



The Spirit

Easter-Pentecost 2023

At St. Christopher's we are called to welcome all people and invite them into a relationship with Christ. We believe growing together in Christ through worship, study, fellowship, and service transforms our lives and the lives of others in our parish and community.

From the Rector

THE REV'D ROB HARRIS

"The Terminal": A Citizen of Nowhere

The Terminal is the story of a foreign traveler named Victor Navorski (Tom Hanks) who unwittingly gets caught up in a series of bureaucratic glitches making it impossible for him to return home.

Victor arrives at New York City's JFK airport and finds he is stranded in a no man's land. He is not allowed to get back on a plane, but neither can he leave the airport and legally enter the United States. Frank Dixon, the director of customs, hauls Victor into his office to explain the situation to a man who speaks virtually no English.

Sitting at his desk, Dixon opens up his lunch box and tells Victor, "I have a bit of bad news. It seems that your country has suspended all traveling privileges on passports that have been issued by your government, and our state department has revoked the visa that was going to allow you to enter the United States. That's it in a nutshell, basically. It seems that while you were in the air, there was a military coup in your country. Most of the dead were members of the presidential guard. They were attacked in the middle of the night. It was a terrible firefight. There were very few civilian casualties, so I'm sure your family is fine."

Officer Mulroy interrupts Dixon: "Mr. Navorski, your country was annexed from the inside. The Republic of Krakozia is under new leadership."

Victor, upon hearing his country's name mentioned, responds: "Krakozia, Krakozia, Krakozia!"

Dixon says, "I don't think he gets it." Officer Mulroy nods in agreement.

Dixon uses an object lesson, and says, "Look. Imagine that these potato chips are Krakozia."

Victor corrects his pronunciation, "Kra-ko-zia."

Dixon: "Kra-ko-zia. Kra-ko-zia."

Victor: "Okay."

Dixon: "So the potato chips are Krakozia, okay, and this apple?"

Victor, holding up a tour book of NYC says, "Big Apple. Big Apple."

"Big Apple represents the liberty rebels, okay?" Then, Dixon uses the apple to smash the bag of potato chips, covering Victor with crumbs. "No more Krakozia," Dixon continues. "New government. Revolution! You understand? So all flights in and out of your country have been suspended indefinitely and the new government has sealed all the borders, which means that your passport and visa are no longer valid, so currently, you are a citizen of nowhere."

Officer Mulroy: "Now even if we could get your new papers, we couldn't process them until the United States recognizes your country's new diplomatic reclassification."

Dixon agrees, "You don't qualify for asylum, refugee status, temporary protective status, humanitarian parole, or non-immigration work, travel or diplomatic visas you don't

qualify for *any* of these things. You are, at this time, simply unacceptable."

"Unacceptable?" Victor asks, struggling to understand.

"Unacceptable," Dixon replies.

The movie is a wonderful example of what life was like for us prior to the Day of Resurrection. We WERE unacceptable. There was no way for us to get our visa to the joys of heaven. Not until Jesus came. +



Join us for
**Mother's Day
Breakfast!**

May 14 9:00 a.m.



Monthly Newsletter

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Bandera, TX 78003

banderafostercloset@gmail.com

Who do we serve?

- Bandera County:
 - Grandparents raising grand children.
 - Low income youth.
 - Foster and adoptive families, reunification.
- Kerr, Kendall and Gillespie Counties:
 - We serve foster families, grandparents raising grandchildren, reunification. Must travel to us; will deliver on case by case basis.

THANK YOU

- Casey Hauer of Hauer Brother AC & Heating for his very generous donation to build out the inside of our space.
- Bill Wilkinson for your donation of materials and construction of a massive shoe shelf and mattress/ bed frame rack.
- Buddys water well and septic; Roger & Melinda Byrd for helping us with the new racks to hang the clothing on!
- Becca Erickson for the amazing mural!

SPONSORS NEEDED

**FOR REAR FACING CAR SEATS!
\$100 WILL PURCHASE ONE NEW CARSEAT FOR A CHILD IN FOSTER CARE OR LOW INCOME FAMILY!
CAR SEAT SAFETY IS ONE WAY WE CAN INSURE CHILDREN ARE SAFE!**

Cowboy Communion was a HUGE Success!



Thanks to the Altar Guild for all of their hard work!



We had a great turnout of 70 people to worship. It was a beautiful day full of great worship and fellowship.



The St. Christopher's Band did a fabulous job leading the praises.



Cowboy Communion dessert table was a force to be reckoned with!



Tom Lee on his beloved mandolin.



What a blessed Resurrection Sunday!





Resurrection Breakfast was great!



Jimmy making the bacon. He also washed dishes!



**We are
one
happy
family!**

Server Schedules

DATE	LECTOR	CHALICE
05/07	Bill D.	
05/14	Terry P.	Terry P.
05/21	Terry P.	Terry P.
05/28 (Pentecost)	Bill D.	

Date	Lector	Litanist	Chalice
05/07	Milam B.	Sandra H.	Sandra H.
05/14	Denise C.	David C.	David C.
05/21	Milam B.	Sandra H.	Sandra H.
05/28 (Pentecost)	Mary Beth W.	Don W.	Don W.

JOIN US FOR PENTECOST

(HOLY SPIRIT SUNDAY!)

May 28

Wear something RED.

Birthdays

05/10: Rachel Mulherin

05/12: Amanda Johnson

05/19: James Harris

05/21: Donna Anderson

Lee Parsons

05/27: Marianne Gerber

A Letter to the Diocese Regarding the Bishop Transition from the Rt. Rev. David M. Reed

“So, teach us to count the days / teach us to make the days count.

Lead us in better ways / somehow our souls forgot.

Life means so much, life means so much.”

–Chris Rice, “Life Means So Much”

“Therefore, I tell you, do not be anxious about your life...Can you by worrying add a single hour to your life?...Consider the flying birds and the lilies of the field. God cares for them and they thrive, and he cares even more for you. So seek first the kingdom of God, and its righteousness, and you will be given all you need. Don’t worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own.”

–Jesus (paraphrased) in Matthew 6

Dear Friends in Christ,

Grace to you, and peace, in these Great Fifty Days of Easter!

As previously announced on April 13, the Diocese of West Texas has received word that our Bishop Coadjutor-elect, the Rev. Dr. David G. Read, obtained the canonically required consents to his election from a majority of bishops with jurisdiction and diocesan standing committees within The Episcopal Church.

Thanks be to God! With that wonderful news, we are now able to begin planning in earnest for the orderly transition from my episcopacy to his, and I am able to give you more details about my own pending resignation (the canonical word for a bishop’s retirement). Our Assistant Bishop Rayford High has made decisions regarding his

own “re-retirement” as well, and his letter to you is attached.

Several important dates regarding this transition are listed below, but I will highlight what are likely the most significant dates for you, Father David’s consecration service and my actual, official retirement date:

Saturday, July 8, 2023: Consecration of the Bishop Coadjutor-elect

Monday, January 1, 2024:
Resignation/Retirement of the Diocesan Bishop

This week, I’ve officially informed Presiding Bishop Michael Curry of my intention to resign. Our Church’s canons require that bishops receive consents to their resignation from a majority of bishops, so a ballot will be sent to them. So far as I know, nobody has ever been denied permission. I doubt I’ll be the first!

Between now and then, of course, the mission and ministries of our Diocese continue. Sunday bishops’ visits continue as usual, through June for me and into July for Bishop High. Meetings with clergy and lay leadership continue, and the working group on Discipleship Formation is beginning its large task, headed up by Archdeacon Mike Besson. The wonderfully dedicated diocesan staff continues its ministry in support of you and your churches. Preparations for busy summers at all three of our camp and conference sites are well underway, and architect’s renderings for Camp Capers’ St. Francis Chapel renovations are forthcoming. A Small Church Regional Meeting will be held at St. Paul’s, Brady in May. The Stewardship Department is launching a webinar series, and the Year of World Missions celebrations continue with online and in-person events. Clearly, as a diocesan family we are “continuing to continue...and how!”

Father David has put together a worship planning team for his consecration liturgy—a beautiful and powerful service, with many moving parts! Our Standing Committee has created a Transition

Committee to assist as needed in his transition into the Bishop's office and my transition out. And of course, David and I will continue our decades-long work of untangling the comedy and confusion surrounding our homonymic names.

I'm becoming much more aware that these days are speeding by, and my Sunday visitations with congregations (always a delight and a highlight over these many years) now carry a hint of wistfulness, too. Still, there is much to do, day by day, and much joy in the doing of it, by God's grace. My hope, and my plan, is to keep showing up for you, for the Diocese of West Texas, and for our Bishop Coadjutor-elect David and his wife Jacqui, until the time has come for me to go.

A part of the experience of Easter is that, by the love and mercy of God, endings that seem so final are often just thresholds to new beginnings, to new adventure, to new and abundant life. The Church in her wisdom gives us fifty days to practice resurrection—fifty days to look for signs of the risen Christ all around us, to share in his resurrection, and to become more fully the Easter people we've been baptized to be. I look forward with abiding hope and great joy to practicing with you as we follow our risen Lord.

Love in Him,

+David M. Reed

Bishop Of West Texas

"One Thing that Made All the Difference:" A Small Church Ministry Reflection

by the Rev. John L. Blackburn, Priest-in-Charge of St. Christopher's, Portland

Something unique about Saint Christopher's By-the-Sea Episcopal Church in Portland is its location on the edge of a residential neighborhood, surrounded on three sides by houses and across the street from a tiny strip mall with a flooring supplier and a hair salon. Last year just prior to Palm Sunday, I noticed that my hair was starting to resemble a lion's mane, so I walked across the street to get a haircut. The lady who was going to cut my hair noticed that I was in a clerical shirt and collar and started up a conversation.

"Are you the new priest at the Roman Catholic Church?" she asked.

"No. Actually, I am the priest at Saint Christopher's Church, just there across the street." I motioned out the big window where you could just make out the archway that welcomes parishioners who come in the front door on Sundays.

"Really?!?" She replied, "I'm glad to see that they are opening that church back up. It has been closed for what now—about 5 years or so?"

I was both shocked and amused. We hadn't been closed, except for that long six weeks or so at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic when everyone else was too. The parish had been in a partnership for a few years, but it was never closed.

What amused me was the idea that someone in the neighborhood didn't even know that the big building across the street was open.

We continued our conversation, and I learned about her children, where she was from, and other chit-chat someone might engage in with the person cutting your hair. Eventually, she finished with my trim, told me the haircut was on her, and asked me to pray for her and her family.

When I left the shop I thought about the conversation and decided to stand in the parking lot just outside the hair salon for a few moments and ponder what she and others who came there were seeing—or better yet, not seeing. That is when it dawned on me! From outside the hair salon and the main street that passes in front of the parish, you couldn't see any cars on site. When I got to church that morning, I had parked around the corner, near a backdoor to the Parish Hall and Kitchen. This was my usual parking spot, because when I arrived in July 2020, that is where everyone was parking. The church could be full, but from the street you can't see any cars that are parked there.

The next week when I arrived at the church, I tried something new and parked in the main parking lot, on the front side of the Church. And something remarkable happened: someone rode up on their bicycle and asked if we were open!

Long story cut very short, that bicyclist is now our Junior Warden. With cars parked in that main lot, several other people have just dropped by, some needing financial aid, others wanting to be prayed for, even people desiring spiritual counseling or just someone to talk to. Some are one-time visitors; others stop in every few months; a few have even attended the Sunday Eucharist.

Sometimes, just making one little change, in this case where I park my car, can have a remarkable impact.

If I were to offer any wisdom from this little episode, it would be this: Take a walk around your Church, but from the other side of the street. Note what you see and look for what you don't see. Look with the eyes of the people who drive by every day. Does the Church look open, or does it seem closed and neglected? Then take your observations and make a small change. That one little, seemingly inconsequential thing may be the signal to the world that the Church is indeed open and ready to welcome everyone in Jesus' Name.

The Rev. John L. Blackburn is the Priest-in-Charge of Saint Christopher's By-the-Sea Episcopal Church in Portland, Texas. Father Blackburn is a bi-vocational priest in the Diocese of West Texas, splitting his time between his family's ranch in Berclair and the Parish.

Congregations Invited to First Small Church Gathering

Inspired by the enthusiastic response to the Small Church fellowship dinner and presentation at Council 2023, the Small Church Steering Committee is launching several initiatives to continue building relationships between congregations, including a newsletter, online meetings, and in-person regional fellowship gatherings.

The first Regional Meeting will take place at St. Paul's Church in Brady on Saturday, May 20th, from 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The meeting will focus on outreach ministries in our communities. We will also have the opportunity to suggest further topics of concern and interest for our small churches. Lunch will be provided at no cost. Anyone and everyone from our Small Churches are invited to attend.

RSVP before Monday, May 15, in order to help our hosts prepare. Contact melissa.soderberg@dwtx.org or the church office.