

Dear Grace...

As the Christmas season ends, and Epiphany begins, may our hearts and minds be open to all the ways God manifests Himself to us.

Whether it be through a changed heart, a new beginning to a relationship, or the simple acknowledgement of His presence through health and peace; wherever you find yourself, may you respond to Christ in faith with fervor and joy in his showings to you.



A little about Epiphany...

Epiphany is the manifestation of Christ to the peoples of the earth. The winter solstice was kept on Jan. 6 at some places during the first centuries of the Christian Era. In opposition to pagan festivals, Christians chose this day to celebrate the various manifestations, or "epiphanies," of Jesus' divinity.

These showings of his divinity included his birth, the coming of the Magi, his baptism, and the Wedding at Cana where he miraculously changed water into wine. The day was called "The Feast of Lights." Celebration of the Son of God replaced celebration of the sun. Baptisms were done, and a season of preparation was instituted. It was later called Advent.

The solstice was kept on Dec. 25 by the fourth century. Jesus' birth was celebrated on this day in both eastern and western churches. The western church commemorated the coming of the Magi on Jan. 6. The eastern church continued to celebrate the Baptism of our Lord and the Wedding at Cana on Jan. 6. In the east the day was called "Theophany" (manifestation of God).

The season of Epiphany is anywhere from four to nine weeks, from the Feast of the Epiphany (Jan. 6) through the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday. The length of the season varies according to the date of Easter. The gospel stories of this season describe various events that manifest the divinity of Jesus. The coming of the Magi is celebrated on the Epiphany. The Baptism of our Lord is observed on the Sunday after Epiphany. The gospels for the other Sundays of the Epiphany season describe the wedding at Cana, the calling of the disciples, and various miracles and teachings of Jesus.

The Last Sunday after the Epiphany is always devoted to the Transfiguration. Jesus' identity as the Son of God is dramatically revealed in the Transfiguration gospel, as well as the gospel of the baptism of Christ.

Faithfully and blessed Epiphany,
Suzanne+

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Staff

Priest in Charge

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Children & Youth Minister

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Organist & Music Director

Paul Humphrey
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Outreach Ministry Coordinator

Ed Carrette
edcarrette@gracechurchalvin.org

Office Volunteers

Monday: Cheri Thompson
Tuesday: Sherry Campbell
Wednesday: Jolene Guilmet
Charli Merchant
Thursday: Julie McAlister
Friday: Chris Lo



One God – One Family – One Table

Vision

Grace Episcopal Church seeks to deepen relationships with God, bring individuals together into a family that builds up one another in love and support, and actively serve our neighbors and community.

Mission

In this family of faith God brings together individuals in all stages of their spiritual life to form an inclusive family. As a family, we encourage growth in relationships with God, others, ourselves, and the creation, in that we:

- ◆ Practice invitation to God's table,
- ◆ Welcome and incorporate those who come,
- ◆ Work together to worship the Lord in powerful liturgy,
- ◆ Challenge, encourage and teach one another, and
- ◆ Build one another up for ministry in and beyond the church.

Remind Me

To receive *free*, quick communications from Suzanne via text messaging regarding important events and happenings at Grace, contact the church office to add your cell phone number to the "Remind" app list. ❖

Volunteer Ministries

Altar Guild Director

Janice Bell: jsbell_7@hotmail.com

Fellowship & Pastoral Care Council

Mary Smith: mebsmith@comcast.net

Lay Ministry Scheduler

Vicki Ennis: 281-585-4660
vrennis@att.net

Liturgy & Worship Council

Janice Bell: jsbell_7@hotmail.com

Media & Communications Council

Donna Tate: donna.s.tate@att.net
Jo Nell Parker:
jnparkerkw@hotmail.com

Vestry

Sherry Campbell, Senior Warden
scampbell52@gmail.com

Anna Arendell, Junior Warden
anamerican1@yahoo.com

Jim Callan
callanjim@comcast.net

Tom Clark
tdplclark1@sbcglobal.net

Jolene Guilmet
jolene.guilmet@gmail.com

Glennie Hefner
glenniehefner@me.com

Leonel Ortiz
lot73@icloud.com

Donna Tate
donna.s.tate@att.net

Jim Thompson
jet@icee.org

Vestry Notes

By Sherry Campbell, Senior Warden

Vestry agenda items at the last meeting included:

- ◆ Three new individuals have been set up as authorized representatives for the Edward Jones accounts (Abiding Memorial & Herrington);
- ◆ Activities are underway to set up new authorized representatives for the Merrill Lynch account (Verna Browning);
- ◆ Christmas bonuses for church staff were approved;
- ◆ Plans for the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper set for Feb 25 were discussed;
- ◆ Praise and thanks was given to the Boy Scouts for spreading the delivered mulch on the playground; this saved the church the expense of having to hire someone to do the work;
- ◆ Review of the Dec 9 Alvin Walk a Mile event was given by Rev. Suzanne+; approximately 300 people attended Grace's presentation as the second church on the walk;
- ◆ On Dec 12 100 Christmas shoeboxes were delivered to the homeless veterans at the DeGeorge Hotel in downtown Houston; in addition, sandwiches, chips and drinks from Kroger's were shared with the vets; thanks to "Joseph", Kroger store manager, for making this extra gift possible;
- ◆ Rev. Suzanne+ reviewed candidates and their respective qualifications for open positions on the vestry and for the February Diocesan conference;
- ◆ Expected completion of the 2017 financial audit has been pushed to the end of January 2020;
- ◆ Rev. Suzanne+ reviewed the current status of the diocesan grant and plans for participation in the grant by Grace.

More news next month—check back with us for the latest Grace Episcopal Church scoop! ❖



Vestry members, church staff, and office volunteers had a great time at Jana & Jim Callan's house. Party participants included (front row) Sherry Campbell, Charli Merchant, Anna Arrendell, Mary Smith, Karen Cruze, Janice Bell, Jana Callan, Rev. Suzanne+, Jo Nell Parker, and Linda Carrette. (Back row) Chris Lo, Ed Carrette, Jim Callan, Jolene Guilmet, Jeremy Guilmet, Jim Thompson, Scott Vinson, Leonel Ortiz, Wayne Bell, Vicki Havenar, and Randy Smith.

Thanks & Info From Grace Guild

By Vicki Ennis

Thanks to everyone who participated in our De George Christmas event. It is wonderful to be able to do something to show appreciation, even in a small way, for our veterans. Since we've done this for a long time, they and the De George staff know that Grace Church is coming at Christmas and again in the spring when we deliver bags and boxes – a carload – of food. We are warmly received!

Thanks, too, to everyone who bought raffle tickets for our lovely Opal Anderson quilt! Congratulations to Susie Credeur, who purchased the winning ticket! Somebody said: it's fun to see somebody that excited! It was!

Following the drawing, I was asked what we do with our money. The quilt raffle is our only fund

raiser, so we don't really have a lot! However, we always do both De George events, making up Christmas boxes and food for a month for 100 when donations fall short. And we also always adopt a family at Christmas. We do other things as needs arise: we have purchased oil for lamps for the Altar Guild, donated over the years to the priest's discretionary fund, and more. This year, we donated \$200 to our police dept.'s Victim Assistance Program.

We meet the third Thursday of the month at 10 o'clock in the admin building. All women of the church are invited to attend. On our church calendar, you may see something called Women's Guild listed. Don't know who or what that is. We are Grace Guild - been around a long time! ❖

January Priest Challenge

Every Sunday in January, Rev. Suzanne challenges each person to bring non-perishable food items to be given to the veterans at DeGeorge at Union Station. ❖

Single Women at Grace (SWAG)

The SWAG meeting will be January 6 at 6pm in the church office kitchen.

The SWAG game night will be January 17th at 5:30 pm at Teddy Rideout's home. More details to come. ❖

Lent 2020

Signs of Life - *Why Church Matters*. Our Lent 2020 offering, takes up the symbols at the heart of Christian worship, revealing how they are full of meaning to deepen our life with God. Each week in Lent we will explore a fresh theme – Light, Water, Food, Shelter, Community – drawing from Scripture, Christian tradition, and worship. In order to bring a deeper meaning to these themes as they relate to your own life, we will be tying an activity to each theme. A couple of the activities I am especially looking forward to are the Water and Community activities. In conjunction with the Water theme, we will be hosting a Laundry Love at a local Alvin laundromat, coming alongside people who are struggling financially by assisting them with their laundry. We hope to make this an ongoing outreach for Grace. Our Community activity will be a garage sale led by our youth to raise money for a yet to be designated children’s hospital. More to come on all of this in the days and weeks ahead. ❖

Shop at Amazon?

Here is an easy way to support Grace Episcopal Church Alvin using Amazon Smile:

Here's how to shop AmazonSmile:

1. Visit smile.amazon.com
2. Sign in with your Amazon.com credentials
3. Search for “Grace Episcopal Church Alvin”
4. Select “Grace Episcopal Church Alvin”
5. Start shopping!

Add a bookmark for smile.amazon.com to make it even easier to return and start your shopping at AmazonSmile—when shopping on Amazon, always go through smile.amazon.com ❖

Grief Support Group

Do you need help working through the loss of a loved one?

Come meet new friends with similar needs at the Grief Support Group at All Saints’ Episcopal Church, 10416 Highway 6, Hitchcock, Tx, 77563 to work through your grief with community support and understanding.

Meetings are held monthly at 3:00 pm, the second Sunday of each month. For more information, contact Mary Jean Carlisle, Grief Support Coordinator at 409-925-2544. ❖

EpiscoGALS Get Together

EpiscoGALS January event will be Saturday, Jan. 18, at 5:30 pm at Amici’s restaurant in Friendswood, 709 W. Parkwood Ave. All women welcome! ❖

Come Thou Long Expected Jesus

By Christopher Lo

“Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” – Matthew 2:2

On December 7, 2019, I saw Opera in the Heights’ production of “Amahl and the Night Visitor” by Gian Carlo Menotti (1911-2007). In this Historical Fiction narrative, the synopsis’ central character, Amahl, a disabled boy who walks with a crutch, encounters Three Kings – Melchior, Kasper and Balthazar. At the end of this opera, Amahl joins the Three Kings in their sojourn. Amahl declared that along with the Kings’ gift of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh, he would offer his crutch to the Christ Child. Immediately, Amahl’s paralysis was cured.

In our church calendar, we celebrate the Epiphany on January 6. This feast commemorates the visit of the Magi to the Christ Child, and thus Jesus’ physical manifestation to the Gentiles. According to the Roman soldier and historian Ammianus Marcellinus, the earliest reference to Epiphany as a Christian feast was in A.D. 361.

From October 7-9, 2019, representatives from The Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) met at the Transfiguration Spirituality Center in Glendale, Ohio, for the Third Round of Bilateral Dialogues (2019-2024). The aim of these dialogues is encouraging closer relationships between congregations of both denominations.

The Dialogue representatives met with the pastoral leadership of the Indian Hill Church, a 72-year old federated Presbyterian and Episcopal congregation, two distinct ecclesial traditions living as one community with shared leadership, finances, governance, and worship. Members listened as clergy leaders shared both the joys and challenges of this ecumenical “experiment.”

On the final day, Dialogue representatives reviewed shared Presbyterian and Episcopal ministries, which include campus ministries, congregations, hospitals,

retirement communities, creation care work, and food pantries. The Bilateral Dialogue will meet again from February 17-19, 2020, hosted by the Presbyterian delegation. May the Star which brought the Magi to the Christ Child, bring our church leaders into a deeper encounter of God’s will.

On November 30, 2019, the Houston Chronicle printed an article by Sarah Kaplan entitled “Alien comet soars through solar system.” This celestial object, now named 2I/Borisov, entered our solar system from the direction of the constellation Cassiopeia. Scientists do not yet know the origin of Borisov or how long it has flown through the desolation of interstellar space. Given its current speed, scientists estimate that it has traveled for millions, if not billions of years. On December 8, 2019, it made its nearest approach to Earth.

“O God, by the leading of a star you manifested your only Son to the Peoples of the earth: Lead us, who know you now by faith, to your presence, where we may see your glory face to face; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.”



Praying together on April 10, 2019, the Most Reverend Justin Welby, the Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury; Pope Francis; the Very Reverend Dr. John Chalmers, former Moderator of the Church of Scotland (Presbyterian); at Domus Sanctae Marthae (St. Martha’s House) in the Vatican.

Outreach News

By Ed Carrette

In 2018, the people of Grace, recognizing that hunger was touching our neighbors, co-workers and friends in our community, began a small initiative we called the Blessings Box which the parishioners and others in the community filled with donated non-perishable food items for those people in need to retrieve around the clock. Try as we might, we couldn't seem to keep it filled. So in late 2019, we partnered with Manvel Community Outreach to become a site for a Houston Food Bank Mobile Food Pantry. Our first pantry served 97 families with much needed fresh produce and food items. Our second pantry served 110 on a cold and rainy Friday afternoon. Beginning in January 2020, we will be hosting these mobile pantries on a weekly basis, every Thursday at 10:00 am.

Our volunteers recognized that we had a "captive audience" of mainly women, primarily low-income, and that surely we could do more for them while they were with us. That is when they approached me with the idea of the Period Initiative - to provide hygiene products, mainly period supplies, to these women and girls, in addition to the

food they were already picking up. Through their research, they learned that on a national level, 1 In 5 low income women have reported missing work, school, or similar events due to lack of access to period supplies. Our volunteers believe this number must be significantly higher considering the socio-economic profile of Alvin and surrounding community, including the number of Title 1 schools in the area.

In order to serve as seed money and incubate this Period Initiative as an ongoing outreach, we have applied for an Episcopal Church Women ECW Outreach Grant in the amount of \$2,013.60. Once established, the inventory of these products will be replenished through donations from the people of Grace, other churches and the community in Alvin, as well as taking advantage of well established national organizations such as the Alliance for Period Supplies which allow for the purchase of low-cost, bulk period supplies. The ECW Board meets on January 24 to review the applications and decide. Please keep this initiative in your prayers. ❖

Lynda Greene and staff of the DeGeorge getting ready to serve up some goodies.



Making the trip down to the DeGeorge on December 17, Reverend Suzanne and Ed Carrette.



Mobile Food Pantry

Volunteers are needed every Thursday morning in January beginning at 8:30 am to set up for the mobile pantry, provide hospitality and registration assistance, distribute fresh produce, and tear-down upon

conclusion. Please contact me by text, phone or email, if you would like to volunteer. This is intended to be a community event, so feel free to invite neighbors and friends to join us. ❖

Days for Girls

By Rachel Vrubel

On November 2nd I got the opportunity to meet a wonderful group of people and help with the “Days for Girls” project. We met at Good Shepherd Episcopal Church, Friendswood where we constructed dozens and dozens of reusable hygiene products for girls in Central America. It was wonderful to be surrounded by such a warm and welcoming group of people.

Days for Girls is committed to supporting a girl throughout her entire lifecycle, from providing her with a DfG Kit, to teaching her health education, to offering training for her when she grows older,

so that she can produce DfG Kits and support hygiene needs in her community. Today, Days for Girls has reached more than **one million** women and girls in **125+ countries** with DfG Kits and menstrual health education. This translates into over 115 million days of dignity, health, and opportunity!

If you missed out on this event don't worry, there will be dates coming in January and February. No sewing skills are required. Please contact Rachel Vrubel for more information: Rachel@vrubel.net ❖

Grace eGiving

Why eGiving?

eGiving is an easy and secure way to make contributions. It helps the church by reducing workload on the staff. And you can set recurring donations, so even if you can't attend, you can still make a gift, which provides the church financial stability.

GivePlus Text:

Text **281-603-9281**, with the amount you want to donate, to make one-time or recurring contributions.

Online Giving:

Visit gracechurchalvin.org/giving to set up and manage your one-time and recurring gifts.

Scan To Give



For more information, please visit the church office or call **281-331-5657**.

January

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 9:30 am Morning Prayer 6:00 pm Prayer & Meditation Group 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	2 9:30 am Morning Prayer 10:00 am to 1:00 pm <i>Mobile Food Pantry</i>	3 9:30 am Morning Prayer	4 9:00 am to 2:00 pm <i>Stewardship Cohort Meeting</i>
5 8:00 am Holy Eucharist (I) 9:00 am Coffee Hour 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Holy Eucharist (II)	6 EPIPHANY 6:00 pm <i>SWAG Meeting</i>	7 11:00 am Priest's Bible Study 7:00 BSA 7:30 pm ALANON	8 9:30 am Morning Prayer 6:00 pm Prayer & Meditation Group 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	9 9:30 am Morning Prayer 10:00 am to 1:00 pm <i>Mobile Food Pantry</i>	10 9:30 am Morning Prayer	11
12 8:00 am Holy Eucharist (I) 9:00 am Coffee Hour 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Holy Eucharist (II) 3:00 pm Grief Support All Saints' Episcopal	13	14 11:00 am Priest's Bible Study 7:00 pm BSA 7:30 pm ALANON	15 9:30 am Morning Prayer 6:00 pm Prayer & Meditation Group 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	16 9:30 am Morning Prayer 10:00 am Women's Guild 10:00 am to 1:00 pm <i>Mobile Food Pantry</i>	17 9:30 am Morning Prayer 5:30 pm <i>SWAG Game Night</i>	18
19 8:00 am Holy Eucharist (I) 9:00 am Coffee Hour 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Holy Eucharist (II)	20	21 11:00 am Priest's Bible Study 7:00 pm BSA 7:00 pm Vestry Meeting 7:30 pm ALANON	22 9:30 am Morning Prayer 6:00 pm Prayer & Meditation Group 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	23 9:30 am Morning Prayer 10:00 am to 1:00 pm <i>Mobile Food Pantry</i>	24 9:30 am Morning Prayer	25
26 8:00 am Holy Eucharist (I) 9:00 am Coffee Hour 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Holy Eucharist (II)	27	28 11:00 am Priest's Bible Study 7:00 pm BSA 7:30 pm ALANON	29 6:00 pm Prayer & Meditation Group 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	30 9:30 am Morning Prayer 10:00 am to 1:00 pm <i>Mobile Food Pantry</i>	31 9:30 am Morning Prayer	



***Let us pray
for the Church
and for the world.***

Grant, Almighty God, that all who confess your name may be united in your truth, live together in your love and reveal your glory to the world.

Archbishop of Canterbury, The Most Reverend Justin Welby
Presiding Bishop, The Most Reverend Michael B. Curry
Diocesan Bishop, The Right Reverend C. Andrew Doyle
Assistant Bishop, The Right Reverend Hector Monterroso
Bishop Suffragan, The Right Reverend Kai Ryan
Bishop Suffragan, The Right Reverend Jeff Fisher
Grace Priest In Charge, The Reverend Suzanne Smith
Grace Music Director and Organist, Paul Humphrey
Grace Outreach Ministry Coordinator, Ed Carrette
Grace Children Minister, Aubrey Smith

Bless all whose lives are closely linked with ours and grant that we may serve Christ in them and love one another as he loves us.

Altar Guild, Bible Studies, Children's and Youth Ministry, Christian Education, Cursillo, Community Outreach, Grace Guild, KAIROS Prison Ministry, Lay Ministers, Music Ministry, Office Volunteers, Outreach Ministry Coordinator, Vestry, and all others serving you.

Keep our college students safe in their journey.

Ashton Arendell, Louisiana State University
James Beasley, Texas A & M University
Catherine Patton, North Carolina State University
Bailey Anne Hector, University of Houston
Perry Hector, University of Texas, Austin (currently studying abroad at Corvinus University, Budapest, Hungary)

Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit; give them courage and hope in their troubles, and bring them the joy of your salvation.

Barbara Adkison
Demi Anderson
Andrew Armstrong
Susan Armstrong
Windy Arnold
Kimber Ballard
Margaret Barrier
Sandra & Charles Batty
Derrick Beaver
Louis Bell
Patricia Bell
Riley Bianchi
Stacey Bitner
Sydney & Jeff Bladon
Allison Blevins
Morris Browne
Luke Bryan
Charles Buckelew
Dianne Buckelew
Brenda Buelow
Nathan Buzbee
Becky Carbone
Karen Carmona
Layton Caruthers

Jackie Childers
Nicole Coronado
Wanda Craig
Ed Crook
Wilbur Dunten
Mike & Martha D.
Kyle & Eddie Dudley
Anna-Grace Duffy
Lauren & Daniel Duffy
Chris & Sarah Duplechin
Flossie Elkins
Terri Elkins
Diane Ellis
Paula Ellis
Jay & Ruthie Fitch
Luci M. Fuller
Jacob Garcia
Cynthia Gardner
Elizabeth Gass' family
Aaron Gideon
Jerrie Grantham
Mitchell Hardee
Bill Harris
Geri Hawkins

Faithfully Departed: We commend to your mercy, O Lord, your servant Elmer Lee, that your will for him may be fulfilled; and we pray that he may rest with all your saints in your eternal kingdom.

Guide and protect our First Responders.

Whatever you ask for in prayer with faith, you will receive. *Matthew 21:22*



Protect and guide all who serve in the military.

Mickey Alcantara (USMC)
Nicholas Armstrong
Scott Barrier (USAF)
Scott Bean
Robert Berger (USN)
Jeremiah Bruner (USA)
Jason Bryan
Chase Capehart
Taylor Cameron (USN)
Robert Carnie (USN)
Ryan Cross
Clayton Crouch
David Dezso
Glen Dockal (USA)
Raymond Dugan (USN)
Thomas Economidis (USN)
Mitchell Goodnight
Matt Heffner (USN)
David Hefner (USA)

Lance Henderson
Nathan Hines (USN)
Ben Meyer (USCG)
Adam Miller
Sam Neumann (USN)
Shon O'Connor
Tara Parker
Chad Perry (USAF)
Daniel Popham (N. Guard)
Ryan Popham (N. Guard)
Jonathan Prater
Manuel Rodriguez
Josh Sager (USAF)
A. J. Soto (USA)
Russell Stewart (USAF)
John Swanson
William Thompson
Ray Turner
Vincent Wilson (USA)

Phil Henry
Roger Ivey
Dalton Jacques
Austin Kessinger
Carolyn Lacy & Family
Bryan Lamb
Danice Laevelle-Cox
Kenneth Lee
Ray Lindemann & Family
Ben Lockett
Courtney McAlister
Lois Marshall
Charli Merchant
Alice Megna
Mildred Morris
Donald Nephew & family
Jim Oliver
Barbara Passmore
Jim & Elizabeth Reimer
Curtis Resta
Barbara Richardson
Angela Rodriquez
Daniel Rodriquez
Elena Rodriquez

Chad Rogers
Joe Rossano
Josh Sager
Marilyn Sheldon
Casey, Trent & Trinity Smith
Marilyn Smyth
The Steiner Family
Brooke Stephenson
Shirley Stockton
Mark Streetman
Joyce Stroup
Mary T. Scarlett Tucker
Carolyn Urech
Fran Van Winkle
Bonnie Weber
Azra Kay Weidner
Curtis Weidner
Jim Weidner
Katherine Welch
Tom Williams
Susie Wilcox
Sandra Willis
Paula Wirth



GRACE
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

200 W. Lang St.
Mail & Office @ 112 W. Lang St.
Alvin, TX 77511-2396

One God - One Family - One Table

Services

Sunday Worship

8am Rite I

9:30 am Children's Sunday School

10:30 am Rite II

Morning Prayer 9:30 am

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

GRACE
EPISCOPAL CHURCH



Upcoming Events

- ◆ Mobile Food Pantry—Jan 2, 9, 16, 23, & 30;
10:00 am to 1:00 pm
- ◆ SWAG Meeting—Jan 6; 6:00 pm
- ◆ SWAG Game Night—Jan 17; 5:30 pm
- ◆ Boy Scout Bistro—Feb 15; 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm

Member of:

- ◆ Episcopal Diocese of Texas: epicenter.org
- ◆ National Episcopal Church: episcopalchurch.org
- ◆ Worldwide Anglican Communion: anglicancommunion.org
- ◆ Alvin-Manvel Chamber of Commerce: alvinmanvelchamber.com