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1 - AN INVITATION
Are you a **collaborative leader** who can help us discern a common vision, and reach out to the community around us?

Are you a **person of deep faith** who is called to be with us on our spiritual journey?

Are you drawn to the **new energy** and **new freedom** that are present at St. Stephen’s?

**Come talk with us.** We are open to your future, our future at St. Stephen’s, and the future that God is opening for us all.
2 - WELCOME TO ST. STEPHEN'S
St. Stephen’s is a vibrant, loving parish whose core values include a welcoming environment, inclusivity, as well as concern for others. Our strongest desire is to deepen our faith—both as individuals and as a congregation—and to share that faith with the community and the world through acts of love and service.

We are a residential parish located in a university town in an economically stable community. Our parishioners come from diverse denominational and doctrinal backgrounds, and we greatly treasure that diversity. We welcome all worshipers, from whatever tradition and wherever they are in their faith journey, and we strive to do so without prejudice.

Worship is the heart of our community life, and our worship is centered in the Eucharist. Our services are family-oriented with an emphasis on graceful liturgy and meaningful music. Grounded in this foundation of praise and prayer, the intergenerational laity of St. Stephen’s is vigorously committed and dedicated to living out the Gospel. We work to do that through education and fellowship programming for all ages as well as through a variety of outreach projects.

In a world where so many are looking for something meaningful, St. Stephen’s seeks to offer a message of acceptance and a sense of belonging.

*And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.*

*Acts 2:42*
3 - OUR NEW RECTOR
We are seeking a rector who is drawn to the sense of community within the congregation, and who conveys the love of God to everyone who walks through our doors and into our community.

We value a personal and professional maturity, along with the ability to provide pastoral care and engaging messages from the pulpit based on sound theology, liturgy, lectionary text, and the Bible that will inspire us to learn more, do more, and become better people. Additionally, the rector we are seeking will encourage mentoring relationships, commit to spiritual formation, and communicate faith. A sense of humor will be helpful, along with a willingness to engage in the parish’s community life.

We seek one who will guide us in our continuing journey of formation, discipleship, and search for spiritual growth and who will challenge us to use our talents to achieve the goals expressed by the parish:

- To promote and encourage church growth and development
- To encourage a deeper relationship with God through preaching, teaching, and liturgy
- To develop and support Christian education and formation
- To build a strong stewardship program that focuses on the spiritual gifts of the parish

We want to expand our educational programs, and we need an increased emphasis on preparation for baptism and confirmation for all ages.

We want to continue to develop congregational leadership by strengthening the existing parish fellowship and hospitality programs. We have strong lay leaders and a healthy spiritual ministry among the laity, but our goal is to develop these talents fully to the benefit of our parish and our community.

We want to continue our community outreach programs and find additional ways to extend our faith and caring into the community.
The years following World War II were a period of unprecedented growth and expansion in Lubbock. Energetic, self-confident, and prosperous, the town’s population increased from 72,000 in 1950 to nearly 130,000 in 1960. So it was that in 1958 a recycled World War II army barracks was moved to a remote expanse of cotton fields at the corner of Slide Road and Eleventh Street, and St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church had its beginning. St. Stephen’s was to be the third Episcopal Church in Lubbock (after St. Paul’s on the Plains and St. Christopher’s). It was founded as a mission church of St. Paul’s, which supported it substantially in those early years; an assistant rector of St. Paul’s, the Reverend Alan Price, came to serve as St. Stephen’s first curate.

On March 26, 1960, the mission was officially established by the Diocese of Northwest Texas and, two years later, ground was broken for the present building. It was to be a contemporary interpretation of Spanish colonial style with thick walls and buttresses, high clerestory windows, and it would be enhanced with an attractive, brightly-colored tile trim. The original structure included the apse, nave, and transepts on a cruciform plan with a centralized altar; it was dedicated in the spring of 1963.

As Lubbock continued to grow, so did St. Stephen’s. By the time the church achieved parish status in 1976, major expansion was needed. Ground was broken the next year for an addition which now houses offices, the nursery, the kitchen, and parish hall. There followed in 1983 renovation and repair to the original part of the church: new heating and air conditioning, new carpet, new windows, and other updates were installed. Those ancient army barracks, in which the parish had had its humble birth, were finally (and gratefully!) moved away in April 1979.

During this growth and expansion, sacramental practice and liturgical integrity were always important to St. Stephen’s. As previously noted, the church has always had a free-standing altar for westward-facing celebration for the vested ministers. A revised seating arrangement of the altar party that more closely reflects early Christian practice was a part of the 1983 renovations. A coordinated set of vestments was crafted by a parishioner to match the symbols in the reredos, and a new wooden baptismal font was donated to match the other sanctuary furnishings. Other liturgical embellishments over the years have included a set of silkscreened Stations of the Cross in the nave, several painted icons near the tabernacle.
and in the transepts, new stained glass clerestory windows, and, most recently, upgrades to the sound system and video broadcast capability in the nave. Perhaps the finest of these enhancements to our worship came in 1994 when a small but very lovely mechanical action pipe organ in the Baroque style was installed in the south transept. Hardwood floors installed at that time added not only to the acoustics of the church, but to its simple beauty.

The 1990s and early 2000s were a time of particular blessing for St. Stephen's. The parish enjoyed dynamic leadership from the Reverend Clifton Mann, its rector from 1989 to 2001, and his wife, the Reverend Jo Roberts Mann, associate rector from 1994-2001. Their ministry was a time of deep engagement and generous financial support from the congregation. A new classroom building for children named Mann Hall was completed in 1996, and the debt on that project was retired within a few years. Through Mother Jo Mann’s previous work as Canterbury chaplain at Texas Tech University and the chaplain at All Saints Episcopal School, St. Stephen’s relationships with those organizations were strengthened. It was also during the early 2000s that St. Stephen’s greatly expanded the outreach activities which have come to be such an important part of the parish’s identity.

The St. Stephen’s story has overwhelmingly been one of grace upon grace; but, like most churches, it has not been without its difficult chapters. The most challenging of these occurred in the middle 2000s when the rector and vestry found themselves with deep disagreements over the identity and direction of the parish. The relationship ended contentiously in 2008 with the departure of the rector, but many members left St. Stephen’s during that period. That rift has healed, but painfully, and only with the passage of time.

Even during that difficult season, however, St. Stephen’s did its best to continue to do the work of the church. Outreach, by now a bedrock core value of the parish, continued and expanded. Programming for children and youth experienced tremendous growth and expansion under the leadership of the Reverend Rich Nelson, the part-time associate rector from 2004 to 2007, who also served as chaplain at All Saints Episcopal School. St. Stephen’s also ran a successful capital campaign (dubbed Bursting with Blessings) for a renovation and expansion project that was completed in 2008; it included a new and expanded nursery, a new multipurpose room, additional restrooms, a kitchen expansion an expanded parish hall, and office renovations.
The last ten years have been a time of healing and renewal at St. Stephen’s. The rectorate of the Reverend J. David Perdue, whose retirement in 2020 triggered this search process, brought a stabilizing influence. As with so many times in its history, the parish’s passion for serving others through outreach has sustained it and given it focus. St. Stephen’s is now a parish whose identity is marked by openness, welcome, and mutual care.

Father David’s retirement, sadly for all, almost exactly coincided with the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. This resulted in a double sense of loss for the parish: loss of a rector as well as loss of our “normal” community life. In spite of this, the church has been far from dormant. One of our long-standing priests in residence, the Reverend Jean Scott, has stepped in as interim rector.

During the time when the church was not being used for in-person worship, the vestry took the opportunity to make many improvements, repairs, and upgrades to the building and grounds. These improvements include a new roof, extensive work to protect the perimeter of the church facilities from moisture damage, and refinished wood parquet floors in the nave.

So with faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, deep gratitude for our cherished past, and steadfast hope in the future to which he calls us, we pray for God to send us a faithful rector who will help strengthen and deepen our lives in love and service.

Our hearts are full with renewed trust in our journey with God, together.
Centered on the Eucharist, our Anglican tradition held close, we enjoy highly participatory liturgy, predominately using Rite II and reserving Rite I for Advent, Lent, and other selected occasions.

Talented parishioners have used their skills to enrich the tone of worship services. Among the treasured gifts from members of our congregation are six seasonal wall hangings and carved, wooden panels representing the seasons of the church year. In addition, three finely painted icons adorn the walls behind the altar, and several pieces of expertly crafted wood décor add to the richness of each worship service. Bordering the communion rail are needlepoint kneelers designed and stitched by members of the St. Stephen’s community, and each service features communion bread that is lovingly prepared by a team of dedicated parishioners.

Eucharistic ministers participate fully at and beyond the altar. A Verger is used on High Holy Days. Baptisms are joyous events, and weddings have been performed successfully during the 10:30am worship service. The parish enjoys variety in the service and responds well. Children actively participate in the Holy Eucharist and act as close witnesses to infant baptism. Although somewhat relaxed in attitude, we perform the solemn rituals with the proper degree of decorum and care required.

Stained glass was installed in the nave in 2017 featuring animals, Biblical characters, and stories and greatly enhances the worship experience.

As a result of the pandemic, St. Stephen’s began live streaming services on Facebook when in-person worship was at a standstill. Through generous donations, a new audiovisual system was installed. As in-person worship began and to help with social distancing, parishioners are now able to watch the service in the parish hall as well as the courtyard on televisions. Live streaming on Facebook has continued as we recognize that homebound and out of town folks were tuning in as well. We are thrilled with this addition as it now allows for an overflow crowd during special events and is providing many additional benefits.

Presently, Morning Prayer by Zoom is also scheduled Monday, Wednesday and Friday. A Wednesday evening Compline service is also offered on Facebook.
6 - MINISTRIES

SERVE
Ministry Opportunities
Worship is the central aspect of the life of this parish. Parishioners participate in many different ways to enhance our worship and community of believers.

ACOLYTES
Acolytes are an integral part of services in the Episcopal Church. Adults as well as children serve as acolytes in nearly all Holy Eucharists. Children may participate in this ministry when they are in the second grade and older. Acolytes carry the processional cross, hold the Gospel book for the deacon or priest, receive the people’s offering and the bread and wine, carry the processional torches and bear incense when needed.

The tradition offers a wonderful way for one to understand worship according to the Episcopal tradition and to be involved in the very center of our life as a community of the living Christ.

ALTAR GUILD
The Altar Guild is a volunteer group of the parish whose ministry is to care for the altar, vestments, vessels, and altar linens of the parish. Altar guild members prepare the sanctuary for services and clean up afterwards. The altar guild prepares the altar for Sunday services, Wednesday services, holy days, and other special services, such as funerals and weddings.

MUSIC | CHOIR
The St. Stephen’s music ministry consists of a choir of volunteer singers and occasional instrumentalists. A music scholarship fund supports young Texas Tech University music majors who sing and play with the choir during their college tenure. The choir, an integral part of the weekly worship service, also participates in special services such as funerals and weddings.

St. Stephen’s wonderful choir is under the direction of Larry Douglas. Larry is a Master Organist who holds Bachelors’ and Masters’ degrees in Music Education from Texas Tech University and has served St. Stephen’s for twenty-five years. The lovely tracker organ, purchased in 1994, provides an excellent framework for the music of St. Stephen’s worship services. St. Stephen’s practices a musical diversity that mirrors parish life at our church, a growing community that seeks to serve God and reflect His love among us.

A Taize service was offered once a month on Wednesday evenings, pre-pandemic.
COMMUNION BREAD
For years, Lindl Graves, a dedicated member of the church, took on as her ministry a project to supply marvelous seasonal breads for the Eucharistic services. Before her passing, she shared this ministry with other parishioners, teaching them to make the various recipes for each season. This ministry has grown into a large group of dedicated volunteer bakers. The breads are used at every Eucharist except in the pandemic.

EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS/LECTORS
This is a group of Eucharistic lay ministers, “beyond the altar” Eucharistic ministers, and lectors who regularly serve the parish.

USHERS | GREETERS
Generally, the first to greet a newcomer to St. Stephen’s, the ushers and greeters have a vital role in making people feel welcome and included. The ushers and greeters who serve make a vital contribution to St. Stephen’s.

COMMUNICATIONS | NEWSLETTER
Visitors, parishioners, and friends can keep up with St. Stephen’s latest news through our updated website and Facebook page. Parishioners also receive the latest news in a Thursday E-messenger email. The Thursday email can also be viewed on the website, www.ststephens-lubbock.org, as well as past sermons and the upcoming worship bulletin for Sunday’s service.

LA CARTA DE SAN ESTEBAN is a monthly publication of inspiration and communication. It includes the life of St. Stephen’s, a message from the Rector, notices for upcoming events, and reports of community life. We hope to continue this monthly newsletter in the coming months.

CARE COMMITTEE
This group of parishioners prepares food during times of family emergency, adversity, or the birth of a child. They respond in times of hospitalization, the death of a family member, or other occurrences when the families of St. Stephen’s are in need.

...LOVE LINK was organized to keep in touch with members in need. The committee consists of its chairperson, priest, chairperson of the intercessory prayer list, senior warden, and parish administrator. This group keeps each other informed of needs, and these concerns are passed along as needed.
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
Instrumental in drawing new families and poised for growth, St. Stephen’s has a Christian Education program for lower school children and the capability for adding middle/higher school curriculum. Vacation Bible School is a joint effort of Lubbock’s three Episcopal Parishes every summer. Adult Christian Education is conducted on Sunday mornings on a seasonal basis for all. In addition, St. Stephen’s offers Inquirer’s classes in preparation for baptism and confirmation.

EYC
St. Stephen’s is looking for youth leadership so the EYC can meet on occasions for study and fellowship and continue to support the various traditions, fellowship life, and efforts of St. Stephen’s.

FELLOWSHIP
At St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church, fellowship centers on eating together as a family. Prepared by the Men of St. Stephen’s Committee or the Parish Life Committee, we enjoy a Shrove Tuesday pancake supper, a Lenten fish fry, a Pentecostal picnic, Thanksgiving dinner (the Sunday evening prior to Thanksgiving), and Easter dinner and egg hunt. Hanging of the Greens is also scheduled for the last Sunday in Advent. Other annual fellowship events to hopefully begin again in 2021 include It’s an Art Thing, Saints & Sinners (small dinner groups), and Spring Fling.

OUTREACH
In July 2007, the St. Stephen’s parish formed an Outreach Committee to explore outreach possibilities for our parish and the community we serve. The first project in August 2007 was to furnish the children of the South Plains Children’s Shelter with school supplies. The response from the congregation was very impressive with backpacks, calculators, many smaller supplies, and cash. This initial response led to many more additional projects.

During 2009, two major initiatives of the committee came to the forefront and are still continued today, Hope Shalom and St. Benedict’s Chapel. Both are dedicated to serving Lubbock’s homeless, working poor, and food insecure individuals/families. We provide various toiletry items to Hope Shalom and provide meals serving 80-100 people once a week at St. Benedict’s Chapel.

In 2016, St. Stephen’s began serving nearby Bowie Elementary
School students (Buddy Bags) as part of the Junior League of Lubbock’s “Food 2 Kids” program. This program sends home sacks of food with children identified as being potentially at high risk for suffering from hunger during the weekend. Later, St. Stephen’s began helping Hardwick Elementary students as well. When Bowie closed, its students moved over to Hardwick. St. Stephen’s currently serves 68 students there. St. Stephen’s has also, over the years, provided these students with school supplies, gift cards, coats, and Christmas gifts. They have also supported Hardwick teachers and staff in various ways.

In 2017, St. Stephen’s hosted Father Bill Miller on his stop through Lubbock during his “Last Howlelujah Tour” for his dying dog, Nawiliviwi Nelson. Money was raised by the event and donated to Lubbock’s Four-Legged Friends. Father Bill’s Lubbock stop is mentioned in his new book entitled, The Last Howlelujah: Tails from the Trail.

St. Stephen’s holds an outreach fundraiser called “Spring Fling” every year around “Cinco de Mayo.” Through a live and silent auction, monies are made and donated to designated outreach groups. Past donations have been made to Four-Legged Friends, Episcopal Relief and Development, St. Benedict’s, Hardwick Buddy Bags, St. Stephen’s Choir Scholarships, and more.

“It’s An Art Thing” is a bi-annual event. This gathering invites parishioners and friends to share their talents and collectibles in a relaxed, fun atmosphere. Donations by the participants are raffled off, and the proceeds are donated to a worthy organization.

Different organizations are also recognized on a monthly basis by donating specific items or funds. These organizations have included Covenant Children’s Hospital, Women’s Protective Services, Grace Campus, Lubbock Animal Services, Grace Manor Drug and Alcohol Treatment Center, Texas Tech University Center for Early Head Start, and many more.

Father David, his wife, Donna, and five others from St. Stephen’s joined other Episcopalians across Texas for a mission trip to Guatemala during the summer of 2019. They helped build two homes for single mothers and their families.

In 2019, St. Stephen’s hosted their first of an annual event, Trunk or Treat Community Block Party. The grounds were full of little ghosts and goblins. Free hot-dogs, games, and lots of...
treats were provided. The 2020 event was cancelled due to COVID.

TRADITIONS
The traditions of St. Stephen’s include celebrations of our sense of community as members of the body of Christ. Stewardship, community, and joy are hallmarks of this tradition. We celebrate our children by including them at the font during infant baptisms and by their inclusion in other parts of the service.

One way we celebrate our joy in God is with a Palm Sunday procession around the church, and our joy in each other with an annual dinner and auction called “Spring Fling.” We celebrate those who are here and those who have passed on by decorating a standing cross with cut flowers on Easter, and we give thanks for God’s creation with the Blessing of the Animals on St. Francis’ Day. Year-round, we celebrate the church community and our place in the community of Lubbock by adopting various other monthly outreach projects.

Our traditions are based on inclusion and the worth of every member of the congregation.

COLUMBARIAIMS
Sid McIlveen Memorial Columbarium is an in-ground columbarium in a beautiful semi-enclosed courtyard. This columbarium was begun in 1995 when a parishioner approached Father Clifton Mann to inquire if the courtyard could be used for the burial of ashes. Father Mann thought this was a wonderful idea and discussed it with vestry, who then approved the courtyard becoming a columbarium. There are 26 peoples’ ashes interred in the ground. With the help of a generous donation, we have just added 48 beautiful red granite and stone niches.

In 2015, also through many generous donations, a pet columbarium was created. A metal St. Francis wall sculpture, created by St. Stephen’s own BC Baker, was placed on the church wall and is backlit at night. The stained glass in the nave overlooking the columbarium is also pet related and backlit at night. A pet’s ashes may be interred in this area with a stone marker. Memory stones are also available. This area represents pets from 26 families. 83 pets have either been interred or memorialized. St. Stephen’s Blessing of the Animals is an annual event and takes place in this area. This columbarium was named for its founder, Debbie Copeland.
MOVIE THEOLOGY GROUP
A Movie Theology Group met in various Parishioner homes until the pandemic. Presently the group meets once a month by Zoom. The group discusses the intended or unintended theology of a movie.

DAUGHTERS OF THE KING
Daughters of the King – St. Katharine of Drexel Chapter–organized in 2020, will begin in 2021. Daughters of the King are women and girls between the ages of seven and one hundred and seven who desire a closer walk with the Lord. We are Christian women, both lay and ordained, who are strengthened through the discipline of a Rule of Life, and supported through the companionship of our sisters. We are all at different stages of our Christian journey – some have just begun and some have been on this path for a long time. But no matter where we are on our sacred journeys, our primary goal is the same – to know Jesus Christ and to make Him known to others.
Interim Rector: The Rev. Jean Pearson Scott
Deacon: The Rev. Paige McKay
Priest in Residence: The Rev. Pat Russell (Ret.)

Staff and Volunteers:
Tom Simmons, Parish Administrator
Larry Douglas, Organist and Choirmaster
Chuck Dickerson, Bookkeeper
Nora Stubblefield, Children’s Christian Education Director
Kelly Kubiszcz, Nursery Director
Michael Pullen, Verger
8 - LUBBOCK AND ITS PEOPLE
Lubbock, a community of over 250,000 located on the South Plains of West Texas, combines big-city amenities with the ease of small-town living. Lubbock’s compact size makes it easy to travel anywhere in the city within 20 minutes.

Our economy is agriculturally based with additional strong support from medicine, education, and business sectors. Lubbock offers the finest regional opportunities for higher education in the vast area of West Texas and Eastern New Mexico, and a thriving business environment. Lubbock is the hub of a 51 county area that makes up West Texas and Eastern New Mexico. The stable employment and diverse economy have somewhat insulated Lubbock from the latest economic downturn.

Covenant Health, University Medical Center, and Texas Tech Health Sciences Center, headquartered in Lubbock, are the preeminent medical centers between the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex and Phoenix. These institutions serve a 62 county area (63,000 square mile area) of about 1.2 million people with regional clinics in West Texas and Eastern New Mexico. These regional clinics are integral to the provision of primary care services to their local communities and send substantial numbers of patients to Lubbock for tertiary care that is not available locally.

Covenant Health is the region’s largest health care system and a member of Provident Health, one of the most successful not-for-profit, faith based health systems in the United States.

University Medical Center (UMC) partners with the Texas Tech Health Sciences Center in educating and training health care professionals enrolled in the school. UMC is a Level I Trauma Center with a Level IV Maternal Program, a Level IV NICU, and a Verified Burn Center.

Lubbock boasts many amenities, but its principal strength lies in its people. It is no secret that West Texas is home to some of the friendliest people in the Southwest. This fact is observed over and over again. At grocery and department stores, at youth sports leagues where cooperation is the norm, throughout the city and outlying areas, mutual respect, consideration, and teamwork are the norm. With regularity people who have moved to Lubbock from other parts of the country pay tribute to the warmth and the spirit of community found among the citizens of Lubbock. Lubbock is a wonderful place to live and raise a family and was rated in the top ten by Zumper.
Amenities that enhance our quality of life are numerous and varied and include the following:

**VISUAL/PERFORMING ARTS & MUSIC**
Lubbock’s vibrant art scene includes festivals, shows, performances, and exhibitions throughout the year. From art galleries to music, dance, and theater, Lubbock’s art culture is thriving. In addition, the Lubbock area hosts numerous special events each year, including the National Cowboy Symposium, Lubbock Arts Festival, and Lubbock Music Fest.

The recently completed Buddy Holly Hall of Performing Arts and Sciences, will be the cultural hub of Lubbock. The Hall will be the future home of Ballet Lubbock, Lubbock Symphony Orchestra, and Lubbock Independent School District Visual and Performing Arts.

The local colleges offer varying degrees of programs, lectures, and visual and performing arts events.

**MUSEUMS**
Texas Tech University Museum, National Ranching Heritage Center, Silent Wings Museum, American Wind Power Center, Science Spectrum Museum and Omni Theater, The Buddy Holly Center, FiberMax Museum of Agriculture, Lubbock Lake Landmark, Moody Planetarium, Louise Hopkins Underwood Center for the Arts and the Vietnam Archives at Texas Tech University are centers of unparalleled information.

**SPORTS**
Texas Tech University is a Division I school participating in the Big 12 Conference. Sports at Texas Tech are very competitive with the National Power Men’s Baseball team going to the College World Series four of the last six years, the Men’s Basketball team playing in the National Championship game in 2019, Men’s Track & Field winning the National Championship in 2019 and Men’s and Women’s golf, Women’s Soccer, Track and Field and Softball and Men’s and Women’s Tennis qualifying for or earning individual NCAA Championships in recent years.

Along with great success in sports, Texas Tech has a world-renowned meat Judging Team, which just won another national championship in 2020.

Also, established in 1925, the Goin’ Band from Raiderland is the oldest student organization on campus. Representing nearly every major available at the university, the 400+ members of
the Goin’ Band from Raiderland seek to entertain and inspire. Lubbock Christian University is a Division II school participating in the Lone Star Conference. The Lady Chaps Basketball team won the NCAA Division II National Championship in 2019.

RECREATION
Amazing trails in the canyons, lakes, and parks surrounding Lubbock offer camping, hiking, and mountain biking adventures. Palo Duro Canyon and Caprock Canyon, within 100 miles of Lubbock, offer exceptional experiences. The City of Lubbock has varied sports recreational programs and more neighborhood parks per capita than any other city in Texas. Lubbock is also home to a USA Triathlon sanctioned Ironman 70.3 triathlon. This event is one of the most grueling on the triathlon schedule.

CLIMATE
Our climate is, without a doubt, one of the best-kept secrets in the country! Lubbock has an average of 265 days of sunshine a year with a temperature range that provides the best of all seasons. The Lubbock region grows 90% of the grapes grown in Texas, lending to award winning wineries in the area. Our location on the Caprock of West Texas affords the city cool summer evenings that make outdoor living a delight. As we say out here, if you don’t like the weather, wait an hour; it will change!

EDUCATION
The Lubbock area is home to more than 52,000 college students and nearly 13,200 college graduates annual; a number that continues to grow each year. Lubbock is the only city in the nation with a comprehensive university, a health sciences center, an agriculture college, and a law school in one location, making Texas Tech University the second largest contiguous university campus in the United States. Texas Tech University, a Tier One Carnegie Designated University, is home to more than 40,000+ students. Texas Tech is world-renowned for its Wind Science and Engineering Research Center and currently offers the only PhD program in this field in the United States. Texas Tech is also home to the Texas Tech School of Law, the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, and the newly formed College of Veterinary Medicine located in Amarillo.

Lubbock Christian University was established by the Churches of Christ. With more than 70 academic programs covering
a broad spectrum of disciplines, including 55 undergraduate majors, more than 14 graduate degrees, a Scholar Colloquium and Honors College, LCU has been recognized by U.S. News & World Report as a Top 20 Comprehensive College in the Western Region.

Wayland Baptist University is the oldest university in continuous existence on the High Plains of West Texas. WBU offers more than 40 undergraduate majors, more than 12 preprofessional programs, and nine graduate programs.

In nearby Levelland, Texas, South Plains College is a comprehensive two-year community college. SPC offers more than 100 programs of study and career programs.

Lubbock’s K-12 population is enrolled in 8 independent school districts, several private schools, including highly regarded All Saints Episcopal School (PS3-12), and several vocational and technical schools.

TRANSPORTATION/ACCESSIBILITY
The transportation infrastructure that converges in Lubbock establishes it as a “Hub City.” Lubbock is home to the Preston Smith International Airport. Arrivals and departures take place each day, serving 12 million travelers annually. It is approximately a one-hour flight to Dallas, Austin, or Houston.

Interstate 27 and major highways connect the city to two major East-West interstate systems. Within the next 10 years, Interstate 27 will be extended from Colorado to Mexico to form the Port-to-Plains highway.

COST OF LIVING
Lubbock has one of the lowest cost-of-living indexes in the country. As a result of this low cost-of-living, both employers and their employees benefit from a higher standard of living at a lower cost than almost anywhere else in the nation. Home choices vary from new construction to refurbished 60+-year old homes and from urban to country living. The median single family home price is well below the state and national average at $144,900.
Lubbock is located in the region of Texas known as the South Plains, which embodies a place, a history, a way of life, and a culture.

The South Plains is a part of the larger Llano Estacado, a huge mesa or tableland that encompasses nearly 40,000 square miles of northwestern Texas and eastern New Mexico at an elevation of 3,000 to 5,000 feet. The name Llano Estacado (the ‘staked’ or ‘stockaded’ plains) most likely refers to the dramatic cliffs that are found at the mesa’s edges; it is literally a huge, flat table rising up out of the terrain. Indeed, as one approaches Lubbock from the south, one has the clear sensation of ‘going up onto the caprock.’ A region of wide open vistas punctuated by dramatic canyons, the South Plains has a unique and rugged beauty to it.

One important aspect of South Plains culture or identity is a keen awareness of connection to the land: to nature, to the elements, to time. The Lubbock Lake Landmark, an archaeological preserve affiliated with Texas Tech University, has provided evidence that people have lived and hunted here for nearly 12,000 years. Excavations of hunting camps from the Clovis and Folsom Periods have uncovered remains of the giant mammoth, extinct buffalo, a giant armadillo, an extinct camel, an extinct short-faced bear, as well as flint tools, points, and other artifacts. The Lubbock Lake Site continues today as an active archaeological dig and an important center of research.

Spanish conquistadors were the first Europeans to set foot on the South Plains. In 1541, Francisco Coronado described the region as a vast ‘sea of grass.’ Through the next century, the Spanish continued to explore the land from the Lubbock area to the Concho River near San Angelo. Their legacy is still seen in the descriptive and colorful names such as Llano Estacado, Amarillo, Tierra Blanca, and Palo Duro that they gave to the places of beauty and magnificence that they encountered. Apaches inhabited the region during this time, and they were supplanted by Comanches who expanded their territory in the early 1700’s and made the South Plains their home for well over a century. This was also the era of the Mexican buffalo hunters, the Comancheros, who came to hunt and to trade with the Comanches. The 19th century, of course, saw the forced displacement of both of these groups as white Americans expanded into the West.

Both farming and oil production are notoriously subject to cycles of ‘boom-to-bust’ and, over the years, this has created a unique outlook among the people who live here. A belief in the self-sufficiency of the individual and the value of hard work goes
hand-in-hand with a strong sense of community and obligation to one’s neighbor. We have faith in God, and faith in each other. And, underneath it all, we feel that connection to the land, that quiet co-existence with time and the elements. It’s a feeling you can understand quite readily when you’ve seen that first, glorious West Texas sunset.
The Episcopal Diocese of Northwest Texas is a diverse community of believers, following the Episcopal tradition and comprised of eighty counties covering 77,000 square miles.

The Diocese of Northwest Texas became a missionary district in 1911 when the Missionary District of Northern Texas split into two regions: the Diocese of Dallas and the Missionary District of North Texas by action of the General Convention and petitioned the General Convention to become a diocese in 1958. The diocese is the home of 28 parishes, missions, and congregations, and it is the home of five schools. The office of the bishop, the Sam Byron Hulsey Episcopal Center, is located in Lubbock in the center of the diocese.

Bishop Mayer was consecrated on Saturday, March 21, 2009 at First United Methodist Church in Lubbock. The Most Rev. Dr. Katharine Jefferts Schori, was the chief consecrator and was joined by Bishops from around the Church.

Currently, Bishop Mayer serves two Texas dioceses - the Diocese of Northwest Texas, and the Diocese of Ft. Worth, in an effort to assist Ft. Worth as they continue to grow and flourish. He was asked by the Standing Committee of Ft. Worth, to succeed the Rt. Rev. Rayford High, retired, as the Provisional Bishop, until such time they are able to elect a permanent Bishop. Although the job is demanding, Bishop Mayer greatly enjoys his connection to Ft. Worth, where family members still reside. Bishop Mayer does an excellent job of providing stability, leadership, and love for both dioceses, splitting his time with each diocese.

In response to a Search Committee question regarding practices and influences that shape his spiritual discipline, Bishop Mayer concluded; “...for me the Holy Eucharist is central. For centuries Christians of all sorts and conditions have gathered with all the company of heaven to eat a piece of bread and drink a sip of wine, testifying to a Reality within and beyond these simple material elements. As the early church theologians tell us, in this sacred meal 'we become what we receive.' This is God's vision, and I count it a gift and a privilege to be called through both baptism and ordination to proclaim it.”