard Earl Dicus, D.D., was consecrated the first Suffragan Bishop of the diocese on July 11, 1955.



DISCERNING TOGETHER: THE PROCESS FOR ELECTING OUR NEXT BISHOP SUFFRAGAN

2024

FEBRUARY:

The Right Rev. Dr. David G. Read calls for the election of the bishop suffragan.

MARCH – MAY:

Consents to hold an election are sought from the Standing Committees and bishops with jurisdiction in The Episcopal Church.

MAY 28:

Nominations open

JUNE 12:

Nominations close

AUGUST 26 – 29:

Discernment retreat

SEPTEMBER 13:

Slate of nominees announced

OCTOBER 4 – 6:

Discernment Forums - Rio Grande Valley, Coastal Bend, and San Antonio regions

OCTOBER 19:

Election of a Bishop Suffragan of West Texas - Church of the Good Shepherd, Corpus Christi

2025

MARCH 29:

Consecration of the Bishop Suffragan of West Texas - St. John's, McAllen

DID YOU KNOW?

The Diocese of West Texas does not have a formal cathedral but is blessed to have St. John's Chapel at the Bishop Jones Center, St. Francis Chapel at Camp Capers and Chapel of the Holy Family at Mustang Island (pictured here).





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DEEP IN THE HEART OF TEXAS: A GLIMPSE INTO THE LIFE OF THE DIOCESE



The Episcopal Diocese of West Texas is deep in the heart of Texas, covering a vast expanse of land from the Gulf of Mexico and Coastal Bend prairies to the Rio Grande border and up through the Hill Country. While the name says West, in reality the diocese is spread across Central and South Texas. Our landscape and cultures are rich and varied, comprised of rugged ranchland and thriving cities, laid-back beach towns and world-renowned centers of education and art. In South Texas, Mexican American culture brings a unique vibrancy to our communities and churches. Together the people of the Diocese of West Texas form a rich tapestry of cultures, languages, and ethnicities.

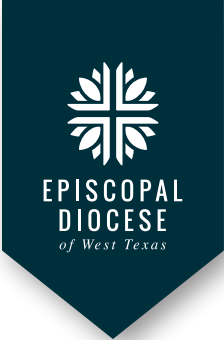
Texans pride themselves on being friendly, and the Diocese of West Texas is no exception. Our diocese enjoys an especially collegial relationship between bishops, clergy, and laity. We love to gather together for fellowship, and we love to eat good food; you'll find the best tacos, BBQ and seafood from the Gulf of Mexico within our diocese.

The congregations of our diocese are dedicated to serving God and loving their neighbors wholeheartedly. Some congregations are small and gather without a full-time priest. Others are larger, with multiple clergy and lay people on staff. Some are low-church and some have incense and Sanctus bells. All of our churches bring unique gifts to the diocese and to their local communities.

Within the Diocese of West Texas, the overall population is growing rapidly. The San Antonio – Austin corridor is one of the fastest growing regions in the nation, and our most recent church plant – St. Nicholas in Bulverde – is thriving within this region. Counties in the northern parts of the diocese, including Bexar, Kendall, Comal, Guadalupe, and Hays, are experiencing explosive growth that analysts project will continue for several decades. The Rio Grande Valley region of South Texas, located along a portion of our country's border with Mexico has also seen tremendous growth, with projections for the population to nearly double by 2045.

The Diocese of West Texas faces challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted all aspects of life, including the mental and physical health of our communities, church attendance, and congregational momentum. The political polarization felt so pervasively throughout the broader culture can lead to division and frustration within our congregations. Many feel that these are frightening and uncertain times.

As the Diocese of West Texas prayerfully searches for our next bishop suffragan, we trust that the Holy Spirit will shepherd the diocese through this process.



2 WEEKS IN THE LIFE OF A BISHOP IN WEST TEXAS

In decades past, the Bishop of West Texas traveled the diocese on horseback, railroad, and river boat. Today, our bishops travel in the comfort of an air-conditioned car, but they must still cover a lot of ground to reach our 87 congregations. If you want to put yourself in the Bishop’s boots, here is the travel itinerary for Bishop David G. Read over a couple weeks in April.

SAT. APR. 13 - Attended and led the Daughters of the King© assembly at St. Peter’s, Kerrville. *114 mi.*

SUN. APR. 14 - Celebrated, preached, confirmed, and led an adult forum at St. John’s, in New Braunfels. In the evening, celebrated, preached, and confirmed at Church of The Holy Spirit in San Antonio. *104 mi.*

MON. APR. 15 - In the office for meetings with the Canon for Administration and the Diocesan Chancellor. Phone calls with clergy and e-mail catch up.

TUE. APR. 16 - Celebrated and preached at the 9am Staff Eucharist. Led the staff meeting, followed by a day of meetings including a budget meeting, lunch with two clergy, an update on Christian Formation ministry, planning for the Bishop’s Golf Tournament, and a meeting on youth ministry. In the evening attended a World Mission birthday party.

WED. APR. 17 - Celebrated & preached at the 10:00 a.m. Eucharist in St. John’s Chapel. Met with the Director of the Children’s Bereavement Center for the Rio Grande Valley. Lunch with the Pres. of the Standing Committee. Met with the Dean of the Iona School. And conducted a Committal Service in the outdoor columbarium.

THUR. APR. 18 - In the morning worked on a sermon for Sunday. Met with a person discerning a call to ordained ministry. Via Zoom, attended a Good Samaritan Community Services board meeting. In the evening attended a General Convention Legislative Committee Zoom hearing.

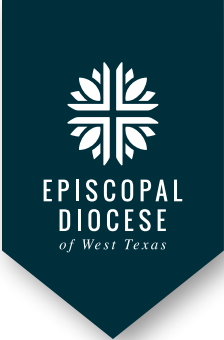
FRI. APR. 19 - A day off at home.

Continued on page 11.

FAST FACTS

- Number of meetings: 21
- Number of Churches visited: 8
- Number of Events: 5
- Number of Worship Services: 10
- Miles Traveled by car: 806
- Miles Traveled by air: 2,464





2 WEEKS IN THE LIFE OF A BISHOP IN WEST TEXAS, CONT.

SAT. APR. 20 - Drove to San Benito to have lunch with the new Vicar of All Saints'. Drove to McAllen and in the evening attended a gala celebrating the opening of a new Children's Hospital. **282 mi.**

SUN. APR. 21 - In St. John's, McAllen, celebrated, preached, confirmed, and baptized at two services and met with a group of youth confirmands. Lunch with the clergy family. Drove home. **226 mi.**

MON. APR. 22 - In the office for meetings with the Canon for Administration & Ministry Support. Also met with Rob Watson to receive an update on Camp Capers Chapel construction and summer staffing. Attended a World Mission luncheon. Met via Zoom with new members of the Executive Board. Met with a priest from outside the diocese who is in a search process in West Texas.

TUE. APR. 23 - After a 3.5 hour delay, boarded a plane for the House of Bishops meeting in Charlotte, NC. **1,232 mi.**

WED. APR. 24 - Attended the House of Bishops meeting at St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Charlotte regarding the upcoming election of our next Presiding Bishop.

THUR. APR. 25 - After a 1.5 hour delay, flew home to San Antonio. Stopped by the office to catch up on a few items before the weekend. **1,232 mi.**

FRI. APR. 26 - Home for Battle of Flowers Day.

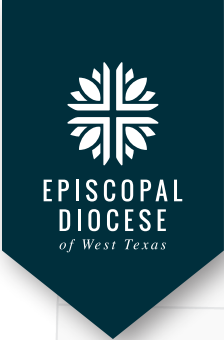
SAT. APR. 27 - A day off.

SUN. APR. 28 - Celebrated, preached, baptized and confirmed on the Feast of St. Mark at St. Mark's in San Antonio. Enjoyed a festive lunch with mariachis. In the evening celebrated, preached and confirmed at Santa Fe Church in San Antonio. Enjoyed a wonderful dinner. **80 mi.**



DID YOU KNOW?

All new bishops of The Episcopal Church attend The College for Bishops for three years. This includes weeklong sessions twice a year and ongoing mentoring from a bishop.



WHO WE ARE

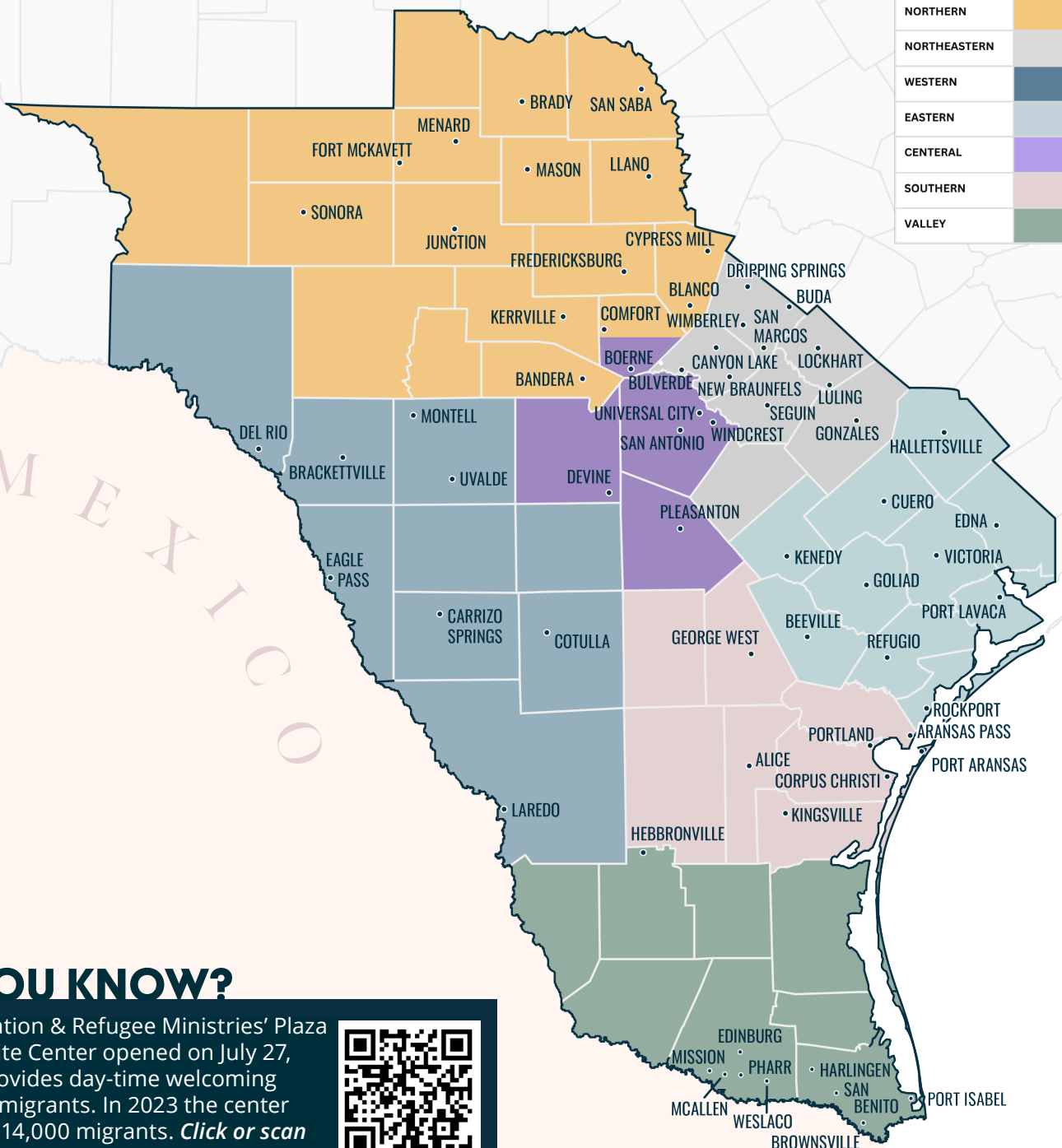
We are 20,000+ persons gathered into 87 congregations, spread across 60 counties and 69,000 square miles.

Our geographical boundaries are roughly Brady to the north, Port Lavaca and Edna to the east, Brownsville to the south, and Del Rio to the west.

For organizational purposes, we are arranged into seven convocations, each headed by a dean. Headquarters for the diocese are in San Antonio at the Bishop Jones Center.

MEXICO

NORTHERN	Orange
NORTHEASTERN	Light Grey
WESTERN	Dark Blue
EASTERN	Light Blue
CENTRAL	Purple
SOUTHERN	Pink
VALLEY	Green



DID YOU KNOW?

The Immigration & Refugee Ministries' Plaza de Paz Respite Center opened on July 27, 2021 and provides day-time welcoming services for migrants. In 2023 the center served over 14,000 migrants. *Click or scan the QR Code to see this ministry in action.*





BY THE NUMBERS

- 87 Congregations
 - 61 Parishes
 - 25 Missions
 - 1 Church Plant
- 165 Canonically-Resident Clergy; 84 active in churches, 15 non-parochial and 66 retired clergy
- 28 Episcopal Schools and 1 projected to open in the fall of 2024
- 2023 In-Person Average Sunday Attendance: 6,636
- 2023 Average Pledge Amount: \$4,571
- 2023 Total Communicants: 19,240

2024 OPERATING AND REACHING OUT BUDGETS FOR DIOCESE OF WEST TEXAS

Apportionments	\$4,833,096
Endowment Income	\$1,106,884
Other Income	\$188,000
Total Revenue	\$6,127,980

Operating Expenditures	\$2,462,667
Reaching Out Expenditures	\$3,806,697



DID YOU KNOW?

The Episcopal Diocese of West Texas' World Missions Department has built sustainable, long-term mission relationships in 41 countries on 6 continents over 25 years of ministry.





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HISTORY OF THE DIOCESE OF WEST TEXAS

The Rt. Rev. Robert Woodward Barnwell Elliott, D.D. became the first Bishop of the Missionary District of Western Texas in 1874. Upon arriving in San Antonio, he took responsibility for 12 active congregations scattered across 110,000 square miles, on the frontier of the nation. He found the district populated by hearty people and a rapidly growing number of new immigrants from the states. The 427 communicants were served by seven priests, two deacons, and itinerant military chaplains. The harvest was plentiful, but the laborers were few. Today, the Diocese of West Texas has many of the same core characteristics encountered by Bishop Elliott: faithful lay and clergy people, a missionary spirit, vast geography, and growing populations in many areas.

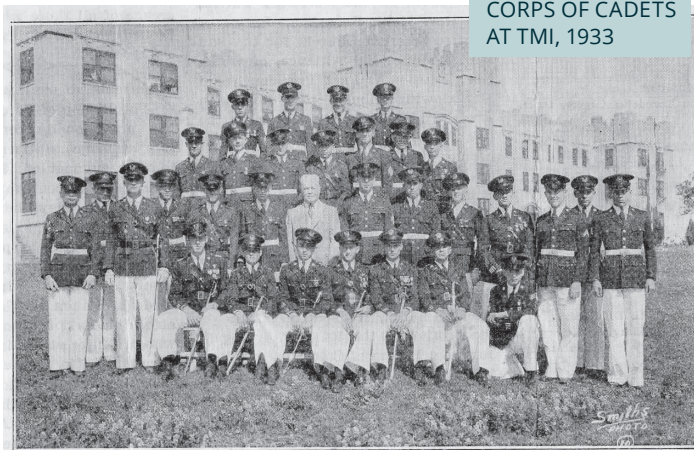


DID YOU KNOW?

Faithful West Texas lay leader Dr. Artemisia Bowden was called from North Carolina by our second Bishop, James Steptoe Johnston, to San Antonio to establish an Episcopal School for African American women. This school became St. Philip's College in San Antonio, which continues to thrive today. She was recognized as a saint by The Episcopal Church in 2015.



CORPS OF CADETS
AT TMI, 1933



WOMEN'S AUXILIARY
MEETING, 1948.



BISHOP CAPERS WITH
GENERAL PRESTON
BROWN AT CAMP
BULLIS. MAY 30, 1923



YOUNG PEOPLE OF
CHRIST CHURCH,
LAREDO, WELCOME
BISHOP JONES. 1947

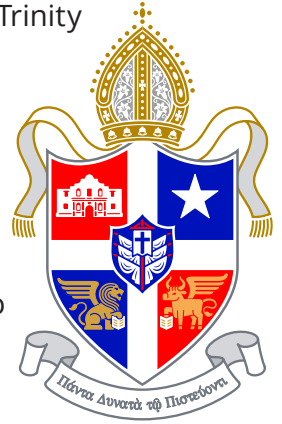


CLICK OR SCAN
THE QR CODE
TO WATCH
OUR 150TH
ANNIVERSARY
VIDEO.

HISTORY OF THE DIOCESE OF WEST TEXAS, CONT.

The diocesan seal, designed by the Rev. Louis A. Parker, former rector of Trinity Church, Victoria, was adopted in 1927.

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



BISHOP JONES CENTER AND CATHEDRAL PARK

The diocesan bishop and staff are housed at The Bishop Jones Center in San Antonio (BJC), a special place that was a gift bestowed in 1958 by Flora Cameron Crichton, stepdaughter of the Rt. Rev. Bishop Everett Holland Jones, D.D., Fourth Bishop of the Diocese of West Texas.

The Bishop Jones Center sits on 19-acres of land, known as Cathedral Park. Open to the public, Cathedral Park is a peaceful, green space perfect for a family picnic or personal prayer walk. In addition to hosting chapel services, committee meetings, and gatherings for the diocese, the Bishop Jones Center is available for congregations and local organizations to reserve for leadership retreats, fellowship gatherings, and events.



CLICK OR SCAN THE QR CODE
TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE
HISTORY AND THE FUTURE OF
CATHEDRAL PARK.



THE DIOCESE IN ACTION

MISSION AND OUTREACH

CHRISTIAN FAITH IN ACTION

The goal of the Department of Christian Faith in Action (CFA) is based on our baptismal covenant: to strive for justice and peace among all creation through individual and corporate action, advocacy, and interfaith cooperation. Several strong ministries make up CFA, including Creation Care, Kairos Prison Ministry, and Recovery Ministries Commission. [Click here to learn more.](#)

COLLEGE AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRIES

The College and Young Adult Ministry supports young adults (ages 18-30) both on and off college campuses. It is amazing what happens when college students gather to ask honest questions of scripture, earnestly follow Jesus, and share life with each other. The vision of this ministry is for God’s kingdom to break through on college campuses. The Diocese of West Texas is committed to creating and sustaining relationships with students who are attending institutions of higher education inside and outside its borders. [Click here to learn more.](#)

EPISCOPAL CHURCH FOUNDATION® OF WEST TEXAS

The Episcopal Church Foundation® in West Texas is a Texas non-profit corporation, established by the diocese to invest and manage funds of the diocese, be an investment resource to churches and institutions of the diocese and encourage and promote legacy stewardship within the diocese. [Click here to learn more.](#)

EPISCOPAL SCHOOLS COMMISSION

There are currently 28 Episcopal schools in the Diocese of West Texas, serving over 4,200 pre-school, elementary, middle, and high school age students. The Episcopal Schools Commission is dedicated to the mission of educating God’s children. Our schools remain a source of pride for our communities and consistently produce committed, caring individuals who become leaders. [Click here to learn more.](#)

GOOD SAMARITAN COMMUNITY SERVICES

Good Samaritan Community Services was established in 1951 by the Diocese of West Texas as a diocesan ministry. Affectionately known as “Good Sam,” the organization is a non-profit social service institution of the diocese. Good Sam has grown over the years to include a campus in San Antonio and services in Brownsville. These services have reached thousands of individuals and families across South Texas through the years offering services including Early Childhood Development, Youth and Teen Services, Adult Services, Wellness Counseling, Food Pantry, Family Services and Summer Youth Enrichment. [Click here to learn more.](#)

IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE MINISTRIES

The Diocese of West Texas and Mexico share approximately 500 border miles. Our congregations are responding to the needs of asylum seekers along the border in a variety of outreach and pastoral care ministries. In an effort to respond faithfully to the needs of our siblings-in-Christ, the diocese established the Immigration and Refugee Ministries in 2019, to distribute factual information about the ongoing humanitarian needs at its southern border and to equip congregants with resources to welcome and embrace migrants in our communities. The diocese co-sponsors Plaza de Paz Respite Center in San Antonio, which provides welcoming services to migrants. [Click here to learn more.](#)

WORLD MISSIONS

The World Missions Department seeks to engage every member and every church of the diocese in the work of evangelism and mission. World Mission staff, volunteer leaders, and church teams share the Gospel through both long-term missionaries and short-term mission trips in Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Belize, Turkey, Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda and Navajoland. Its work includes water well drilling, medical and dental clinicals, veterinary work, microenterprise, and more. [Click here to learn more.](#)



THE DIOCESE IN ACTION

CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT

CAMPS AND CONFERENCES

The Diocese of West Texas is blessed with three camping and retreat facilities: Camp Capers in Waring Texas, Mustang Island Conference Center in Port Aransas, Texas, and Duncan Park in Colorado. The diocesan camping program is dedicated to bringing children and young people of all ages and backgrounds to Jesus Christ so they may reach into the world in his name. Each facility also serves adults of all ages through various spiritual retreats and conferences. The program is flourishing with tremendous support from across the diocese, leading to new construction and new programs.

[Click here to learn more.](#)

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND FORMATION

The Christian Formation Committee provides formation resources for our diocese and guides congregations in forming disciples of all ages. This is accomplished through written resources, videos, workshops, and other events, with a wide variety of offerings such as the World Mission's Children's Curriculum and The Wisdom Years. Learn more and access children and adult resources. [Click here to learn more.](#)

EVANGELISM

Evangelism is sharing good news! It is announcing, proclaiming, preaching, and demonstrating the Good News of Jesus Christ and inviting people to respond. The goal of the Evangelism Department of the Diocese of West Texas is to make it feel easier... more natural... life-giving... life-changing. Support to congregations is provided through resources and programs such as partnerships, mentoring, and events such as Cursillo and Happening retreats. [Click here to learn more.](#)

IONA SCHOOL FOR MINISTRY

The Iona School for Ministry in the Diocese of West Texas offers a three-year curriculum for the education of Bi-Vocational Priests. Students who graduate and are ordained go on to serve our smaller congregations which may not be able to support a full-time clergy person. [Click here to learn more.](#)

MILITARY MINISTRY

The Military Ministry in the Diocese of West Texas was established in 2016 to serve those who have borne the battle and acted in our name. There is a strong commitment within the Episcopal Church to support and care for active duty military members, veterans, and their families. With over 1.5 million veterans living in Texas, the need is great. The diocese hosts military camps, retreats and other outreach projects. Congregations and Ministry leaders, known as Military Ministry Contact Persons (MMCP), promote military ministry and coordinate outreach to veterans and their families at the church level.

[Click here to learn more.](#)

STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship is about funding the mission of God to which the Church has been called. Stewardship extends beyond the annual "pledge drive" and is not merely about raising money to run the church. Stewardship is what we do with all that God has given us, all the time. The Stewardship Department of the Diocese of West Texas has a mission to educate and inspire members with the larger meaning of Christian stewardship, as well as to provide resources to help congregations with their stewardship programs. [Click here to learn more.](#)

WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

The Commission for Women's Ministries (C4WM) is the diocesan branch of the **National Episcopal Church Women** (ECW). It works to foster active communication, spiritual enrichment, and education among women of The Episcopal Church with Christ at the center. Many groups, such as The Daughters of the King, are active throughout the diocese at the congregational level, building friendships and reaching out in Christ's name. [Click here to learn more about Daughters of the King®.](#)



THE DIOCESE IN ACTION

BISHOP'S INITIATIVES

CHURCH PLANTING TASK FORCE

In 2018, the Diocese of West Texas established its first Church Plant, St. Nicholas, Bulverde. At the 120th Council in 2024, Bishop Read stressed the importance of continually planting churches, continually scattering seed and continually cultivating. Bishop Read has appointed the Rev. Mike Michie, Rector of St. Thomas, San Antonio to chair a task force to plan and launch the process of church planting. [Click here to watch Bishop Read's Address to the 120th Council.](#)

DIACONATE STUDY GROUP

Deacons are one of three historic and ordained orders in The Episcopal Church. The other two being priests and bishops. A deacon is called by God to a unique ministry within the church. The Ordinal in our prayer book tells us that the ministry of a deacon is a special ministry of servanthood directly under the authority of the bishop. Deacons are to serve all people, but particularly the poor, the weak, the sick, and the lonely. Deacons remind us that in serving the helpless we are serving Christ himself. The Diaconate is not a new ministry in the diocese but has been inactive for decades. Bishop Read has appointed the Rev. Dr. Mike Marsh, Rector of St. Philip's, Uvalde to convene a study group to explore the possibilities and methods for reintroducing the Diaconate in West Texas. [Click here to watch Bishop Read's Address to the 120th Council.](#)

LATINO MINISTRIES COMMISSION

The Latino Ministries Commission was launched in 2021 to enhance the Latino presence in our churches and strengthen the Church's presence across the wide variety of Latino communities, providing a welcoming and inclusive environment for Latinos. The commission strives to celebrate the rich histories and cultures of Latino individuals and communities and provide valuable resources to both serve current church members and expand church membership in the Diocese of West Texas.

MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION

The Diocese of West Texas Mental Health Commission seeks to be a resource for churches and individuals, to help congregations recognize people who are struggling with mental health, and to provide initial first aid to support them and connect struggling individuals to different resources and professional help that they need to heal. The Commission provides education and training to equip congregations and lay people as they support individuals affected with mental health issues. [Click here to learn more.](#)

RACIAL RECONCILIATION COMMISSION

The Racial Reconciliation Commission's task is to seek ways that the diocese, as a whole, might more effectively foster the racial reconciliation to which the Gospel calls us to be a resource to congregations who want to engage in reconciling conversations and work. The Commission is engaged in Sacred Group, the film-based dialogue series on race and faith, which is part of The Episcopal Church's long-term commitment to racial healing, reconciliation, and justice in our personal lives, our ministries, and our society. [Click here to learn more.](#)

SMALL CHURCH MINISTRY

In The Episcopal Church there are over 6,000 congregations, and 49.5% of them have 50 people or fewer on an average Sunday, while 87% of all Episcopal congregations have fewer than 150 on a Sunday. This is true in the Diocese of West Texas as well, with over half of our churches reporting less than 50 people on an average Sunday. To help support small congregations, the Small Church Ministry was formed in 2023, and in January 2024, the Rev. Leyla King joined the diocese to lead the ministry in her role as Canon for Mission in Small Congregations. The Small Church Ministry supports, resources, trains, and networks our small churches as they carry out the mission of God in the church, communities, and in the world. [Subscribe to the Small Church Ministry newsletter to learn more.](#)



PHOTOS

COVER

The cover includes seven churches from each convocation:

- Grace Church, Cuero - Eastern Convocation - The oldest church in the Diocese of West Texas
- St. James', Del Rio - Western Convocation
- Church of the Good Shepherd, George West - Southern Convocation
- St. Mark's, San Antonio - Central Convocation
- Trinity Episcopal Church, Pharr - Valley Convocation
- St. Helena's, Boerne - Central Convocation
- St. Andrew's, Seguin - Northeastern Convocation
- St. Martin's, Mason - Northern Convocation - The newest church in the Diocese of West Texas

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The Bishop Jones Center, San Antonio
Cathedral Park, San Antonio

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The Rt. Rev. Dr. David G. Read's portrait, Cathedral Park, San Antonio
Bishop Read with campers and counselors at Camp Capers
Bishop Read visits Church of the Redeemer, Eagle Pass

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Bishop Read at the 120th Council of the Diocese of West Texas and acolytes from St. Luke's, San Antonio and St. Mark's, San Marcos

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The Labyrinth at St. Mark's, San Marcos

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Chapel of the Holy Family at Mustang Island Conference Center

PAGE 9

Church of the Good Shepherd, Corpus Christi
Diocesan Church Formation members help lead FORMA '24, including the retreat worship team
Episcopal Church Women's Spring Gathering at Mustang Island Convention Center

PAGE 10

Daughters of the King® Spring Assembly, St. Peter's, Kerrville
St. John's, New Braunfels
Church of the Holy Spirit, San Antonio
St. John's Chapel, Bishop Jones Center, San Antonio

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All Saints', San Benito
St. John's, McAllen
House of Bishops Meeting at St. Peter's, Charlotte, NC
St. Mark's, San Antonio
Santa Fe, San Antonio

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Immigration and Refugee Ministries at the 120th Council of the Diocese of West Texas
College & Young Adult Ministries at St. Helena's, Boerne
Young Adult Bible study
Family Camp at Duncan Park

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Cathedral Park, San Antonio

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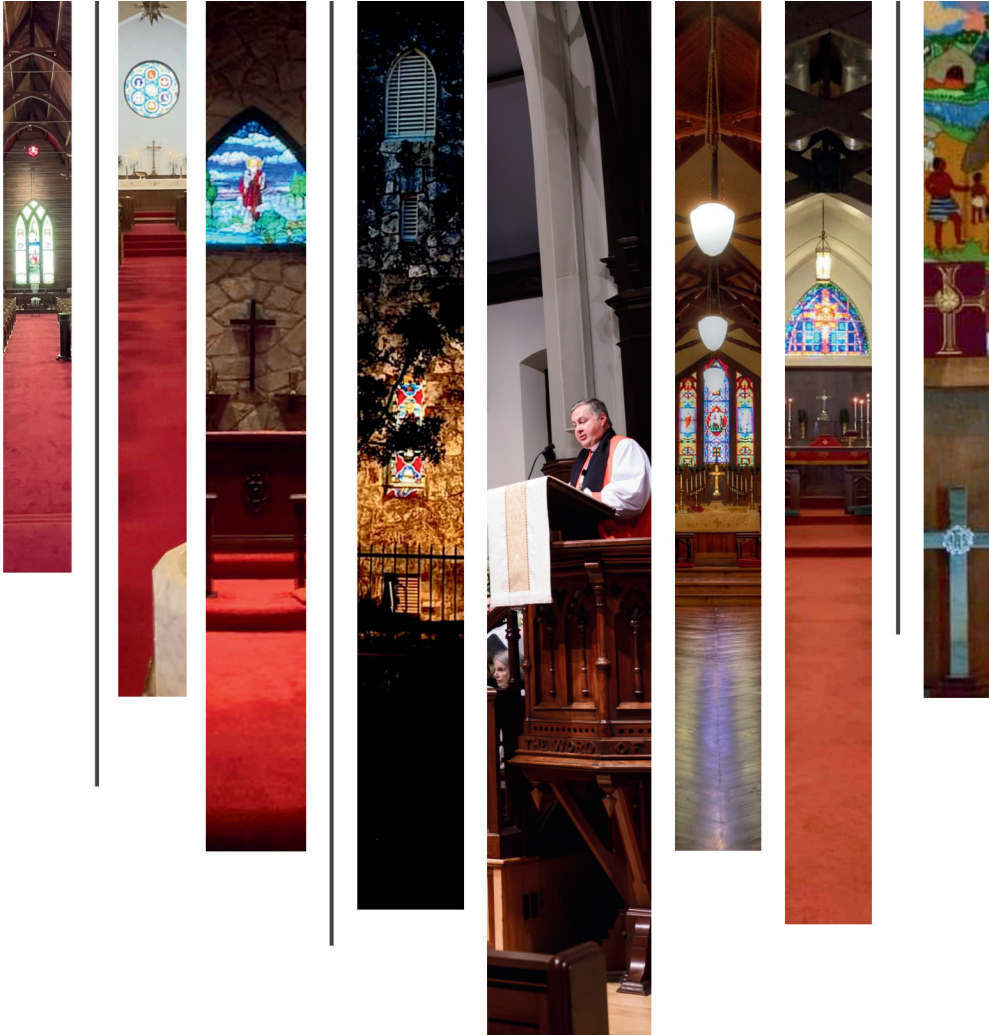
Church banners at the 120th Council of the Diocese of West Texas

STANDING COMMITTEE

The Rev. James Derkits, Trinity by the Sea, Port Aransas - President
Dr. Liz Manning, Holy Spirit, Dripping Springs
Susan Alwais, St. George, San Antonio
The Rev. Karen Morris, Emmanuel, Lockhart
Libby Templeton, St. Michael and All Angels, Blanco
The Rev. Jonathan Wickham, All Saints', Corpus Christi

ASSISTING MEMBERS

Lorena Rojas, St. John's, McAllen
The Rev. Mike Woods, St. Elizabeth's, Buda
Lory Zimmerman, St. Philip's, Uvalde
The Rev. Betsy Stephenson, Grace, Llano
Dorcas Sampson, Church of the Resurrection, Windcrest
The Rev. Michael Koehler, Trinity, Victoria



ARE YOU DISCERNING A CALL TO SERVE AS THE BISHOP SUFFRAGAN OF WEST TEXAS

**OR WANT TO NOMINATE A CLERGY
TO SHEPHERD OUR DIOCESE?**



Click or Scan the QR Code for the Candidate
Nomination Form. Nominations will be open
on May 28 and close on June 12.