



THE GOOD SHEPHERD

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

2026

Volume 56, Issue 2

Annual Address from the Rector

Grace to you and Peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The story of God's people is often told in terms of feasts and fasts, times of great abundance and celebration, and times of great scarcity and hardship. Texans have long experienced this way of life, in the form of floods and droughts. 2025 will be remembered for both the severe drought that we have been in, as well as the devastating flood that took the lives of so many in the Hill Country. These events are reminders that regardless of how prosperous we are, we are always vulnerable and dependent upon God for our lives and most basic needs.

Ironically, it's in the midst of tragedy that we see the hand of God at work, in the thousands of people who selflessly responded to serve those in need. Again, it was the church on the front lines, organizing and supporting the local needs of the area, and who is still there today doing the healing work of the Lord. We were united in suffering across the state as we came together to pray for those impacted and missing. The Spirit of the Lord was mightily present in the hundreds of people gathered in prayer at the Good Shepherd that day. It was just what we needed.

We also gathered for a special service of prayer for rain, as we continually look to God to pull us out of this extreme drought we are experiencing. It doesn't get any more real. We need water, and we don't seem to be able to solve it on our own. We are dependent upon God to act on our behalf, to pour down his healing grace upon us and our land.

So, who needs church? We need church! Our children need church! Our world needs church! Last year I reported some troubling trends in church attendance, but there are now wonderful signs of new life. It has been recently reported by the Barna Group that, "Gen Z, those in their teens and twenties, are showing a surprising increase in church attendance, particularly among young men, reversing a long-standing trend of declining participation. Recent studies indicate that this generation is seeking spiritual connection and meaning in a world dominated by technology and social media."

People are looking for spiritual connection, meaning, and purpose - a place to raise their families on the solid foundation of God's truth. That is exactly our mission as we seek to share Christ in the world. Our church is thriving as we continue, year over year, to welcome new families into our fellowship. Again, last year we welcomed 38 new adults and 34 children; very similar numbers for many years now. Our baptisms continue to out-pace our funerals.

In June we said a heartfelt good-bye to Fr. Philip May, as we celebrated his 15 years of ministry with us, and sent him off into retirement back to his homeland of Canada. Philip reports that he and Alice are happily reunited in Ottawa and making their new home together in the heart of the city. He sends his love to you all. We continue our patient search for a new priest to complement our wonderful team, in the midst of a real clergy shortage.

(continued on the next page)

ADDRESS FROM THE RECTOR (continued)

Last year's theme, "From Generation to Generation" continues to be vitally important as our faith is lived out and passed down from generation to generation. As parents and grandparents, Godparents and mentors, our most important task is to pass on this faith to the next generation. Our children's ministries are thriving in all age groups with record numbers served in Kingdom Kids, Vacation Bible School, and Children's Choir.

These times in which we live are challenging, stressful, and unpredictable, where fear runs rampant. In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus reminds us not to worry about our lives, what we will eat or drink, or what we will wear; even the birds are fed and the lilies beautifully adorned, and we are of much more value than they. He's not saying these are not important, they are, but where do they come from? Where is God in the ordering of our lives? Where have we placed our faith? God knows our needs and is already providing for them.

Our theme this year is taken from Matthew 6:33, where Jesus reminds us to, "Seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things (that we worry about) will be added unto you as well." When we place God first in our lives, as our provider, the rest of life falls into its proper place, and we see clearly the hand of God at work in our lives. We look forward to focusing this year on God's kingdom and his righteousness.

We are excited about several new ministries that are starting up. We have a new women's ministry kicking off this Spring which will welcome all women of Good Shepherd. The first gathering will be in April as we seek input on the shape and the direction of this new ministry. I want to thank Elizabeth Stewart, Nancy Beauchamp, and Kimberly Tompkins for their leadership.

We are also looking to start a new "Senior's Ministry" to support our elder members. The first order of business will be to come up with a cute and catchy name. I want to thank Suzie Warzecha and Jean Barth Albright for their leadership. We are looking for others to join in and shape the direction of this new ministry. Lastly, we would like to start a grief ministry program. We know how needed this is, but we are also considering the importance of a program and leadership team. This will take more time to get off the ground.

One of the great gifts of a life in Christ is that "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Our faith must be put into action to experience it. We are a family of volunteers with many ways in which to serve the good, from altar guild to children's ministry, from greeters and ushers to lay readers and bible study leaders, there are so many blessings that come when we put our faith into action by serving others.

We must continue to grow financially to support our growth in new members. It is a good problem to have. We need your financial support. Making a financial commitment to the church is an expectation of membership and essential to our mission of Changing lives and Sharing Christ. We can't do what we do without your financial support. We have all been the beneficiaries of those who have come before us. God will provide for the church, through each of us, as we seek and serve him first.

I want to thank you for your continued love and support, and all that you do to make our church so strong and vibrant. And I want to thank our amazing staff. Each of whom faithfully serve every day in countless ways and is a true gift from God. We have an amazing team!

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Milton" followed by a plus sign.

6 Reasons to Receive Holy Communion from the Common Cup

1. Jesus said, "Take, drink, do this in remembrance of me." Nothing about dipping.
2. The bishop has asked us to return to regular use of the common chalice.
3. The common cup (chalice) is a witness of the unity of the church: we are all in this together.
4. Drinking from a silver chalice with fortified wine has been proven safe for generations.
5. Christians have done this for hundreds of years.
6. Dipping is for Baptism; sipping is for Communion.



New 2026 Tax Deduction Information

A new, permanent above-the-line deduction is available for taxpayers who take the standard deduction:

- Up to \$1,000 for single filers
- Up to \$2,000 for married couples filing jointly

Key restrictions:

- Only cash contributions (checks, credit card charges, online payments, payroll deductions) made directly to qualified public charities are eligible.
- Gifts to donor-advised funds (DAFs) or private foundations do not qualify for this universal deduction.
- Non-cash gifts (like clothing or stock) are also ineligible.

Note: COTGS cannot render any type of tax or legal advice. Consult your financial advisor or tax advisor before making a decision.

122nd Diocesan Council - 2026

Thursday, February 26 - Saturday, February 28

Host Churches: St. Philip's, Beeville; St. Francis, Victoria; Trinity, Victoria

Council will convene at the Hilliard Conference Center in Corpus Christi on Thursday, February 26th. Our Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Dr. David G. Read, has chosen "Let Love Be Genuine" from Romans 12:9 as the theme this year. Clergy and lay delegates will assemble to hear ministry reports, conduct the annual business of the Diocese, worship together, participate in workshops, and share fellowship.

Go to the Council Website to follow all that is going on, including the Bishop's Address and a selection of reports and worship services. dwtx.org/council

FEBRUARY

FEBRUARY 4

Kingdom Kids

6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

FEBRUARY 8

St. James Sunday

10:30 a.m. Service

FEBRUARY 15

Coffee in the Courtyard Returns

Following the 10:30 a.m. Service

FEBRUARY 17

Shrove Tuesday

6:30 p.m.

FEBRUARY 18

Ash Wednesday Services

7:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

FEBRUARY 25

Lenten Supper & Program

6:15 p.m.

FEBRUARY 26 - 28

Diocesan Council

Corpus Christi

COFFEE IN THE COURTYARD

Beginning February 15th we will have a table set up in the Courtyard with coffee and snacks for anyone who would like to enjoy fellowship after the 10:30 a.m. service.



LENT / HOLY WEEK / EASTER



HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday

Sunday, March 29

8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

Liturgy of the Palms and Holy Eucharist
(10:30 service begins in the Courtyard)

5:30 p.m. "Come As You Are" Service

Stations of the Cross

Wednesday, April 1

5:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist

6:15 p.m. Stations of the Cross

Maundy Thursday

Thursday, April 2

5:30 p.m. Maundy Thursday Liturgy

Good Friday

Friday, April 3

7:00 a.m. Communion from the
Reserved Sacrament

12:00 p.m. Good Friday Liturgy

Easter Sunday

Sunday, April 5

8:00 a.m.

Holy Eucharist w/Choir & Brass

Flowering of the Cross

*Bring Fresh-Cut Flowers to Adorn
the Cross Between Services*

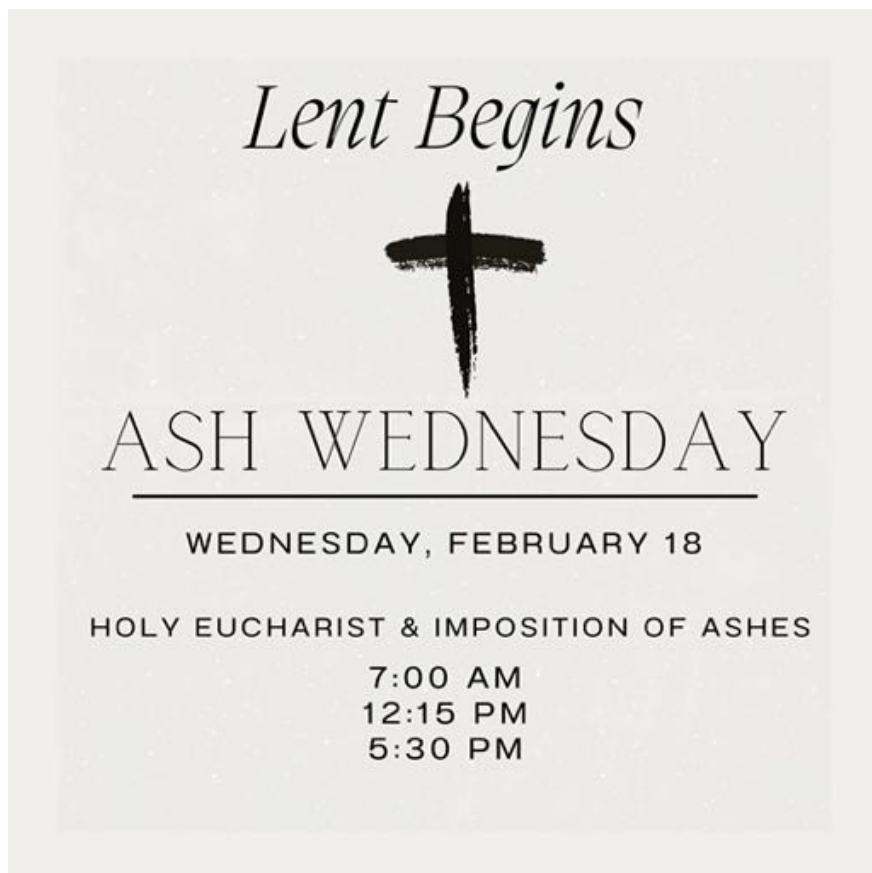
10:30 a.m.

Holy Eucharist w/Choir & Brass

Alleluia Egg Hunt

Following the 10:30 a.m. Service

*No 5:30 p.m. Service





WEDNESDAY LENTEN SUPPERS & SPEAKERS

5:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist

6:15 p.m. Potluck Supper in Munds Hall

(please bring a side dish to share)

6:45 p.m. Speaker in Munds Hall

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25

The Rev. Andy Stanley (via video)

Globally Renowned Pastor and Best-selling Author

Dinner: Roasted Chicken - Host: Jenette Hammer Guild

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4

The Rt. Rev. Gary Lillibridge

Retired Bishop, Diocese of West Texas

Dinner: Lasagna and Breadsticks - Host: Daughters of the King

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11

The Rt. Rev. Dr. David G. Read

Bishop, Diocese of West Texas

Dinner: BBQ- Host: Men's Fellowship/Tuesday Morning Group

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18

The Rev. Bert Baetz

Rector, St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Kerrville

Dinner: Chicken Strips - Host: Young Families Ministry

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25

The Rt. Rev. Angela Maria Cortiñas

Bishop Suffragan, Diocese of West Texas

Dinner: Enchiladas - Host: Vestry

CHURCH COMMUNITY

Sunday School Classes

LIVING WORD

Led by the Rev. Milton Black from 9:30 - 10:15 a.m. in the Parlor

This is a discussion-based class utilizing the scripture readings from each Sunday's services. The day's scriptures will guide us as we learn from one another and better understand God's Word.

FROM ISLAM TO THE REFORMATION—JESUS' REVOLUTION CONTINUES

Led by the Rev. Frank Fuller from 9:30 - 10:15 a.m. in Munds Hall Library

The Church inherited the ruins of the western Roman Empire, and helped preserve learning and faith for a thousand years of chaos and darkness. This class explores how the mission of Jesus continued to reshape the world and opened the rebirth of the West.

NEW MEMBERS CLASS - FOR ADULT CONFIRMATION

Led by the Rev. William Campbell

9:30 - 10:15 a.m. in Dobbins Hall Adult Classroom

This class is for anyone wanting to officially join the Episcopal Church. It gives a wealth of information about the Church and what it means to be an Episcopalian. If you have any questions, please call Fr. William.

Wednesday Evening Class

RAMS HORNS TO ROCK BANDS

6:30 - 8:00 p.m. in Dobbins Hall Adult Classroom

This class will continue to look at the changing forms of music in Christian worship, with a focus on the last 300 years down to today. Different times call forth different music, and the Christian people have expressed their faith in many different musical ways. We hope to broaden our appreciation of how the Spirit speaks to us in song across the centuries and today.

Egg Ladies Egg Creations Pick-Up

If you are on the list for Easter eggs, the Egg ladies will have their creations ready for pick up in March.

Drive-Thru Pick Up Dates:

Monday, March 16 and Wednesday, March 18

Monday, March 23 and Wednesday, March 25

11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.



If you are not able to pick up on these days, come by the church office March 30th through April 3rd from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. The cost of the eggs is **\$30**.

Bring a **check or exact cash** when you pick up eggs, or you can **pay online**.

If you pay online, choose "Other" as the fund and put "Eggs" in the notes.

ST. JAMES SUNDAY

Sunday, February 8

10:30 a.m. Service

On February 8th we will welcome all students, families, and staff of St. James Episcopal School at our 10:30 a.m. service. We will celebrate our partnership as church and school!

Please join us!

NEW VESTRY MEMBERS

Thank you to all who came to our Annual Parish Meeting on January 25th. We had a full house, a fabulous breakfast, an overview of the past year's ministry highlights, and a look at our vision for 2026.

We elected a new class of six vestry members to serve a three year term.

Mary Campbell
Payne Neessen
Debbie Newman
Courtenay Berry Rickett
David Stewart
Blaire Turnbull

A very special thank you to everyone who faithfully agreed to be nominated. You have the gratitude of our congregation.

Drake Beauchamp will serve as our new Senior Warden.

If you would like a copy of the Annual Parish Report, please come by the Church Office.

CHILDREN'S & YOUTH MINISTRIES



Youth Group in February

Sunday, February 1

Make "Blessing Bags" at the Youth House
4:30 p.m. Middle School and High School

Sunday, February 8

Tacos not Bombs
11:45 a.m. Meet at the Youth House
We will carpool to Artesian Park to pass out Blessing Bags to those in need.

Sunday, February 15

Regular Youth Group at the Youth House
4:30 p.m. Middle School and 6:30 p.m. High School

Sunday, February 22

Prayer Walk (Meet at the Youth House)
We will walk our campus and pray for the church, school, and community.
4:30 p.m. Middle School and 6:30 p.m. High School

CHILDREN'S WEDNESDAY LENT PROGRAM

Wednesdays in Lent Beginning February 25

6:15 p.m. Potluck Supper in Munds Hall
6:45 p.m. Program for Children in Dobbins Hall Classroom & Kid's Zone
Each week we will have a lesson with a meaningful activity that teaches children to seek first the Kingdom of God. For the older children, we will also have guest speakers from our youth program.

Infants/Toddlers 6 months - 2 years in the Nursery
3 year-olds through Kindergarten in Kid's Zone
1st - 6th grade in Dobbins Hall Classroom

February 25 - Seek Jesus
March 4 - Trust Jesus
March 11 - Follow Jesus
March 18 - Praise Jesus
March 25 - Serve Jesus

KINGDOM KIDS

Wednesday, February 4
6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Kingdom Kids is a fun evening of fun, food, and fellowship for children from Good Shepherd and St. James. There are games and free-play in the gym, as well as dinner and a bible story for children in 1st - 6th grade.

The nursery and Kid's Zone are available for Infants - Kinder. The cost is \$8 paid online at cotgs.org. Registration is open.



SUNDAYS

Sunday School

9:30 a.m.
Children Preschool 3 - 5th Grade
Water Street Classroom 107

Confirmation (6th Grade)
Munds Hall Auditorium

Children's Chapel

10:30 a.m.
for 3 year olds - Kinder

Celebration Chapel

10:30 a.m. in the Gym
1st - 6th Grade

NURSERY

Ages 6 months - 2 years
Sundays from 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon

We offer nursery in Dobbins Hall during the Sunday School hour and the 10:30 a.m. service.

WORSHIP SERVICES & HOURS

Sunday Schedule

8:00 a.m. Traditional Eucharist
8:45 a.m. Breakfast Fellowship
9:30 a.m. Sunday School
10:30 a.m. Family Eucharist
5:30 p.m. 'Come As You Are' Service

Nursery For the Little Ones

6 months - 2 Years in the Nursery 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon

Sunday School Classes

Sundays 9:30-10:15 a.m.

Children Meet in Water Street Classroom 107

Confirmation in Munds Hall Auditorium

Youth Meet in Munds Hall Auditorium

Adults:

Living Word w/Rev. Black in the Parlor

New Member Class w/Rev. Campbell in DHAC

From Islam to the Reformation w/Rev. Fuller in Munds Hall Library

Weekday Services

Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m. Healing Service with
Holy Eucharist (Rite II)

Monthly Services

We offer a service of Holy Communion at the Trinity
Towers/Brookdale retirement community at 3:30 p.m. on
the first Sunday of every month.

St. James Chapel Services

Tuesdays at 8:05 a.m. Middle School Chapel

Tuesdays at 8:45 a.m. K- 4th Grade Chapel

Wednesdays at 8:20 a.m. Preschool Chapels (4 services)

Thursdays at 8:05 a.m. All School Chapel

Parents are welcome at All School Chapel on Thursdays.