

# Parish Profile 2023



## St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

810 Kitty Hawk Road

Universal City, Texas 78148

(210)658-5956    [stmatts-uc.org](http://stmatts-uc.org)



### Our Vision

*We seek to follow Jesus Christ as we discover  
and share our gifts in order to be transformed  
and connected to God and the world.*

## **Who we are . . .**

Founded in 1964, Saint Matthew's is an intimate church of about 60 families who seek to serve Jesus Christ as a caring family. "Sharing God's love with everyone," "Christ centered in worship and actions," "seeks to know God and making Him known to others," are just a few examples of who our parishioners say we are. We are a warm and welcoming community of believers who strive to be inclusive – welcoming people of all backgrounds. It doesn't matter how old you are or where you came from, if you are here, then you are family. As a family, we minister to and care for each other. We are outreach and mission minded, wanting to help our community. Our potlucks are always a time of good food and fellowship.

### **Our Mission**

We serve Jesus Christ as a community rich  
in Episcopal tradition  
by welcoming the seeker,  
providing a caring family,  
encouraging spiritual growth,  
and reaching into our neighborhood and world.

### **Our Worship**

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic we had two services on Sunday: 8:00 a.m. without music and 10:30 a.m. with music. We returned to in-person worship with a single service at 9:00 a.m. with music. We hope to return to two services soon. We also have a Wednesday 11:00 a.m. Eucharist at the Army Residence Community (ARC) which is a residence for retired military officers. We live stream our Sunday service through Vimeo and Facebook. Previous services may be viewed [here](#) or [here](#). We have an Order for Compline every Wednesday evening using [Facebook Live](#) led by lay volunteers.



# Our Ministries

Parish ministries lie in four categories: Worship & Prayer, Education & Spiritual Growth, Nurturing (In-reach), and Outreach with the Love of Jesus.

## WORSHIP & PRAYER

**Altar Guild** \* Teams of two prepare the worship area for Sunday & special services.

**Audio Visual** \* Adult volunteer live streams video and audio during the service.

**Choir** \* A group of volunteers help lead the congregation singing and provide music for special services.

**Greeters & Ushers** \* Visitors and members are greeted and welcomed for every service.

**Lay Eucharistic Ministers** \* A volunteer assists the priest during the service and distributes wine at Communion.

**Lay Eucharistic Visitors** \* Communion is taken to homebound parishioners every other Sunday.

**Lay Readers** \* Volunteers read the lessons and Psalms during services.

**Monday Prayer Group** \* A dedicated group who meet every Monday at 12:00 p.m. The prayer list is updated from prayer cards, emails, and phone calls. Then they pray for everyone on the list and throughout the week.

**Organist** \* A volunteer provides music on Sunday & special services.

**Prayer Minister** \* A lay person is available after the Sunday service to provide private prayer for any who need it.

**Prayers of the People** \* Volunteers read the Prayers of the People during services.

**Ushers** \* Teams of two take the elements to the altar and take up the Offering. They assist with seating and going up for Communion as needed.





## **EDUCATION & SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

**Education for Ministry (EfM)** \* Five parishioners currently enrolled.

**Bible/Book-Studies** \* Various studies and devotionals held throughout the year with shared facilitation of discussions by participants.

**Sunday School** \* For adults led by a lay volunteer.

**Vacation Bible School (VBS)** \* Not resumed since COVID. Was a shared, week long event with Church of the Resurrection.



## **NURTURING OUR MEMBERS**

**Caring Umbrella** \* Phone Calls, Cards & Notes, Food for Families, Transportation, Emergency Childcare, Home Visits &/or Flower Delivery, Grocery Shopping, Home Honey-do Support, more as needed.

**Dining Out** \* An opportunity for fellowship and breaking bread on the last Thursday of the month, excluding November & December. A local restaurant is chosen and coordinated by volunteer parishioners for families & friends.

**Hospitality** \* Sunday Coffee Hour, Potluck for Parish Meetings & Holidays, Funeral & Special Event Receptions, coordinated by volunteer teams.

**Military Ministry** \* Support, Care, and Fellowship for our active duty military members, veterans, and the families of both groups.



## **OUTREACH with the Love of Jesus**

**Give It—To Go** \* Bags for the homeless filled with a water bottle, snacks, wash cloth, soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, and socks. Designed to travel in members' cars to be given as needed.

**Newcomers Visits** \* A "thank you for visiting" card with small crosses are taken to visitors who fill out a guest card.

### **Randolph Area Christian Assistance Program (RACAP)**

\* A local non-profit created and supported by area churches. We support the food pantry, back to school supplies and shoes, holiday meal baskets, Christmas gifts, and cash donations for other assistance.

**Episcopal Relief and Development** \* **Global Teams** \* **Habitat Builders of West TX** \* We support all financially.

## **Community Outreach**

**Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) Groups** \* Weekly meetings of AA are held in the parish hall.

**HOME** \* Youth music instruction organization for home schooled children. They meet weekly in our parish hall, sanctuary, and Christian education building.

**ThriveWell Cancer Foundation** \* They hold several exercise classes weekly for cancer patients and survivors in our Christian education building.

**Christ Church of San Antonio** \* A church plant of the Presbyterian Church of America. They began using our sanctuary on Sunday evenings. Now they use our parish hall, nursery, and sanctuary for special services, women's Bible studies, and other classes.



## **Our Staff**

In addition to the rector, we employ three part-time, paid staff members. Our parish secretary works 20 hours per week. Our two nursery caregivers primarily work Sunday mornings and come in for evening services as needed. The rest of the staff members are volunteers: Lay Ministry Coordinator, Treasurer, and Communications Director.

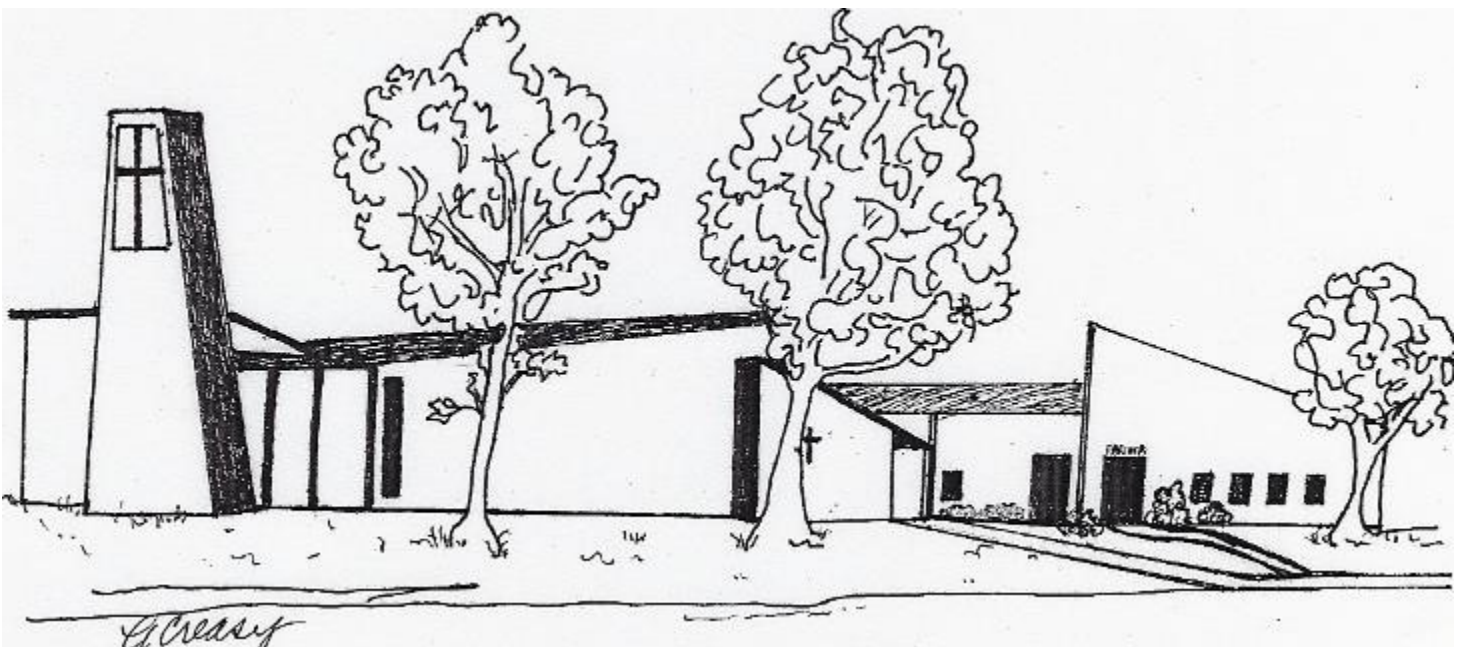
We also have a group of dedicated volunteer receptionists who work during office hours. They assist with answering the phones and front door, assist with folding the weekly Order of Service, stuffing envelopes, and a variety of other tasks to assist our secretary and rector.



## Communications

We use a variety of ways to communicate with our parishioners and the general public.

- ♦ **Website**—[www.stmatts-uc.org](http://www.stmatts-uc.org)—information concerning our services, staff, history, newsletters, and more. The landing page is updated as needed with current information about seasonal changes of services.
- ♦ **Constant Contact** is used to send group emails for breaking news, announcements on studies and gatherings, requests for volunteers, news of the family, etc. A means to sign up for the email list is on the front page of our website.
- ♦ **Matt's Missive** is our monthly newsletter and includes information on current happenings as well information from the Diocese.
- ♦ **OOS**: The Sunday Order of Service has the weekly announcements for events happening in the near term.
- ♦ **Facebook**: Pages exist for the church and annual Market Day which are open to the public as well as a private Facebook Group. We use Facebook Live for our Wednesday Order for Compline. Live stream service archive is found here as well as on our video upload service, VIMEO.com.
- ♦ **For first time visitors**: If they provide it, we will contact them by email and provide the information above, along with an invitation to speak with the rector.



## Our Parish Numbers

We received 41 pledges totaling \$191,289 for 2023.

	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Avg Sunday Attendance	41	32	66*	75	86
# of Pledges	41	43	54	55	54
\$ Amount Pledges	\$202,634	\$167,027	\$190,882	\$186,348	\$185,748
*Partial year due to COVID shutdown.					

REVENUE	Budget	Actual	EXPENSE	Budget	Actual
2022	\$241,599	\$245,559	2022	\$268,456	\$269,355
2021	\$222,441	\$220,946	2021	\$274,106	\$251,681
2020	\$229,619	\$233,974	2020	\$275,664	\$254,352
2019	\$265,660	\$297,382	2019	\$282,941	\$287,413
2018	\$259,638	\$325,944	2018	\$285,346	\$296,431

We are working with Google Fiber to lease a small section of our property to put in a fiber hut which will provide us with a monthly lease payment. We are also negotiating the sale of a small piece of our land.

We host an annual Market Day Craft Fair in September as a fundraiser. This is a community event which also brings in funds for our operations.





## Our Campus



1.Parish Hall with offices, library, kitchen, and bathrooms.

2.Sanctuary

3.Christian Education Building

4.Memorial Garden

5.Cell Tower Lease

6.Future Google Fiber Hut Lease





# Our History

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church was begun in 1964 when a group of Episcopalians in and near Randolph Air Force Base, Universal City, Texas, decided to start a church to serve Universal City and the surrounding communities. The first worship service was held on January 17, 1965, in a storefront location in Schertz, Texas. Much of the original membership came from the military at Randolph Air Force Base. The storefront was utilized for six years.



## Rectors and Key Accomplishments

**Robert Creasy – served 32 years from 1966 to 1998.**

1968 – The Diocese of West Texas purchased land on Kitty Hawk Road in Universal City.

June 17, 1970 – Construction of the church began.

January 31, 1971 – First worship services were held in the new sanctuary.

February 7, 1971 – Bishop Gosnell dedicated the church.

1980 – First Parish Hall, a WWII era barracks, arrived.

April 2, 1989 – Celebration of parish status—becoming financially self-supported.

December 17, 1990 – Dedication of new pews in the church.

May 3, 1998 – Parish Hall completed and dedicated.



1971



Easter  
Reverend Robert Creasy  
Vicar



# Our History

**Timothy Vellom – served 23 years from 1999 to 2022.**

May 1, 2011 – Dedication of new playground.

2012 – First year of shared Holy Week services with three other Episcopal churches to include public Stations of the Cross on the Riverwalk.

2012 – Construction of Memorial Garden with memorial pavers and benches.

May 26, 2013 – Dedication of Memorial Garden as “Reflection Garden.”

2014 – Installation of patio area between Sanctuary and Parish Hall.

2018 – Individual, removable pew cushions purchased.

2022 – Asbestos abatement of Christian Education Building with new siding and windows.

September 2022 – Installation and dedication of large, wooden cross at outdoor altar.



## **History of The Army Residence Community**

The Army Residence Community (ARC), a residence for retired military officers, opened in January 1987. The Church of the Resurrection in Windcrest was the first to provide Episcopal chapel services at the ARC and did so for four years. St. Matthew's took responsibility for the services after The Church of the Resurrection and continues to do so.

In addition to the services, Fr. Bob Creasy and then Fr. Timothy Vellom, provided pastoral care for the residents as well as memorial and burial services. The ARC is an extension of the St. Matthew's parish and family. Some residents regularly attend services at St. Matthew's, pledge annually, and participate in functions.





## Our Community

**Universal City** is a city in Bexar (pronounced “bear”) County, Texas, United States. It borders San Antonio to the northeast, and is adjacent to Randolph Air Force Base. The population was 19,720 at the 2020 census. Due to the close proximity of the base, there is a large military presence, both active duty and retired. It is part of the San Antonio Metropolitan Statistical Area.

Universal City was established in 1960. Pat Booker Road is the commercial thoroughfare through the city.

According to the United States Census Bureau, the city has a total area of 5.7 square miles (15 km<sup>2</sup>), all of it land.



In Universal City, the summers are hot and oppressive; the winters are short, cold, and windy; and it is partly cloudy year-round. Over the course of the year, the temperature typically varies from 42°F to 95°F and is seldom below 30°F or above 100°F. (Source: [weatherspark.com](http://weatherspark.com))

Universal City's housing expenses are 33% lower than the national average and the utility prices are 6% lower than the national average. Universal City has grocery prices that are 11% lower than the national average. (Source: [payscale.com](http://payscale.com)) According to [bestplaces.net](http://bestplaces.net), the unemployment rate in Universal City is 6.7%, the median income is \$60,934, median home price is \$272,000, and the median age 36.1.

In addition to a variety of parks and walking trails, the city has a public library.



Universal City is served by the [Judson](#), [Schertz-Cibolo-Universal City](#), and [Randolph Field](#) Independent School Districts. There are several (k-12) Private, Parochial, and Charter Schools (ratings & tuition vary) available to include [TMI Episcopal](#) which is the Diocese of West Texas high school.

Post-secondary schools in the area include the University of Texas at San Antonio, University of the Incarnate Word, Trinity University, and Texas Lutheran University. Alamo Community Colleges has various vocational training programs and 2-year degree programs. Northeast Lakeview Community College, a campus of the Alamo Colleges, is located in Universal City.

Major medical centers in the area are Brooke Army Medical Center and the South Texas Medical Center with multiple hospitals, medical offices, and a medical school.

Joint Base San Antonio (JBSA) includes Randolph Air Force Base. Fort Sam Houston including Brook Army Medical Center, Camp Bullis, and Lackland Air Force Base.

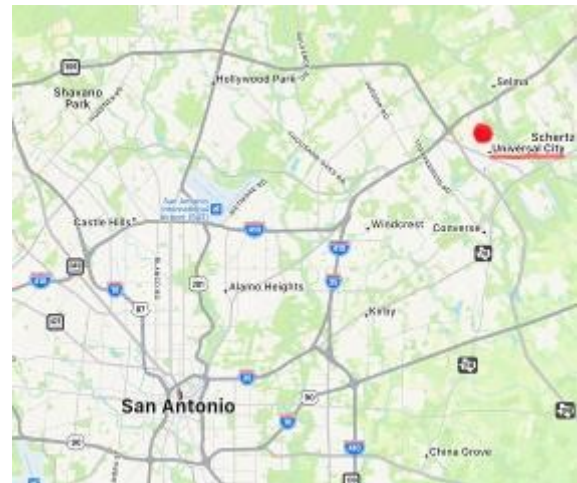
**[San Antonio](#)** is a lovely city year-round. In addition to the famous Alamo, we have four other missions which are part of a World Heritage Site, the beautiful River Walk with shopping and restaurants, Hemisfair Plaza, and the Tower of the Americas.

We celebrate an annual Fiesta, Christmas, and other holidays with parades and floats on the river.

It is home to the San Antonio Spurs Basketball team, Missions minor league baseball team, San Antonio FC professional soccer team, and recently added the San Antonio Brahmas Football.

Many other recreational opportunities include theaters, concerts, museums, sports, festivals, parks, along with many lake and river activities.

Surrounding cities include [Live Oak](#), [Selma](#), [Schertz](#), and [Converse](#).





## *Our challenges . . .*

Like many congregations, our attendance and pledging were already declining and the onset of COVID just exacerbated it. We are starting to recover and are seeing members return as well as visitors. It is slow but moving in the right direction.

We have found it to be challenging to keep young people and families engaged when most of the congregation are mature.

Declining pledges have resulted in fewer funds to support the church operations while prices of supplies and services are increasing. Our dedicated treasurer and vestry, along with generous gifts at just the right time, have kept us in the black.

We are an aging congregation with fewer individuals able to participate. We are blessed to have a devoted, caring, albeit small cadre of parishioners who work tirelessly to make Sunday happen and keep everything running.

While functional, our facilities are aging and require maintenance.



## *Our hopes, prayers, and dreams . . .*



Our individual hopes, prayers, and dreams for St. Matthew's are as varied as our members, yet we are all eager to grow. We hope and pray for a full sanctuary on Sunday and a return to two services. Like many churches, we dream of younger members and more families attending and participating as well as expanding our appeal to empty nesters. We hope to grow in both number and spirit.

We pray that growth in membership will lead to more financial stability which will allow for more support of our church and outreach activities. We are anxious to update and improve

our facilities, so they continue to be a welcoming environment for all who enter. We want to have programs which share our gifts and reach out to those in our neighborhood who are in need as well as our parishioners.

We hope for more involvement and activity from those worshipping with us on Sunday. We want to help our parishioners and visitors grow in their relationship with Jesus; to become more of the person God intended for them.

Encouraging them to become more engaged and compassionate; to want to be more engaged with our community. We dream of the return of a vibrant youth group where we can make a difference in the spiritual formation of our future leaders.

Finally, we pray for a rector who will join us in this journey and help us discern which dreams God is calling us to fulfill. Our hope for our new rector is a spiritual leader who will guide us and help us grow, both as individuals and as a church.



## ***What we seek in our next rector . . .***

The members of St. Matthew's recognize we have been blessed with two long-serving spiritual leaders over fifty-eight years. We are excited to begin this next phase of our journey. We are looking for a rector who will come alongside lay leadership to renew, support, challenge and grow with the congregation – someone spiritual and prayerful, inclusive, compassionate, and fun, with engaging preaching skills.

Specifically, we seek a rector who:

- ♦ Will emphasize the spiritual growth of members.
- ♦ Is a compelling, energetic preacher who can relate the Gospel to our daily lives.
- ♦ Will develop and encourage formation for children and youth.
- ♦ Will equip and involve laity in the planning and leadership of church ministries.
- ♦ Will provide pastoral care that includes visiting the sick, bereaved, and homebound.
- ♦ Is actively involved and visible in the community beyond the church.

Our hope is to grow with someone who is nurturing, energetic, and excited to shepherd us into the future.

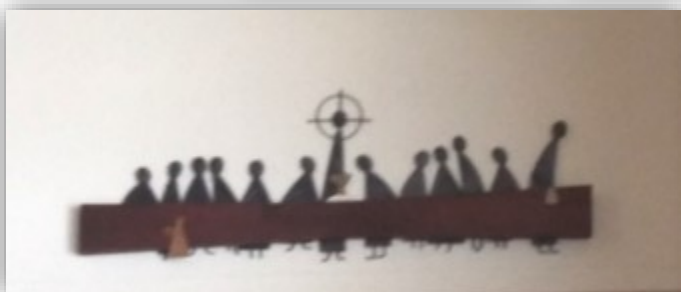


50th Anniversary Group Photo

## Our Parish Family in Photos



*"Saint Matthew's is a warm and friendly congregation, and it will always have a very special place in my life and in my heart."*







*"Almost from the first service I attended at St. Matthew's I was aware of being surrounded by caring, considerate, and friendly people who soon added a new dimension to my life. For spiritual and daily inspiration I need only to look around and see the St. Matthew's members that continue to embrace the fullness of life while soldiering through all kinds of life changing events."*

