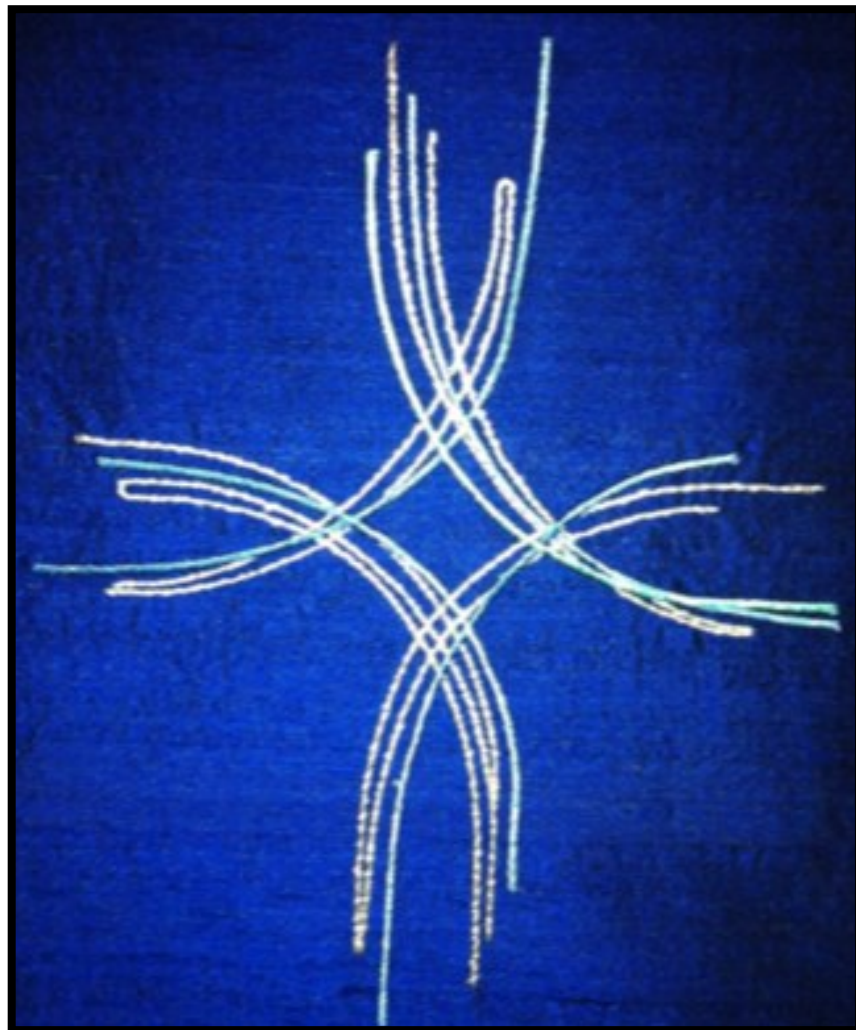


Cross-Finder

St. Helena's Episcopal Church & School

November 2022

Prepare Ye The Way....



From The Rector

Patience seems to be a rare virtue these days. We do not like to “hurry up and wait.” We can order from Amazon and have a package delivered the same day. We can “google” any subject, or ask “Alexa” or “Siri,” and receive an instant answer to almost any question. We can send text messages and get immediate responses from our friends and family members. Google maps can instantly tell us exactly how long it will take to drive from point A to point B, and even give us traffic updates. In our high-tech, high-speed, multi-tasking, short soundbite, same-day-delivery, instant gratification culture, we rarely are required to exercise patience. ‘

This is why we need the season of Advent.

The season of Advent is a gift from the Church to all of us who live fast-paced lives. This 4-week season which begins Sunday, November 27, forces us to slow down, refocus, and practice a little patience, as we light a purple candle each week on our Advent wreath, or open the next door on our Advent calendar, or sing the next verse of O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.



None of our high-tech gadgets or phone apps can speed up this Advent countdown. One day at a time, we count with growing expectation the days until we celebrate the birth of our Savior. In Advent we hear John the Baptist exhorting us to get ready and prepare the way. For many of us getting ready means slowing down, temporarily turning off gadgets, and waiting patiently for a word from the Lord. **Each day in Advent our expectation grows as we eagerly anticipate celebrating once again that God loves us so much, God came among us as one of us – born in Bethlehem of Judea and laid in a manger: Jesus, the Son of God.**

I pray that this year we will use the gift of Advent that the Church gives us. Plan to be here on Sundays in Advent to hear God’s call to us through the prophets. Come to our Advent wreath-making event so you can patiently keep the season of Advent in your home. Invite someone you know to come to Walk through Bethlehem, or to Lessons & Carols. Hum a few bars of “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel,” or, “On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry...” Practice a little patience so that you may prepare your heart to be filled with joy this Christmas.

Advent blessings,

David ✝

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December/January Calendar at a Glance

Regular services: Wednesdays at 10am and Sundays at 7:45am (HS), 9:00am (WH) and 11:00am (HS). Sunday School at 10:10am.
 Wednesday afterschool : for 1st-5th at 4pm CMC and middle school in YH. 5:30p St. H Singers in PH. 6pm High School in YH.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
AW - Annex West on Rock St CMC - Children's Ministry Center on Rock St; GR - Great Room 2nd floor WH; GH - Gathering Haus behind office; HS - History Sanctuary Building on Rock Street; PH - Parish Hall is in the basement of HS; WH - Wendler Hall on Johns Street; YH - Youth House on Rock Street; Note: Calendar is subject to changes.						
				Dec 1 7pm Young & Restless Christmas Party	Dec 2	Dec 3 8-1pm Help build Bethlehem, St. Helena's. 5 pm Middle School Christmas party
Dec 4 Regular Sunday Services (see schedule above the calendar)	Dec 5	Dec 6 6-7:30pm Bethlehem production	Dec 7 6-7:30pm Bethlehem production	Dec 8	Dec 9 11:30am Moms in Prayer, GH	Dec 10 5:30pm Young Families Christmas Party, @Groenhuyzen's
Dec 11 Regular Sunday Services YAMS Christmas Baking party, 31 Walnut Grove	Dec 12 Art Haus Party, PH	Dec 13	Dec 14 4pm Kingdom Kids/Rock Solid Christmas Party	Dec 15 Sr. Fellowship Lunch, Camp Verde	Dec 16	Dec 17 High School Christmas Party
Dec 18 Regular Sunday Services	Dec 19	Dec 20	Dec 21	Dec 22	Dec 23	Dec 24 Christmas Eve Services 4pm GR /7pm HS / 9pm HS
Dec 25 10am Service HS Nursery closed	Dec 26 Church office closed	Dec 27 Church office closed	Dec 28	Dec 29	Dec 30	Dec 31
Jan 1 10 am service only HS Nursery closed	Jan 2 Office closed	Jan 3	Jan 4	Jan 5 7:30am Men's Bible Study AW Young & Restless TBD	Jan 6	Jan 7
Jan 8	Jan 9	Jan 10	Jan 11 Youth programs resume. Women's Bible Study PH 11am and 6pm	Jan 12 7:30am Men's Bible Study AW	Jan 13	Jan 14
Jan 15 Young Families Lunch YAMs Bible Study after church	Jan 16 Office closed for MLK Day	Jan 17	Jan 18 11am & 6pm in PH Women's Bible Study	Jan 19 7:30am Men's Bible Study AW	Jan 20	Jan 21 DWTX Youth Ministry Summit
Jan 22 7:45 Service HS 10:00 Service GR 11:30 Annual meeting GR	Jan 23 1:00 pm Art Haus PH	Jan 24	Jan 25 Installation of Father Brian at St. Paul's	Jan 26 7:30am Men's Bible Study AW	Jan 27	Jan 28
Jan 29 Sunday School resumes	Jan 30	Jan 31 Ukuladies				

Welcoming Members to St. Helena's

On November 9, Bishop Reed officially baptized, confirmed, received, and reaffirmed these new church members.



Confirmations

Richard Milliron
Lauren Stoner
Lillian Hagerty
Jeanne Leslie
Steve Drukker
Nancye Drukker
Charles Roberts
Rachel White
Stephen Westover
Zane Sampson



Reaffirmations

Donald Andrews
Sandi Andrews
John Schmidt
Jacqueline Schmidt
Lynne Milliron

Receptions

Kenneth Maxymof
Richard Hagerty
Mary Ann Simmons
Lila Reed



Great is Thy Faithfulness!

Pledge Update from Father David

Once each year, each household in St. Helena's Parish Family is invited to say their prayers, give thanks to God for God's abundant blessings, and return to God a portion of those blessings in the form of a financial pledge to support God's work at St. Helena's Church in the upcoming year. **These pledges are outward and visible signs of our lives and labors offered to the Lord.**

This year, St. Helena's annual Pledge Sunday was held on October 16. Many thanks to the YAMS (Young Adult Ministry) for cooking and serving breakfast on Pledge Sunday! Over 120 households made their pledge offering on Pledge Sunday. Since October 16, over 50 more households have submitted and offered their pledge.

As of November 15, St. Helena's has received **180 pledges which total \$1,078,211!

This is an outstanding response and surpasses last year's total pledging. Thank you to each and every household who has made their pledge for 2023.

Thank you for your great faithfulness! It is amazing what God can do at St. Helena's when we all work together.

There are many households who have not yet made a pledge for 2023. The Vestry is beginning to follow up to invite households who have not made a pledge to make one as soon as possible. The Rector and Vestry encourage every household to participate in the work God has given St. Helena's to do. If you have never made a pledge before, we encourage you to take a small step of faith and make a commitment this year. Everyone can do something. Every pledge makes a difference in St. Helena's ministry and mission. If you forgot to turn in your card, or misplaced it, we understand. The easiest way to make a pledge is on-line at St. Helena's website: www.sthelenas.net. Click on the yellow pledge button at the top of the page.

If you have questions or concerns about pledging feel free to contact rector@sthelenas.net or (830) 249-3228.



Saying Goodbye to Father Brian



With joy and tears this past Sunday we sent Father Brian and Alayna down the road to St. Paul's, San Antonio for the next stage in their ministry. In a heartfelt sermon, Father Brian shared all this congregation has taught him about being a priest, being beloved,...and returning that love. The Men of St. Helena's cooked a hearty breakfast served after the 7:45 and 9am services. A presentation of gifts in the Parish Hall brought more shows of our appreciation of Father Brian and his ministry as did the beautiful anthem sung by the St. Helena's Singers at the 11am service.



Expectations by Mother Jamie

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven (Ecc 3:1). The time has come for Advent, a season of great expectations. We've spent far too long putting things off, holding back dreams, and placing ourselves behind the boundaries of Covid. All of it was necessary to keep us and others healthy. We needed to hold back. We needed to be in a liminal time of waiting. But, the time has come to dream again, to envision what could be. It is time to think of possibilities and opportunities with great expectations. The season of Advent gives us that time.

I can remember, as a young child, the great expectations surrounding Thanksgiving at Grandma and Grandpa Partney's house. The five hour drive to the small, West Texas town of McCamey always provided plenty of time to dream about what Thanksgiving Day would be like. Grandma Partney was a riotous Dallas Cowboys football fan and a righteous good cook. Thanksgiving for me was about the sound of the Cowboys playing football and the smell of fresh-baked, tender yeast rolls wafting through the house. The morning of Thanksgiving, I would sit by Grandma in the kitchen and watch her knead the goeey, glutenous mess of sticky bread dough that would become the anticipated fresh baked rolls. Every year, as we waited for the dough to rise and form, she would remind me that the mess would become something beautiful. Every year, I waited all day with great anticipation for those yeast rolls. And every year, they were worth it.

I also remember the great anticipation of my children on Christmas morning. Little toddlers, with their pudgy little feet dancing up and down, waiting for me to call them to see the Christmas tree. Cinnamon rolls baking in the oven, made from the same recipe as Grandma Partney's fresh baked yeast rolls with a little cinnamon and sugar added for the festive occasion of Christmas. Christmas morning was shiny smiles, giddy giggles of glee, and tapping toes of toddlers with great expectations, hoping for a visit from Saint Nick.

Memories of seasons filled with great expectations and anticipation can provide fuel for a fire into our future. As adults, we too can await, with great anticipation and great expectation, the longings of our hearts. What is it that you hope for? What is it that you dream about for yourself, your friends, and your family? What are the opportunities and invitations placed before you for the coming year? It is time to dream, and plan, and play again, like children awaiting Christmas morning.

With great expectation, we wait for all the gifts God has for us. Gifts of connections with people. Gifts of new life in our families and in our parish. Gifts of revelation, insight, and vision. The gift of Heaven breaking into the earth, the Word made flesh, brought to us in the form of a baby named Jesus. This Advent, as in every season of Advent, we await the birth of Christ.

As we await the celebration of the birth of Christ, may we spend time in great anticipation and expectation dreaming of possibilities and envisioning all of the opportunities God is inviting us into. Let us tap our own twinkle toes and giggle with glee as we await the gifts of God around the bend ahead. Let us knead the messy dough of our lives and wait for God to rise within us, forming us into the bread of life for God's glory. The time has come for an Advent filled with great expectations.

The Hands of God

Mother Jamie has been working with a new group of Lay Eucharistic Visitors. They are ready to do visits and are excited to come see you. If you are not able to attend worship and would like to receive communion, email Mother Jamie at Jamie@sthelenas.net. If you have other pastoral care needs, please call the church office or email Jamie@sthelenas.net.

What is ahead for the Women of St. Helena's:
Women's Wednesday Bible Study
January 11, 11:00am or 6:00pm in the Parish Hall

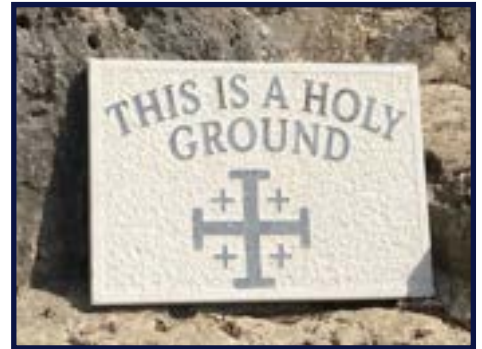
SAVE THE DATE - May 5-7, 2023
"God Sees Me" Women's Retreat at Mustang Island
Conference Center

Artist: *Melissa Birdsong*

Reflections - Holy Land Pilgrimage

Father David led a group to Jerusalem this past month. Below, Sheri Clark shares her reflections on the trip. Father David is scheduling the next pilgrimage trip to leave the day after Thanksgiving, 2024.

If I had to come up with just one word to describe my experience on our recent Holy Land Pilgrimage it would be *inspirational*. Of all the traveling I have done, absolutely no destination comes close to the fulfillment of walking through the land of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Each day's itinerary led to new revelations as we took turns reading the Gospel at the Biblical locations where the events took place.



Our pilgrimage began in Jerusalem, then we continued on to Nazareth, stopping in Jericho along the way. We visited Bethlehem, and even had the chance to float in the Dead Sea - the lowest spot on Earth! **Every location makes the Bible come to life in new ways; spiritual truths are given the added validity of physical places in history.**

At the home of Mary, a plaque reads "The Word Became Flesh Here." We were thrilled to **drink from the well where Mary was visited by the Angel Gabriel** and was told she would give birth to our Savior.



I, along with many others, was moved to tears at the Rock of Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus prayed before He was arrested. While we were at the site where Peter denied Jesus three times, a rooster actually crowed. Walking up the worn steps to Calvary was truly incredible. **Celebrating the Eucharist at the Sea of Galilee and in Emmaus was deeply moving for us all. I could clearly envision Jesus blessing, breaking, and giving the bread to the apostles in these places.** Renewing our baptismal vows at the Jordan River was a remarkable spiritual moment that I will always treasure.

(Continued)

Reflections (continued)



Walking around the little town of Capernaum which overlooks the Sea of Galilee, we marveled at the ruins of the synagogue where Jesus taught and at Peter's home where Jesus healed the paralyzed man. We saw the location of the feeding of the 5,000. We spent quiet devotional time on the rocky shore of the Sea of Galilee. We walked the Palm Sunday Procession and walked the Stations of the Cross through the

narrow ancient stone streets of Old City Jerusalem. In Caesarea Philippi, Jesus asked the apostles "who do you say that I am?" among the backdrop of a mountain carved with shrines to all the many different false gods. Remnants of these worship sites carved in stone still remain today. **We were reminded that just as the apostles had to answer that question, so do we.**

Despite the absolute amazement that we all experienced throughout this journey, I would be remiss if I did not mention the current state of events in Israel. **As Christians we are called to stand up to injustice.** The sad truth is the current Israeli government is essentially violating the human rights of their non-Jewish citizens. People are being taxed but are not allowed to vote, utilities are being randomly shut off, and people are not free to move about the country and are separated from their families and loved ones. Land has been annexed and people are being forced to leave their homes where they have lived for generations. A massive segregation wall built by Israel looms over Bethlehem. Many of those being oppressed in this way are our Christian brothers and sisters. **We were reminded that the Holy Land also belongs to us - this is our heritage.**

So, if you feel God nudging you to take this journey, I emphatically encourage you to sign up for the next pilgrimage! I promise it will be an inspirational experience that will affirm your faith. And maybe you will even join in with the tradition of commemorating your pilgrimage with a Jerusalem Cross Tattoo!

Bethlehem in Boerne December 6 & 7

During the fall of 2008, St. Helena's church family embarked on a journey. We worked together to create a Christmas gift for our community. We envisioned an experience that would give people time to come and encounter with family and friends, a moment that would rekindle the source of all of the Christmas celebration. To remind everyone that there is a reason for the lights, the songs, and the gifts of our Christmas festivities.

**Our "Walk in Bethlehem" was born so that we could proclaim
the Good News of Jesus Christ!**



Come Be Part of Bethlehem 2022

Thousands of families journey to St. Helena's annually to see Bethlehem! Please join your church family by participating in the preparation of this gift to our community which depends on the help of more than 100 parishioners. Please email Dawn McLendon if you can help (dawn@sthelenas.net).

Here's how you can be involved.

- **Advertise the event.** Can you display Bethlehem posters at your workplace? Can you help us put posters up in local businesses? If so, we need you!
- **Help build our little town of Bethlehem, Saturday Dec. 3 from 8am-1pm.** We need helpers and gloves, drills, ladders. We also need people who can paint with a roller to repair some scenery.
- **Transport plants with a truck. Tuesday, Dec. 6,** pick up some plants from a local nursery to bring to church. **Thursday, Dec. 8,** return them to the nursery.
- **Join the prop committee to set up scenes. Tuesday, Dec. 6 from 9am-1pm.**
- **Be a tax collector or shepherd!** We need volunteers to play various role in our cast.
- **Help deconstruct Bethlehem, Dec. 10 from 8am-11am.**

PLEASE contact Dawn McLendon to join in all the fun! dawn@sthelenas.net



From Advent to Christmas



Please join us for a

St. Nicholas CELEBRATION

DEC 4TH 10AM-11AM

In the Parish Hall

Join us during the Sunday school hour to celebrate St. Nicholas. We will have crafts, games, traditional St. Nicholas Day treats, and a very special guest visitor!



Youth and Young Adult Christmas Celebrations

December 1st

Young and Restless Christmas Gathering, 7pm

December 3rd

Middle School Youth

in the Weihnachts Parade

Middle School Christmas Party, 5pm

December 6 and 7

A Walk in Bethlehem

December 10

Young Families Christmas Party, 5:30pm

December 14th

Kingdom Kids & Rock Solid Christmas Party, 4 pm

December 17th

High School Christmas Ugly Sweater Party,

Remember to RSVP if you will be attending
stefanie@sthelenas.net or dawn@sthelenas.net

if you will be attending.

Seniors Christmas Events



St. Helena's Christmas and New Year's Day Services

St. Helena's will celebrate the Nativity of our Lord with three services Christmas Eve and one service on Christmas Day. Below is the schedule of services.

Christmas is a great time of year to invite someone you know to come and worship with you.

Christmas Eve

4:00pm This Christmas service will be held in the Great Room of Wendler Hall. It will include Christmas music led by our 9:00am worship team, Children's Sermon, Adult Sermon, and Holy Communion. The Parish Nursery will be open for any who desire to use it.

7:00pm This Christmas service will be held in the Historic Sanctuary. It is a traditional service which includes Christmas music led by pipe organ, a harpist, and our traditional choir. The service includes a sermon, Holy Communion, and candlelight.

9:00pm This is the most traditional service of the evening and will be held in the Historic Sanctuary. It will include Christmas music led by pipe organ, choir, and harp. It will include chanting and candlelight, sermon and Holy Communion.

Christmas Day

10:00am Christmas Day is on a Sunday this year! We will have one Christmas Day Service at 10:00am in the Historic Sanctuary. This service will be a simple, spoken celebration of The Holy Eucharist with sermon. The nursery will not be open. Kids can wear their PJs.

New Year's Day

10:00am New Year's Day is on a Sunday this year! If you or someone in your family is interested in being baptized, this is a great day to do it and start 2023 off right!

Contact Father David Read at rector@sthelenas.net if you are interested in scheduling a baptism. This service will be held in the Historic Sanctuary and includes Holy Communion and sermon.



When Can You Wear PJs to Church?

Christmas morning 10 am

Note: The nursery is **not** open Christmas morning and January 1st



St. Helena's School Receives \$12,000 Grant



Thanks to a \$12,000 grant from the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA), a popular community sports court in downtown Boerne soon will have a roof to protect visitors from the scorching Texas sun and inclement weather. **St. Helena's Episcopal Church and School, site of the sports court and an adjacent playground, will provide the roof with help of the LCRA Community Development Partnership Program grant. The school contributed \$12,000 in matching funds for the project.**

Head of School Tiffany Jureczki said the concrete sports court will be covered with a metal roof atop a metal frame. "It will be like a pavilion," Jureczki said of the sports court, which has two basketball goals and is available to both Boerne residents and St. Helena's students and families at no charge. "We're so excited to put a roof over the court. Imagine playing basketball when the temperature is 100 degrees and there's no shade from the sun."

The basketball court is the only outdoor court inside the Boerne city limits that is available for free, and St. Helena's provides basketballs to those who need them, Jureczki said. "There are people out there on the sport court all day long," she said. "It's always open, and it gives children, teens and adults a safe place to play." Jureczki and St. Helena's rector, Rev. Dr. David Read, said the addition of a roof will make the court usable even during the hottest August days or in rainy weather.

"We are very excited to receive this grant," Jureczki said. "We have watched children, teens and adults play basketball and we've seen their sunburns as a result of their time on our court. Providing shade for the court makes it more desirable to the groups who love to use it."

St. Helena's Episcopal Church & School

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