

Then, there was Hanna...

SETTLE INTO A ROUTINE? WHAT WAS I THINKING.

Just as we began to settle into the routine of streaming services from the sanctuary, along comes Hurricane Hanna. Fortunately, we had lots of good weather reporting and we knew on Thursday that Hanna would arrive on Saturday night whether we were ready or not.

Fearing the worst, we talked with Fr. Mike Fulk and others and decided that it would not be smart to have people out trying to get into the facility on Sunday morning, July 26. Instead, Fr. Mike would stream the Eucharist from his home. Thank God that we made the right call. 15+ inches of rain later, Hanna left but she surely made a mess while she was here.

Fr. Mike had internet problems that Sunday morning and without internet connections he couldn't stream the message. That means we were left to our own devices. At our house, we said a prayer and watched the rain and watched the rain and watched the rain. And when we were finished with that, we watched the rain once more.

Our church building had some roof leaks mainly along the front side of the church. There was a little water on the tile floor and we have stained ceiling tiles in that area. In the sanctuary, there were two places on either side of the altar platform where the carpet was wet. So, we brought our shop vac and vacuumed water out of carpet and turned on fans to help it dry. Water also blew in under the back door of the office building. Again we vacuumed carpet and put fans in place. We also lost the east facing storage building that was beside the office. It contained old Scouting materials. The Mejia family—Molly, Jake, Lola and Gigi—came up and made quick work of sorting what needed to be saved and what didn't. The shrubbery took a beating but no trees were blown over. The labyrinth screening is still standing.

All in all, we fared pretty well compared to others in our area. We will pray for their recovery.

...Martha Oxford



St. Peter & St. Paul Episcopal
Church

2310 N. Stewart Rd.
Mission, TX 78574
(956) 585-5005

Interim Vicar.....Fr. Mike Fulk

Office
Administrator.....Blanca Adame
Music Director.....Jeff Figueroa
Audio-Visual.....Helen Spalding

Bishop's Committee

Mike Schroeder, Senior Warden
Jose Trevino, Junior Warden
Leonor Fletcher, Secretary
Martha Oxford, Treasurer
Russ King
Jake Mejia
Henry Oertel

LANDSCAPE RE-DO & CLEAN-UP PLANNED



As part of his requirements for 3 awards in his Scouting career, Jake Mejia has asked to be allowed to

plan the clean-up and re-landscaping of some of the area around the church. The planning will take about month since each phase has to be written and approved by his Scouting leaders.

Yes, we will be asked to help. Once his plan is in place, we will schedule a Saturday workday to help him with this work. He will assign areas by families so we can be conscious of social distancing requirements.

There will be plenty to do—weeds to pull, shrubs and trees to trim, and new plants to be put in place. Pots on the front porch need to be re-potted in some instances or replaced in others. An automatic drip watering system could be planned to help keep this area watered.

Our goal is to have a landscape made up of native flowering plants that will attract pollinators. And, something that will be easy for us, as a congregation, to maintain going forward.

Included in this plan is the Labyrinth arbor and pathways. We would like to use tumbled glass from the re-cycling center to line the paths. It is safe and will be beautiful. Perhaps we'll begin evening prayers walks once more.



“Our goal is to have a landscape made up of native flowering plants that will attract pollinators.”

LABYRINTH WALKS

Saint Augustine coined the phrase *solvitur ambulando* which translates as “it is solved by walking.” The Labyrinth is an ancient spiritual tool that helps practitioners to engage the body in spiritual disciplines that, in turn, help to free the mind, heart, and soul.

Our Labyrinth is open to the public during daylight hours. And, after the re-vamping of the pathways, we will schedule some evening walk times as well.



FINANCIAL UPDATE



Financially, we are okay for the moment. But ...

I hate that word. Don't you?

Everything's okay but...

I like your work but ...

Your hair looks good but ...

The word 'BUT' usually means that something we don't want to hear is close at hand.

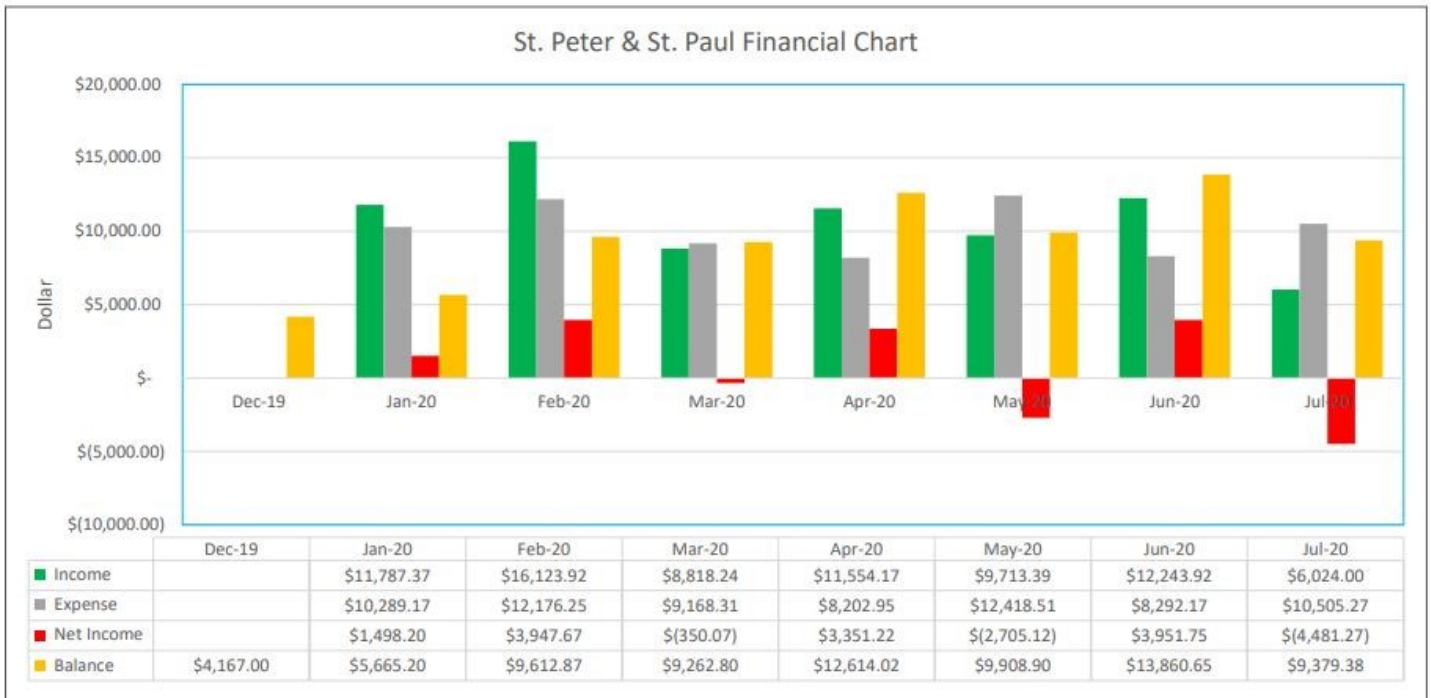
So, here's our BUT...

No one at any church ever wants to talk about money. BUT, every church needs to talk about money because that's how salaries and bills are paid. It's how the lights stay on and the toilets flush. Money! But ...

I decided that, as your treasurer, you need to see the whole picture of our finances. I've prepared this graph for that reason. The green is your giving, the grey is our expenses (bills) and the red is what was left over after the bills were paid. The yellow is a cumulative amount since January 1.

In 3 out of 7 months, we had a shortfall of funds. Praise God that we had some carryover funds to see us through.

Your giving is between you and God. I'm just here to let you know where we stand as a church.



PRAY FOR YOUR CHURCH

You are encouraged to pray each day . Use this time to pray for our church, congregation and community. Here's some guides for that prayer.

- Pray for God's guidance in your spiritual journey
- Pray for guidance of our ministries and wisdom in creating new ministries
- Pray for our clergy and their families
- Pray for our church staff and volunteers
- Pray that our financial decisions will glorify God
- Pray that we can expand our outreach and make new disciples
- Pray that the spirit of generosity will grow throughout our congregation.
- Pray for our congregation for revival and for the sick and grieving.
- Pray for our families, marriages, parents, and grandparents.
- Pray for the homebound.
- Pray for our neighborhood and community and our missional outreach to those in need.
- Pray for all our ministries: children, youth, adult, music, and teaching ministries.

Lord, help me see all the blessings in my life. I come to you with an open and grateful heart. Teach me to be a good steward of all that I have. Open my eyes and my heart to see all the opportunities around me. Fill my heart and let me respond in every situation with an attitude of worship and a spirit of generosity. Renew my faith as I ask "Lord, where would you want me to be in my giving?" Amen.

PROYECTO DESARROLLO HUMANO

A vital part of any church is the mission work that it does. At St. Peter and St. Paul Episcopal, we have chosen the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and their project at *Proyecto Desarrollo Humano* as one of our outreach ministries. The name translates into English as "The Human Development Project."

The Sisters provide a place where the residents of the Colonia can receive assistance with food, clothing, medical care, education for adults and children, English language classes, and other needs as they appear.

In the past, our church has helped support the Colonia with Thanksgiving meals, Christmas visits with Santa, Easter non-perishable food items, and clothing.

With the advent of Covid-19, shelter-in-place orders and the general uncertainty in these times, the Center at the Colonia has been closed. This includes the Thrift Shop. The Sisters are visiting people in their homes to see to their needs. A lot of

the families have chosen to not send their children back to school, so we are hoping the Media room at the Center will be opened for online learning.

Although buildings are closed to the general public right now, if you have donations—non perishable food items, toiletries such as shampoo, soap, toothbrushes, etc. or items from your closets—we can call and they will arrange to meet us and accept our donations. Bring things to be donated to the church office.

Keep the Sisters and this ongoing ministry in your prayers.



FILLING THAT LAST SPACE

No matter how I try, it seems there's always a small (or large) space left that I have nothing for. This is that space. So What goes here? Maybe this is a time for me to look to God to see what He wants in this space. He's a pretty good writer, you know. Maybe He will fill it. Hmmmmm! God? Are you there? Did you hear me say that I need filler for this space? What? Look to your Word. Well, who would have ever thought that. Okay, I'll do it.

Today's word ... from The Word ... Matthew 14:25-31

"And early in the morning he came walking toward them on the sea. But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid."

Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"

Yes, God's got this. Our job is to NOT DOUBT!!!

FATHER MIKE'S MUSINGS

And here we are in the month of August...it doesn't seem possible. We were just in a meeting with Fr. Mike Besson to talk about our future and now it's August. I can't say time flies when you are having fun because dealing with this Covid-19 virus has been anything but fun. But, this is our new normal for a time. I have not heard of anyone in our church family who has come down with the virus or lost their job or housing. This is indeed good news. Thank you, Lord.

We continue with Morning Prayer at 9:30 AM and Compline at 9:00 PM and Eucharist on Sunday at 10:00 AM. We will continue with this indefinitely. We reach people outside our church family...some in Florida, others in Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Indiana (One time someone from Cambodia prayed Compline with us.); but I would like to see more of our church family involved. "Church" is a habit and it is so easy to get out of the habit. I know that on-line services are not the same as in-person worship, but this is the best we can do right now. I would suggest that you set the alarm on your phone for 9:30 and 9:00 as a reminder to join us in prayer and for 10:00 on Sunday to join us for Eucharist. Come on now, my sermons are not that bad!

August is the time for students to head back to school or the university. I worry about what might happen to our students and teachers as they gather for classes. The best laid plans often go out the door when working with kids. I hope that physical distancing and face coverings will work, but I also hope there is a plan B.

Hurricane Hanna, even as a category 1 hurricane, did enough damage in the RGV. The amount of rain and the flooding was more than enough. Of course, as we all know, we could be back in drought conditions within a month or two. Let's hope not! One of my friends was without power for 11 days. Micaela and I lost a rose tree and part of a palm cluster, but that was all. Thank you, Lord! The church building had two leaks as the result of Hanna. One was in the kitchen area where it leaks whenever there is heavy, blowing rain and the second leak was on either side of the altar area. We think that that leak was from an "opening" around the foundation of the east wall. The Bishop's Committee has authorized a "high tech" sealing of the roof and a sealing around the east foundation of the building. The office leak was from blowing water that made its way under the back door. All is good, we are dry!

As some of you have heard I tried out for the Olympic gymnastics team on Sunday, July 19 or, according to Martha, the ballet. I caught my toe as I came around the altar, tried to keep my balance, knocked over the candlestick, and "flew" into the first row of chairs landing face down. I have had knee replacement and the fall and my knee didn't like each other. I was bruised in multiple places and "suffered" rug burns on both knees. One knee decided to swell. The swelling has mostly gone down, but some remains. I didn't break anything or damage the prosthesis. I am still icing the knee and elevating it as per doctor's instructions.

"When we don't come to church on Sunday, we tend to forget that the church still depends on our generosity."

One unfortunate result of the Covid virus is that donations have fallen considerably among all the churches of the diocese. When we don't come to church on Sunday, we tend to forget that the church still depends on our generosity. Whether we are using the church plant or not, bills keep coming and salaries must be paid. If you are able, I encourage you to catch up on your pledge. If you are a non-pledger, bring your contributions up to your normal level. Mail in your offerings or use the on-line option. If we were not the beneficiaries of the Payroll Protection Plan which helped with salaries and utilities for two months, we would not have any "available" money. SPSP needs you to join together in prayer on-line and to send in your offerings!

The Diocese has not forgotten us. The search for your next vicar continues, but the virus has put a crimp in the search. I hope to have news for you in one of our upcoming newsletters.

I think I have rambled on enough for this month, so Peace and Blessings to all.

Mike+



PRAYER REQUESTS

These names are from the church prayer lists. Please lift these people up with your daily prayers.



Bill Van Zant
Cindy Young
Janice Dudley
Anne Weisman
Minnae

Tom S.
Eola Martin
Mike Martin
JR De Leon
Faustino
Terri Burleson
Noah

Artemio Sandoval
Rosa Olvera
Javier Olvera
San Juana
Zepplyn
Oliver

Bobbie Jo
John Morales
Michael Morales
Jacob Michael Morales
Mary Harris
Linda Teuling

Rick Redd
Paul Tannehill
Irene Dimas
Rosie Palacios
Daniel Rivera
Rodriguez Family (Marco, Carol, Kayla)

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Wishes for happy birthdays are always appreciated. And, anniversaries are to be celebrated.

BIRTHDAYS

Karilene Davis 8/11
Skye Rodriquez 8/14
Subie Redd 8/17
Eleanor Blott 8/18
Molly Mejia 8/29



ANNIVERSARIES



Brian & Donna Lunn 8/4
Bob & Nina Nelson 8/7



St. Peter & St. Paul Episcopal Church is located at
2310 N. Stewart Road
Mission, TX 78574
(956) 585-5005
www.peterpaul.org
secretary@peterpaul.org

We are a part of the Diocese of West Texas under the direction of Bishop David Reed and Fr. Mike Fulk, Interim Vicar



PLEASE PLACE STAMP HERE

TO: