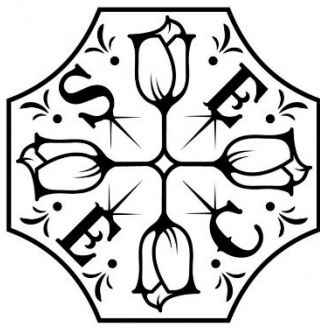




ST. ELIZABETH'S

— EPISCOPAL CHURCH —



Introduction

Welcome to St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church in Buda! We are a congregation of joyful, prayerful and committed parishioners who are ready to welcome our new Vicar and all who come to join us. We care for one another and our community as we share the healing, transformative love of God in our lives.



When asked what everyone should know about St. Elizabeth's, we agree that some of the key characteristics of our community are:

- We are inclusive, non-judgmental, and accepting of all backgrounds. St. Elizabeth is a safe space of inclusion and welcomes all who enter. We value diversity and have a reputation for progressive thought and action.
- We are traditional in our faith and services but relaxed in our celebration and expression. We greatly appreciate stimulating, challenging, and interesting sermons and are blessed with great musical talent that is shared in making our services all the more beautiful. We lovingly refer to our church and our community as "St. Liz."
- We are a small church with a big heart. We care deeply about our members, and our entire community from birth to "seasoned" adults are celebrated and cherished here.

Our objective with this profile is to present a clear vision that defines who we are and what we seek as members of St. Elizabeth's. As we created this profile, it became an invitation for our prospective new Vicar. Along the way, we discovered it also serves as an invitation to visitors and new members, and perhaps even to people who have been here a while but have not yet found their niche.

Our Roots

St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church in Buda dates from the founding in 1985 on a hill overlooking what was then a small town in between the booming City of Austin and the wonderful Texas Hill Country. We have been a Mission Church in the Diocese of West Texas for over 40 years. From the original temporary building to our current facilities, St. Liz has watched our small town grow into a vibrant community, and that growth seems to have no end in sight.

St Elizabeth's facilities are used for current congregational and community programs, but they also offer many opportunities for future growth.

Our campus is beautifully situated on 5 acres (218,236 sq. ft.) of natural surroundings and includes:

- Church building, including sanctuary, Vicar's office, nursery, and kitchen
- Mission Hall used for church functions, youth activities, and community programs
- Playscape Playground, prayer garden, and gazebo



Who is Saint Elizabeth?

An inspiring role model of a young woman, Elizabeth was born in the year 1203. A princess married to a prince, she enraged the Hungarian court by selling royal jewels to build a hospital and by opening the royal grain storehouses to feed the poor in a famine. Even after she was widowed with three young children, she continued her selfless generosity. She died when she was only 24 years old.



A story is told that she was caught smuggling bread out of the palace, but when forced to open her cloak and reveal the evidence, her accusers found only roses. Her symbols, therefore, are bread and roses. We honor our patron Saint Elizabeth each week in worship, and our church logo proudly includes a compass rose in remembrance of Saint Elizabeth.

Our Faith Story

While we are deeply proud of our small church, we are also focused on our future and looking for God's calling through the 21st century. We see St. Elizabeth's as an open Christian community seeking to grow in relationship with God and in compassionate engagement with the world.

Core Values

Spirituality: Our history is rooted in the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer. On Sunday mornings we have a traditional Rite II service.

Community: One of St. Elizabeth's gifts are its people. You will be hard pressed to find a warmer, more enthusiastic, and loving welcome when you arrive at church on a Sunday morning. We are an open Christian Community, seeking to grow in our friendship with each other and with God; and we seek to study our relationship with God and our engagement with the world. We welcome anyone who would like to join us in our journey. We adore newcomers!

Worship: Our goal is to empower our relationship with God through prayer, praise, and thanksgiving. Our worship is traditional yet casual. Our music is also traditional but original. And the sum of this experience is deeply personal for each member of our church community.

Outreach: We seek and serve Christ in the world by supporting our local community in several meaningful ways.

Children & Youth: We are committed to being an intergenerational community, which includes children and youth in fellowship, spirituality, and mission. Our church is in the midst of a growing, thriving community of families. Our hope is to be able to increase the number of children and youth attending St. Elizabeth's and build strong children and youth ministries.



Sundays at St. Elizabeth's

Sunday mornings at St. Elizabeth's currently offer a service at 10am with piano music, two regular instrumentalists and a choir. Local student musicians contribute their talents on high Sundays or special occasions. A nursery is available throughout the morning for families with infants and toddlers (staffing is seasonal or provided by Safeguard-trained ministry leaders as needed when staff are unavailable).

Attendance at St. Elizabeth's has fluctuated over the last five years. Pre-COVID, our attendance was so high that two services were needed, with Godly Play and adult formation and bible studies offered between the two services. We also enjoyed hospitality time between or after services, giving parishioners an opportunity to get to know one another better, as well as to welcome our guests and newcomers.

During the pandemic, the clergy, staff and Bishop's Committee very thoughtfully determined the safety protocols for the parish. We did not worship in person for many months. The dedication and creativity of church leadership and members enabled us to shift to online worship via Facebook and YouTube.

Presently, we worship in person and continue to live stream our services. While we are still recovering in numbers from the pandemic, we are receiving an increasing number of visitors from our growing community.

We enjoy a brief hospitality time before and after the service with coffee. About once a month, we have a more specific hospitality time after service like ice cream cones on backpack Sunday or cookies for our Bluebonnet Seed Stomp in the fall.

Our playground is a beehive of activity, as children frolic and burn energy with friends and get better acquainted. While we may all go in different directions with ministry and outreach work during the week, we treasure our worship, formation and fellowship time together on Sundays.

Ministry and Mission

At Saint Elizabeth we are determined to share the abundant love of God with our local communities, including Buda and Kyle specifically.



Sunday Morning Ministries

Acolytes

Acolytes are young people who assist with the worship service in very particular ways. Here at St. Liz, we have Senior Acolytes (Senior High School) who are eligible to serve as Gospeler and Crucifers. Middler Acolytes (Middle School) can serve as Banner Bearers, candlelighters, Torchbearers, and Chapel Crucifers. Junior Acolytes are eligible to serve as bell ringers during the Eucharist.



Altar Guild

Altar Guild is a small team of volunteers who care for the altar and its appointments, vessels, and linens. The Altar Guild sets up each week for the Eucharist, tending to the Lord's Table and assuring that the bread and wine are ready, the candles are filled, and the flowers are purchased and arranged.

The Altar Guild prepares for Baptisms, Weddings, and Burials, and handles seasonal extra decorations such as the Advent Wreath, poinsettias at Christmas, and Easter Lilies and the Flowering of the Cross at Easter.

Children's Programs

Children's Chapel historically has been provided for kids who no longer need the nursery but are not quite old enough to engage in what is going on in the first part of the church service. Our purpose is to help bridge the gap that younger kids can have in understanding and following the scripture readings, sermon, and prayers.



Godly Play is Montessori-based Christian Education that offers **a sacred space for children to experience God** by hearing stories from the Bible, and then responding through wondering, working with hands-on materials, and art expression in a peaceful, prepared classroom environment. St. Elizabeth was graciously gifted a significant number of Godly Play core stories and materials, which children at St. Elizabeth have enjoyed and learned from over the years. Godly Play takes place each Sunday throughout the school year, with a hiatus during the summer months. During months with a 5th Sunday, we hold an intergenerational worship service where the children assume Lector and Intercessor responsibilities.

Lay Leaders

Lay Leaders perform several important functions in the Sunday worship service. Here at St. Liz, we have:

- **Lay Eucharistic Ministers** (sometimes abbreviated “LEMs”) are licensed by the Bishop to assist in administering the chalice during communion.
- **Lay Eucharistic Visitors** These persons are also trained and licensed to visit persons who cannot come to church and distribute communion from our common worship. This program was temporarily suspended during COVID and is pending resumption.
- **Lectors/Readers** are appointed by the pastor to read portions of scripture in worship.
- **Intercessors** are appointed by the pastor to lead the Prayers of the People in worship.

Choir and Music Ministry

*Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.
Serve the Lord with gladness; come before his
presence with singing.*

Psalm 100: 1-2



At St. Elizabeth, we incorporate a wide variety of music to support and enhance the liturgy of the Episcopal service. From Classical to Jazz, Folk to Contemporary, Gospel to Camp, the history of sacred music is rich, and we are happy to explore the many forms of praising God in song together. Our choir director and music team are incredibly talented and ensure St. Elizabeth has original, meaningful, and inspirational music every week. The music at St. Elizabeth is not just an activity but a spiritual and community-building strength.

Community Outreach & Activities

Helping Hands

The St. Liz Helping Hands Ministry exists to serve our community by helping with small household and lawn projects. This ministry supports congregants who need assistance changing out detector batteries, light bulbs, or need help moving furniture or other items around inside or outside their home. Our supprt team works to address the identified need or help find someone who can.

Men's Group (Burn Your Own Steak)

The St. Liz Men's Group gathers on the Mission Hall Porch every third Tuesday of the month at 6pm. Everyone is invited to bring something to put on the grill for themselves, and a side to share with the group. They've been known to burn a steak or two along the way, but they offer good food and fellowship!

Scouting

St. Elizabeth Episcopal Church sponsors several Boy Scout and Girl Scout groups in our community. These are all active and vibrant groups of kids!

Meetings take place weekly in our **Mission Hall**. The people of St. Elizabeth joyfully support the scouts in all of their endeavors.

St. Elizabeth also hosts a "Scouts" Sunday each year. Eagle

Scout candidates have executed repairs of our parking area, helped create our prayer garden, and planted the flowers and shrubs under our church sign along the highway.



Meals On Wheels

We are called to feed the hungry. St. Elizabeth's provides space for the preparation and distribution of meals each week by the local Meals on Wheels program. This program serves the elderly and disabled in Buda as part of a county-wide program



Grief Support Group

St. Elizabeth's hosts a grief group to provide spiritual and psychological support to our members and community friends coping with many kinds of loss (of loved ones, relationships, etc.) or life changes (empty nesters, retirement, etc.). The group(s) are led by a licensed professional counselor from our church community. A Blue Christmas service is also held to provide a safe and contemplative space for healing, in support of those who find the holiday season to be a particularly difficult time.

Sunshine Mail

Each quarter, the St. Elizabeth's community prepares "love letters" for residents of our local nursing and memory care facilities. These notes, drawings, and creative communications brighten the lives of those who may have limited visitors.



Little Lions Pantry

Throughout the year, St. Elizabeth's collects diapers, wipes, and feminine hygiene products in support of the Little Lions pantry in San Marcos, TX. The pantry provides supplemental diapers and products each month for those families in need.

Hays County & Central Texas Food Bank

St. Elizabeth's has collected canned goods and donated volunteer service time to the Hays County and Central Texas Food Banks as part of different seasonal initiatives. The Scouting units sponsored by St Elizabeth's hold an annual food drive benefitting the Hays County Food Bank, collecting more than 1200 pounds of non-perishable items. St. Elizabeth's Youth Ministry (EYC) also volunteered at the Central Texas Food Bank in 2025, helping to provide more than 4500 meals to Central Texans in need.



School Supply Drive

St. Liz teams up with the Kiwanis Club of Kyle-Buda each year to collect school supplies, with the goal of creating supply bags for 500 children in all grades from Kindergarten through High School. Our back-to-school season culminates with our backpack blessing in mid-August, when we pray over all who are going back to school, and those who support them.



Hawai'ian Shirts

Why are there so many Hawai'ian shirts at St. Elizabeth's? We've been wearing them longer than we can remember! We are an inviting and welcoming community who take our worship seriously, while remembering not to take ourselves too seriously. Our casual attire is a reminder that all are welcome to come as they are, and that we are all connected as part of the human family – one large 'Ohana.'



College Ministry

There are more than 300,000 college students within the Diocese of West Texas, and St. Elizabeth's supports and actively participates in college outreach and young adult ministry. Tami Woods, spouse of our immediate past Vicar, the Rev. Michael Woods, is the Director of College & Young Adult Ministries, and served as an invaluable resource for our community in this space. St. Elizabeth seeks to continue this outreach as we call our next Vicar.

Current Challenges

As we forge ahead, we have identified the following challenges for our beloved St. Elizabeth's community:

- Our physical plant is aging, and our upkeep needs are steadily increasing. In 2025, St. Elizabeth's replaced two air conditioning units at significant cost and undertook an urgent repair of the support beams on the front porch.
- St. Elizabeth's has entered into a temporary rental agreement with Living Word Lutheran Church, permitting use of the St. Elizabeth's Mission Hall for their Sunday worship service while they seek a permanent home (rental agreement is provisioned in 6-month increments by mutual agreement). Storage space is at a premium, particularly during their occupancy of the hall. The Scouts have offered to build us a new storage shed on the property.
- Increasing and extending our reach into the community, increasing volunteer participation, and developing a healthy stewardship culture to support our current and future growth. We would like to involve more parishioners in our various ministries and lay leadership roles.
- Maintaining a forward-looking plan for St. Elizabeth's, alongside clear communication and transparency without a Vicar at the helm.
- Rejuvenation and reimagination of children's programming; development of new programs and formation opportunities for older youth and young adults.



Hopes and Dreams

- We seek a leader who can help us navigate the current period of uncertainty by articulating a vision for St. Elizabeth's (i.e. a 5-year plan); to help us grow the church and serve all generations of our parish family.
- We are seeking a path to achieve parish status after serving as a mission for 40+ years. We strive to have sound finances and stable membership with a plan for sustainable growth. Prior to the pandemic, St. Elizabeth's had grown enough to warrant a discussion about parish status and the steps needed to achieve it.
- We long to look beyond our doors and reach into the surrounding community; to serve as a vibrant presence in the broader Buda/Kyle community.
- We dream of updating and potentially expanding our physical church facilities to allow for more classroom and programming space and permit additional on-site storage.
- We want to provide thriving youth programs, offering vital youth and young adult programs that fully utilize our facilities. We want to reach out to our youth and young adults and provide spiritual formation opportunities and fellowship activities.





Our Vicar Profile

Our next Vicar must be a strong, dynamic and skilled communicator, who prioritizes active engagement with the congregation and our local community to promote sustainable growth and community outreach.

These are the qualities our new Vicar must possess in order to align with our vision for St. Elizabeth's future. Next Vicar is someone who can:

- Provide strong, energetic preaching that relates the Gospel to our daily lives
- Develop and support formation of children and youth
- Emphasize newcomer ministries (invite, welcome, and connect)
- Provide pastoral care that includes visiting the sick, bereaved, and homebound
- Equip and involve laity in the planning and leadership of church ministries
- Emphasize the spiritual growth of members

Life at St. Elizabeth's

St. Elizabeth by the Numbers

Membership & Attendance	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025¹</u>
Members	126	138
Average Sunday Attendance	68	66
Livestream Participants	4	3
Baptisms	1	1
Confirmations	1	0
Funerals/Burials	1	0
Marriages	0	1
Stewardship & Finances		
Pledges	46	51
Total Amount Pledged	\$189,410.01 ²	\$165,700.00 ³
Total Operating Revenue	\$261,474.69	\$138,538.30
Total Operating Expenses	\$247,912.58	\$151,734.00
Total cash in checking\savings	\$216,888.86	\$218,972.18

¹ 2025 figures are current through July 1, 2025.

² Total received in 2024 was \$187,308.50.

³ Total received to date is \$94,202.91.

Life in Buda



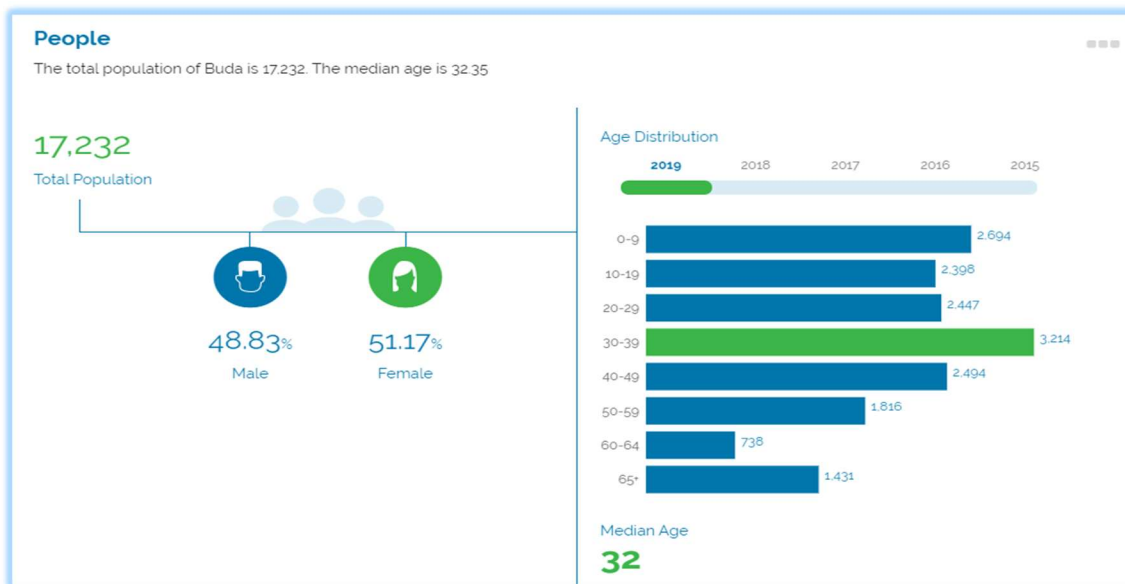
More than a small city

The Buda area which borders other cities such as Kyle, Mountain City, and nearby Wimberley, is a part of the greater Austin and San Antonio area stretching along Interstate Highway 35.

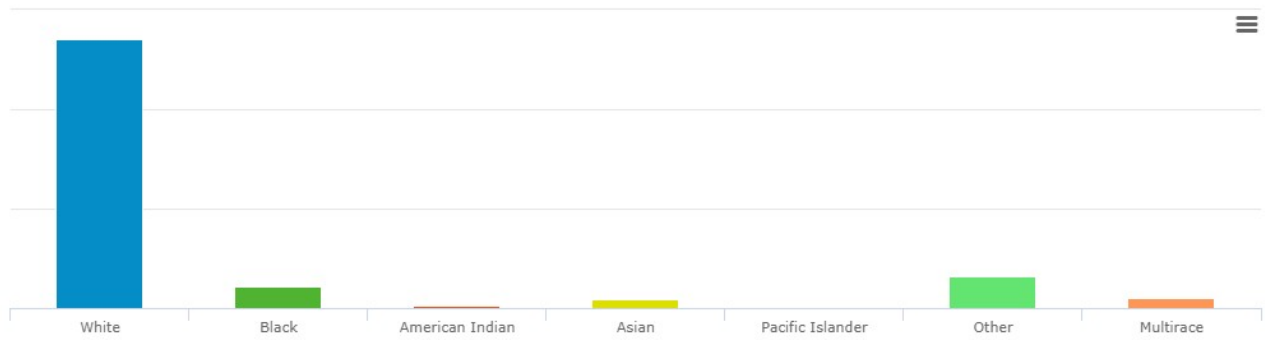
On average, Buda gets 36 inches of rain per year. Snowfall averages 0 inches (but it has snowed!). Typically, there are 225 sunny days per year in Buda. The July high temperature is 95 degrees, and the January low is 39 degrees. The US average comfort index is 7.

As part of the growing Interstate Highway 35 corridor, the Buda/Kyle area is quickly becoming home to many industries ranging from manufacturing, healthcare and technology, to those smaller service industries that support our booming population.

Buda is a quickly growing city with a current population of over 16,000. During the 2010 census, Buda's population was 7,295 while the 2020 Census population was 17,232, an increase of 136% in that decade. Hays County stands as the second-fastest-growing large county in the nation, experiencing an impressive 16.4% population surge from 2020 to 2023.



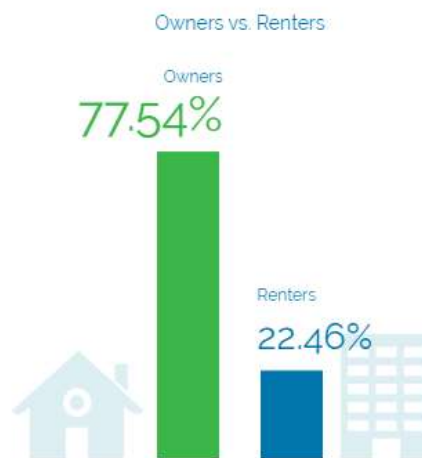
Race Distribution



	Total	%
Default		
White	13,505	78.37
Black	1,058	6.14
American Indian	112	0.65
Asian	430	2.50
Pacific Islander	5	0.03
Other	1,596	9.26
Multirace	526	3.05

Housing

There are 245% more households who own their homes than there are renters.



Quotes From Our Parish Profile Survey

- “St. Liz has given my family a community and church family.”
- “I have been truly touched by the openness and welcome of the community to all people.”
- “We really care about helping each other and giving each other spiritual support.”
- “St. Liz has provided a warm, caring, and welcoming space for my family. My kids enjoy St. Liz and the community, which has been a huge blessing.”
- “St. Elizabeth’s facilitated my reconciliation and reunion with my loving God and creator after a long separation.”
- “I have made several lifelong friendships from attending this church.”
- “I appreciate so much the music ministry of St. Liz. I love that the hymns chosen are easy to sing and have meaningful lyrics.”
- “St. Elizabeth’s is a valuable support system for me.”
- “Sunday sermons are educational and help keep me grounded.”
- “I love a church with both young and older members worshipping together as a community. St. Liz has a good mixture of all ages.”
- “St. Liz supports the area Scouts, the nursing home behind our church, local schools, and food programs.”
- “We are a welcome place for people to receive the love of God.”
- “We like to laugh and be joyful.”
- “We have great music every week.”
- “We are friendly and welcoming, serious about worship but not uptight.”
- “We are passionate to learn and reflect God in our life.”
- “We are open, inviting, and inclusive.”

- “We always seem to find ways to connect to each other on Sundays, whether you are new or a member.”
- “We are small but mighty. We are always happy to grow, but we’re also happy having the small sanctuary.”
- “We are thoughtful, positive, upbeat, fun-loving, and happy. We are full of noisy joy.”
- “We meet people where they are.”





EPISCOPAL DIOCESE *of West Texas*



The Right Reverend David Read, Bishop of the Diocese of West Texas, was consecrated as the 11th Diocesan Bishop in July, 2023. Prior to his consecration, Bishop Read served as rector of four congregations in the Diocese, most recently at St. Helena's in Boerne. Bishop Read brings a strong vision for church planting, discipleship, and congregational development. He reminds us that the Diocesan Staff exists solely to serve as a resource for the 87 congregations in the Diocese of West Texas.



The Right Reverend Angela Cortinas, Bishop Suffragan of the Diocese of West Texas, was consecrated as the 7th Bishop Suffragan of the Diocese on March 15th, 2025. Prior to her consecration, Bishop Cortinas served congregations in Florida and Texas. She brings her many gifts and skills to the work and ministry of the Diocese, and oversees lay ministry development, Christian formation, and discipleship.



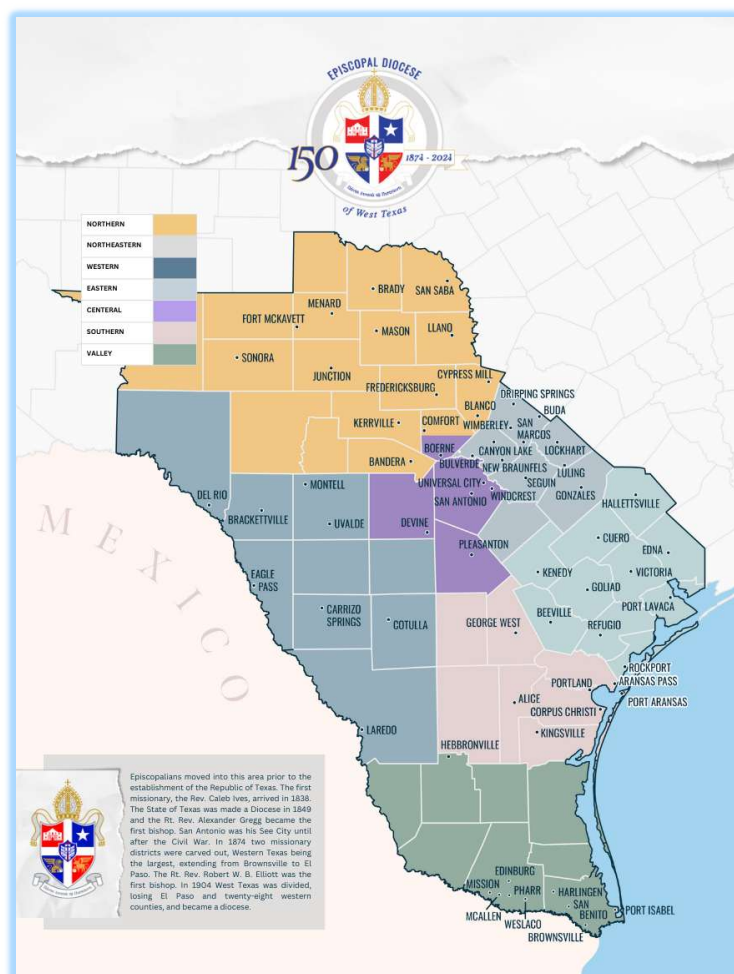
111 Torcido Drive
San Antonio, Texas 78209
210-824-5387



EPISCOPAL DIOCESE *of West Texas*

St. Elizabeth's is part of the Diocese of West Texas, which is made up of 87 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!



St. Elizabeth Episcopal Church 2025

Bishop's Committee

Will Piferrer - *Bishop's Warden*

Ed Crawford – *Junior Warden*

Brooke Zotz - *Secretary*

Travis Glick

Erin Kowalik

Richard Martinez

John Scull

Terri Thompson

Vanessa Westbrook

Ex-Oficio

Lisa White – *Treasurer*

<http://www.st-liz.org>

