



THE BULLETIN

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL
An Episcopal Community in the Heart of Houston, Texas

DECEMBER 2025
CHRISTCHURCHCATHEDRAL.ORG

AFTER-HOURS EMERGENCY CARE LINE | 713-826-5332

Celebrating Padre Simón: a legacy of love and service

“The first time I met Padre Simón, I knew there was something special about him, he radiated an energy and he has brought that same energy to his ministry at the Cathedral, always.” A smile crosses Sonia Mascorro-Velasquez’s face when she speaks about Padre Simón’s time at the Cathedral and it is a feeling shared by our entire community.

After more than a decade of dedicated service to our Cathedral family, Padre Simón Bautista is set to retire in January, leaving behind a legacy that has profoundly impacted, not just our community, but our diocesan community and all that have benefitted from his ministry. Padre Simón has been more than just a spiritual leader; he has been a beacon of hope and a source of strength for the entire congregation. His ability to connect with people from all walks of life, offering solace and wisdom, has endeared him to all.

From officiating weddings and baptisms to offering support during times of loss, his



presence has been a constant source of comfort. Throughout his tenure, Padre Simón has been instrumental in fostering a sense of unity and inclusivity within the Cathedral.

PADRE SIMON, page 2

The Dean’s Corner

There is a moment that I have come to cherish in our regular pattern of worship that often comes when I have the opportunity to celebrate on Sunday mornings at either 9 & 11am. When we have a trained Lay Eucharistic Visitor (LEV for short) scheduled to bring communion to a member of our community who is unable to come to church, that LEV will make her or his way to the altar once the table has been cleared. As the celebrant, I take my place behind the altar and hand small silver containers of bread and wine and lead our congregation in a brief call and response. I address the LEV by name, sending him or her forth “bearing these holy gifts that those to whom you may share with us in the sacrament of Christ’s Body and Blood.” Then we all respond together: “We, who are many, are one body because we all share in one bread and one cup.”



**THE VERY
REV. NATHANIEL
KATZ**

I love this moment for the beautiful tension that it holds between community and intimacy. The Eucharistic Visitor and I exchange these words together, and we hold the moment with eye contact. At the same time, the voices of the entire congregation surround us, almost lifting us up. It is, for me, a profound way to affirm exactly what it is we believe happens with this tender and powerful ministry. The LEV will leave that moment to perform the same gesture in reverse. S/he will leave the hustle and bustle of our campus on a Sunday morning and enter the intimacy of a home or hospital room to serve bread and wine that have been blessed by the Holy Spirit’s movement in our midst as a community. And so, we believe, the Body of Christ that is our congregation is brought into mystical union with one

THE DEAN’S CORNER, page 3

Rally Day and Ingathering Sunday highlight history and community



EMC Co-Chair Christopher McCord welcomes all to Ingathering, alongside parents & Co-Chairs

The much-anticipated Rally Day on August 24 at Christ Church Cathedral was a resounding success, bringing together parishioners in a joyful celebration to mark the beginning of the new program year. From 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., the Cathedral was abuzz with excitement as attendees engaged in a variety of activities designed to foster community spirit and involvement in the life of our Cathedral. One of the highlights of the day was the

INGATHERING, page 3

OUR CATHEDRAL FAMILY

We Celebrate with

☞ The Newly Baptized: Reid Majors Coffin, Addilyn Elaina Pacheco, Elizar Alexander Perez, Everardo Axel Perez, Ezra Armando Perez, and Madeline Daniella Rycroft.

We extend heartfelt sympathy

☞ to the family of member Dr. Ronald Bearden who passed away on October 16, 2025. Ronald is spouse to Rebecca Bearden.

☞ to the family of Linda Cox who passed away on October 28, 2025. Linda is mother to Bilinda Matusek, mother-in-law to Brian Matusek and grandmother to Matthew Matusek.

The flowers on the Cathedral Altar

☞ on December 7 are given to the glory of God in loving memory of Linda Anne Baldwin and Dorothy Geiselman Baldwin by the family of Robert B. Baldwin III.

☞ on December 14 are given to celebrate the Advent Needlepoint Hanging to the glory of God in loving memory of Geraldine Campbell Naschke whose needlepoint talents created these Cathedral Advent Hangings and her beloved husband John Hess Naschke for his love and devotion to Christ Church Cathedral by their three daughters Katherine Naschke Stites, Nancy Naschke Simonds and Geraldine Naschke Bielefeld.

☞ on December 14 are given to the glory of God in loving memory of Ann Randolph Bledsoe and in thanksgiving for Nancy Staub Wareing by Bledsoe and Wareing families.

☞ on December 14 are given to the glory of God in loving memory of their mother, Carolyn Joy Elliott, and their brother, Gregg William Palmer, by Robin Palmer and Joan Taliaferro.

☞ on December 21 are given to the glory of God in loving memory of Robert C. and Madie M. Richter by Bob Richter, Jr.

☞ on December 21 are given to the glory of God in loving memory of Cherry Gullede by her children and grandchildren.

PADRE SIMON, from cover

He has tirelessly worked to bring people together, celebrating the diversity that enriches our community. His sermons, always filled with warmth and insight, have inspired countless individuals to live lives of purpose and compassion. Padre Simón's commitment to service extends beyond the walls of the Cathedral. He has been actively involved in numerous outreach programs, addressing the needs of the less fortunate and advocating for social justice. His efforts and pastoral outreach to our friends at Casa Mateo have not only uplifted individuals but have also strengthened the bonds within our community. As we prepare to bid farewell to Padre Simón, we reflect on the profound impact he has had on our lives. While his physical presence, that of Amarilis and their family will certainly be missed, his teachings and the love he has shared will continue to inspire us.

We wish him a joyful retirement, filled with relaxation, time with his family, and the fulfillment that comes from a life well-lived. Please join us for the Gran Posada and two special receptions on January 4 after the 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. services to honor Padre Simón's remarkable contributions to our community.



Cathedral Listens: Inaugural event

Sanders Hall was transformed into an intimate space for community connection during the very first-ever Cathedral Listens. This new initiative invited members to gather, reflect, and share stories of their most meaningful spiritual experiences—what we call “holy encounters.”

We were delighted that a few dozen attendees joined us for this special gathering. Cathedral Listens is modeled on a casual coffee shop “story slam,” and this open-mic format allowed audience members to share their reflections at will. The response was incredible.

What emerged was a powerful evening of shared vulnerability and inspiration. The vast majority of those present stood up to share a story, speaking from the heart about moments



Cathedral Listens, Stories of Holy Encounters

when they felt the presence of the sacred, many in surprising and unexpected ways.

Attendees recounted impactful moments experienced right here within our Cathedral life—in the midst of worship, through a spontaneous act of fellowship, or during personal

reflection in ministry. Stories ranged from receiving deep comfort during difficult times to sudden revelations of God's grace in everyday life. It was a beautiful reminder that the Holy Spirit is constantly at work in our lives and within our community. By creating a space simply to listen to one another, we not only bore witness to these powerful, personal testaments but also deepened our collective faith. Thank you to everyone who shared their courage and their story.

The success and moving honesty of this event confirmed that Cathedral Listens is a much-needed addition to our community life. Please stay tuned for information about future dates and opportunities to share your own story of a holy encounter!

DEAN'S CORNER, from cover

another, nourished by the same bread, same wine, same Spirit.

When we experience this ritual together on Sundays it is not meant as a gesture benefiting only those who cannot be in church that day. It is an affirmation of the truth that we have been bound together as one body by the nourishment we receive in God's love. And no matter where we will go in the week that follows – to work, to school, running errands, traveling for

business or to visit loved ones, we remain bound to our family in Christ. This practice is especially meaningful for us during this Advent season in which we anticipate the joy of Christmas, the moment when God takes on our humanity in the Christ child. It is this moment that makes our mutual belonging as the Body of Christ possible. I will be cherishing this moment in our worship life throughout this holy season, and invite you to let its poignancy linger in your hearts this Advent.

New liturgical role at Christ Church Cathical

THE REV. LIZ KRONENBERG, CANON VICAR, SPECIAL CONTRIBUTOR TO THE BULLETIN

For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another.

— Romans 12:4-5

Each Sunday when we send a lay Eucharistic Visitor out with the Sacrament to take to those who cannot be present in worship, we say a version of the words above from Paul's letter to the

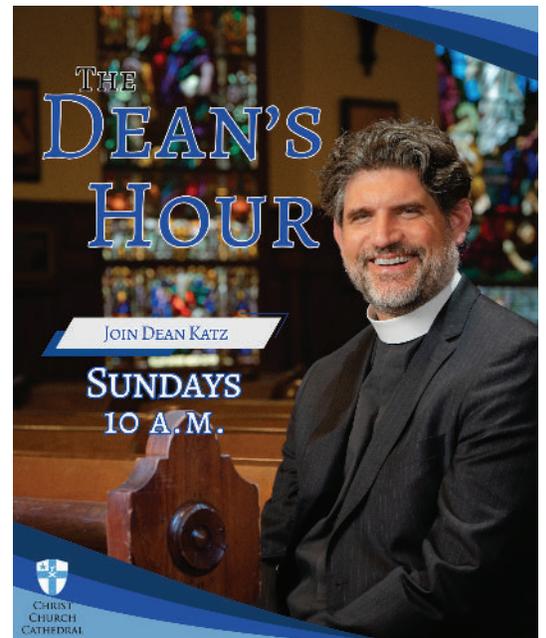


Romans, that we who are many are one body. In this way, we not only remember those who cannot be present on Sunday, we re-member them into the body of Christ. It is a powerful image of the metaphor of the body of Christ where both lay and ordained ministers, along with the entire assembly, participate in the receiving and sharing of Holy Communion.

This is part of our liturgy week in and week out, and it is just one small but mighty example of why we often define liturgy as the work of the people, not as the work of the priest or church staff. Rather, the liturgy comes into being when the entire assembly comes together to listen, to pray, to sing, and to be nourished in word and sacrament.

This approach to liturgy demonstrates a key aspect of our theme for this program year, which is focused on the Body of Christ. In this image painted for us in the Christian scriptures by St. Paul, we hear and understand every member of Christ's body has a unique and vital role to play. This is true in the wider Christian context, and it is also true in worship.

All of this is the basis for why this year we are implementing a new liturgical role, which we're calling Lead LEM (Lay Eucharistic Minister). The role of the Lead LEM will not only be to serve in their established role as Eucharistic minister at communion, but it will also be to represent the laity during the Eucharistic prayer. They will help gather the offerings of the people to be placed on the altar during the Great Thanksgiving, and by their presence behind the altar at communion they will be a visible representation of the unity of Christ's body, in all of its diversity (lay and ordained), and in all of its unity as we all share one bread, and one cup.



INGATHERING, from cover

opportunity for parishioners to confirm their contact information, ensuring seamless integration into the Cathedral's new database from Planning Center. This initiative aims to enhance communication and streamline administrative processes, paving the way for a more connected congregation.

Adding a personal touch to the day, many parishioners had their photos taken for the new parish directory. This endeavor not only aims to put faces to names but also strengthens the sense of belonging within the community. The directory will serve as a valuable resource for members to connect with one another throughout the year.

A particularly heartwarming aspect of Rally Day was the launch of the Cathedral quilt project. Attendees were invited to contribute a stitch to this collaborative effort, which will continue throughout the program year. The finished quilt will be auctioned off at The Beacon's 2026 Come to the Table event, with proceeds supporting its outreach programs. The project is a beautiful reminder of the unity and collective spirit of the parishioners, each stitch representing a unique contribution to the effort.

Rally Day exemplified the vibrant and inclusive atmosphere of Christ Church Cathedral, with activities tailored for all ages. Long-time members and newcomers alike found common ground in their shared dedication to the Cathedral's mission. As the Cathedral community embarks on a new chapter, the memories of this special day will undoubtedly fuel a year filled with hope and promise.

In mid-November, our community gathered for Ingathering, a celebration of our identity as One Body in Christ. This annual event reminds us that all our gifts, whether of time, talent, or treasure, support the Cathedral's mission.

INGATHERING, from page 3

The celebration began with a bilingual worship service. Music was provided by both the Cathedral Choir and the Mendeliz Group. Mendeliz also shared their talents during the Ingathering Lunch, where we feasted as one body, danced, and enjoyed our time together.

Christopher McCord, EMC Co-Chair, along with his wife Scottie, and parents Mike and Gillian McCord, spoke about the value of faithfulness in our commitments. He noted that being “faithful, reliable and steadfast in your support, commitment, or allegiance to something, even when it is inconvenient or difficult,” is fundamental to our shared work. He thanked the community for its effort, stating, “We are really grateful for that effort and that contribution to the Cathedral.”

While expressing gratitude for the support received, they reminded the congregation, “We still have a ways to go to meet our financial goal. Pledges are still being accepted,” emphasizing that “Large or small everything counts.”

Dean Katz concluded the event remarks by reflecting on the purpose of the day: “All that we’re doing today is about Thanksgiving. with hearts filled with gratitude.” The Dean offered “A special thank you to all who have made their pledge already” and encouraged everyone to enjoy the fellowship: “What we’re here for is thanksgiving, and we’ll feast... Enjoy yourselves. Let all that we do, be an action, a gift of thanksgiving and joy in God’s direction.”

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Beacon CEO Ana Rausch, Event Chair Nicole Boudreau, Beacon Board President Susan Reeves, and Dean Katz. Photo: courtesy The Beacon.

The Beacon offers thanks

Thanks to everyone who joined us at Come to the Table at The Beacon this Fall. Your support made the evening both meaningful and inspiring. Together, we’re helping more of our neighbors who are experiencing homelessness with nourishing meals and other essential services as well as pathways toward stability. We’re deeply grateful for the generosity and partnership in this important work.

Living Seasonally at the Cathedral



Dean Katz presents the Barnard Cross to Wick Rowland.



Above and below: Advent Wreath Making Workshop



Youth Sunday young leaders.



Dia de Los Muertos community ofrenda.

2026 ANNUAL PARISH RETREAT/RETIRO PARROQUIAL ANUAL

It is with great joy that we invite you to our Cathedral's Annual Parish Retreat! From Friday, January 16, to Sunday, January 18, 2026, we will gather at the beautiful Piney Woods, also known as Camp Allen. This retreat is thoughtfully designed to renew your spirit, deepen your faith, and strengthen our community. Whether you are seeking spiritual growth, rest, or fellowship, this weekend provides the perfect opportunity to step away from life's busyness, connect with God, and build meaningful relationships with your Cathedral Family.

We encourage you to come with an open heart, ready to receive God's blessings and share in the grace and joy of this retreat. We are excited to see what God has in store for us and hope you will join us for this transformative experience! Key Date to Remember: Registration Deadline is: January 4, 2026. Register at: christchurchcathedral.org. For more information, please contact Elizabeth Cuevas, Minister for Community Life, at 713.590.3300 or ecuevas@christchurchcathedral.org.



Parishioners enjoy a festive hayride at Camp Allen

¡Es con gran alegría que les invitamos al Retiro Parroquial Anual de nuestra Catedral! Del viernes 16 de enero al domingo 18 de enero de 2026, nos reuniremos en el hermoso Piney Woods, también conocido como Camp Allen. Este retiro ha sido cuidadosamente diseñado para renovar su espíritu, profundizar su fe y fortalecer nuestra comunidad. Si usted está buscando el crecimiento espiritual, el descanso, o el compañerismo, este fin de semana ofrece la oportunidad perfecta para alejarse del ajetreo de la vida, conectarse con Dios, y construir relaciones significativas con nuestra familia de La Catedral.

Fecha clave para recordar: LA INSCRIPCIÓN ESTÁ ABIERTA HASTA EL 4 DE ENERO DE 2026.

Te animamos a que vengas con el corazón abierto, dispuesto a recibir las bendiciones de Dios y a compartir la gracia y la alegría de este retiro. Estamos emocionados de ver lo que Dios tiene reservado para nosotros y esperamos que nos acompañes en esta experiencia transformadora. Para obtener más información, póngase en contacto con Elizabeth Cuevas, Ministro de Vida Comunitaria, en 713.590.3300 o ecuevas@christchurchcathedral.org.



Parishioners enjoy some fellowship during a previous Annual Parish Retreat.

Mark your calendars for our 2026 Annual Parish Meeting

As the New Year unfolds, we warmly invite you to join us for our Annual Parish Meeting on Sunday, January 25th. This important gathering will be a wonderful opportunity for our community to come together, reflect on the past year, and look forward to the exciting plans ahead.

The day will begin with a special bilingual worship service at 10 a.m., designed to bring our diverse community together in shared faith and fellowship. This inclusive service will set a meaningful tone for the meeting that follows, ensuring everyone feels welcome and valued. After the 10 a.m. service, we invite all parishioners to proceed directly to Reynolds Hall. Here, the Annual Parish Meeting will take place, providing a platform for updates, discussions, and the sharing of visions for the future. This is a chance for every

member to voice thoughts, ask questions, and engage in the vibrant life of our parish. In addition to the bilingual service, please note that our regular services will also be held at 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. on this day. Whether you're an early riser or prefer

a later service, there is an option for you to participate in worship and still join us for the meeting. Mark your calendars and make plans to attend this significant event in our parish calendar. Your presence and participation are invaluable as we continue to grow and strengthen

our community. We can't wait to see you there and share this meaningful day with you. Let's come together to celebrate our past achievements and embrace the future with hope and enthusiasm. See you on January 25!



2025 Annual Parish Meeting attendees.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
January 25

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS JOY



Christmas: Worship & Events



Experience the profound joy of the season by joining us for our many Christmas worship services and joyful community events.

From the Christmas Eve services—including new 3 p.m. service for families, traditional late-night Eucharist—to the intimate Christmas Day worship, these celebrations invite you to pause and receive the light of the Incarnation.

You're also invited to participate in the Christmas Offering, either by mailing in a gift or placing an envelope in the offertory plate. Be sure to visit the new Between Services Café

on Christmas Eve to enjoy some treats and celebrate the season with your Cathedral family between the 3 p.m. and the 6 p.m. services. Take a moment to savor the season.

For more information or to sign up to share a goodie, contact the Rev. Canon Luz Montesat: lmontes@christchurchcathedral.org.



Advent and Christmas services

La Gran Posada, Sunday, December 14

5 p.m. Holy Eucharist, Bilingual

The Longest Night, Sunday, December 21

5 p.m. Holy Eucharist

Christmas Eve, Wednesday, December 24

3 p.m. Family Service, Holy Eucharist Rite II, (Pageant)*

6 p.m. Festival Eucharist, Rite II, in Spanish*

7:30 p.m. Organ Prelude

8 p.m. Choral Eucharist, Rite II*

10:30 p.m. Cathedral Choir Prelude

11 p.m. Festival Eucharist, Rite I, (with incense)

Christmas Day, Thursday, December 25

10 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I

WATCH LIVE AT WWW.CHRISTCHURCHCATHEDRAL.ORG/CHRISTMAS

* CHILDCARE AVAILABLE

Christmas Camp

Saturday, December 20 | 9:00 - 11:30 AM
Try on costumes & walk through the highlights of the pageant

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL
ESTABLISHED MARCH 16, 1839

Between Services Café

Holiday goodies, hot coffee, and great company.
Between the 3 & 6 PM Christmas Eve Services

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL
ESTABLISHED MARCH 16, 1839

The Longest Night at The Well

Sunday, December 21 | 5:00-6:00 p.m.
Contemplative service that provides a reflection on loss and hope

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL
ESTABLISHED MARCH 16, 1839

Pastorela

Domingo, 28 de diciembre | 1:00 - 2:30 PM
Obra navideña de pastores que viajan a ver al niño Jesús

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL
ESTABLISHED MARCH 16, 1839

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Visit christchurchcathedral.org/events or call **713-222-2593** to learn more about these and other events at the Cathedral.



CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL

ESTABLISHED MARCH 16, 1839

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The Bishop Richardson Society **APPRECIATION RECEPTION**

For information on how to become a member, please visit:
christchurchcathedral.org/give/plannedgiving.

