



ST. THOMAS'
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

St. Thomas' Episcopal Church

Wharton, Texas

ST. THOMAS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH

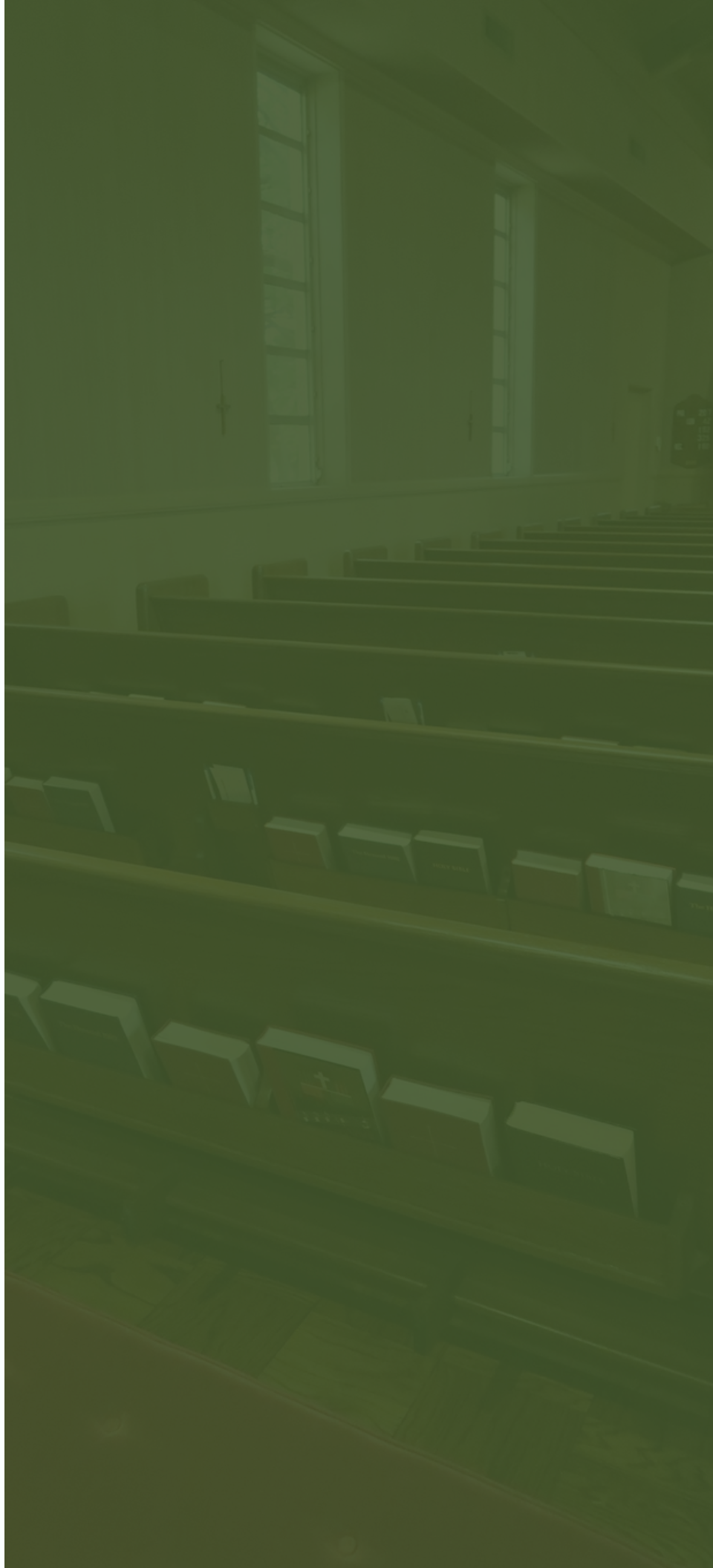


ST. THOMAS'
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Parish Profile

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Mission, Values, and Vision
- History of our Parish
- Worship
- Parish Life
- Community Connections
- Our Ministries
- Membership and Financials



OUR VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

“

Our mission is to love the Lord with all our heart and to reflect His love through service, worship, and presence in our community.

Our vision is to be a Christ-centered church rooted in tradition, where all are welcomed, faith is deepened, and God's love is made visible through worship, service, and community outreach.

Guided by the beliefs of the Episcopal Church, we value scripture, tradition, and reason, and are committed to inclusivity, service, and growing together in Christ's love.



ST. THOMAS'
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

History of St. Thomas'

Honoring Our Past

CHURCH WAS ESTABLISHED, THE SECOND CHURCH GROUP IN WHARTON COUNTY AND THE FIRST AND ONLY EPISCOPAL CHURCH TO PERMANENTLY ROOT IN THE COUNTY. WORSHIP IN WHARTON BEGAN WITH THE FIRST OFFICIAL SERMON DELIVERED ON MAY 5, 1867, BY RT. REVEREND ALEXANDER GREGG. THE CHURCH WAS RECOGNIZED AS A MISSION IN 1868.

THE FIRST CHURCH BUILDING WAS ERECTED IN 1898 ON MILAM STREET, REBUILT IN 1902. BEGINNING IN MAY 1926, RAYMOND DICKSON OFFERED THE OLD DICKSON HOME FOR USE AS A RECTORY. WHEN THE HOUSE WAS DISMANTLED, THE SALE OF THE LUMBER WAS USED TOWARD FUNDS FOR A NEW RECTORY. A NEW CHURCH BUILDING WAS COMPLETED IN 1951 AND THE OLD BUILDING ON MILAM WAS SOLD.

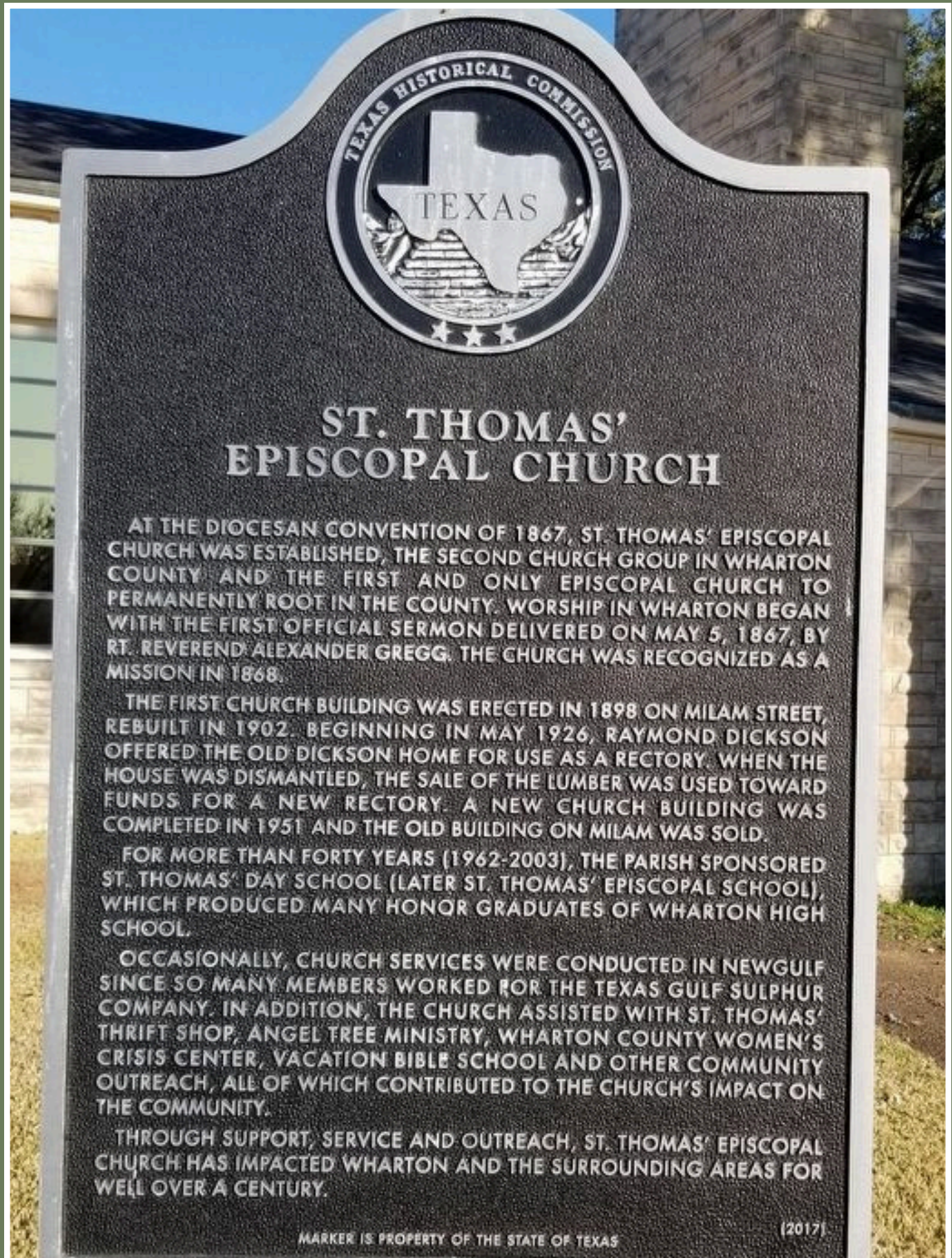
FOR MORE THAN FORTY YEARS (1962-2003), THE PARISH SPONSORED ST. THOMAS' DAY SCHOOL (LATER ST. THOMAS' EPISCOPAL SCHOOL), WHICH PRODUCED MANY HONOR GRADUATES OF WHARTON HIGH SCHOOL.

OCCASIONALLY, CHURCH SERVICES WERE CONDUCTED IN NEWGULF SINCE SO MANY MEMBERS WORKED FOR THE TEXAS GULF SULPHUR COMPANY. IN ADDITION, THE CHURCH ASSISTED WITH ST. THOMAS' THRIFT SHOP, ANGEL TREE MINISTRY, WHARTON COUNTY WOMEN'S CRISIS CENTER, VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL AND OTHER COMMUNITY OUTREACH, ALL OF WHICH CONTRIBUTED TO THE CHURCH'S IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY.

THROUGH SUPPORT, SERVICE AND OUTREACH, ST. THOMAS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH HAS IMPACTED WHARTON AND THE SURROUNDING AREAS FOR WELL OVER A CENTURY.

The Story of St. Thomas'

EST. 1867



ST. THOMAS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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Highlights of St. Thomas'

EST. 1867

A Faithful Presence in Wharton County

- *St. Thomas' is the only Episcopal church to permanently establish itself in Wharton County, serving as a spiritual and community anchor for generations.*

Christian Education for Over Four Decades

St. Thomas' Day School / Episcopal School (1962–2003)

- *Provided a strong academic foundation in a nurturing, Christ-centered environment for the multi-ethnic, multiracial families of Wharton.*

A Legacy of Community Collaboration

Vacation Bible School

- *In partnership for decades with St. Paul Lutheran and First Presbyterian Churches, offering free VBS complete with home-cooked meals and joyful music to children across the community.*

Year-Round Outreach & Support

St. Thomas' Thrift Shop & Outreach Center (Since 1982)

- *A vital ministry supporting local families, schools, and those in need through affordable goods and compassionate service.*

Sacred Spaces for Reflection

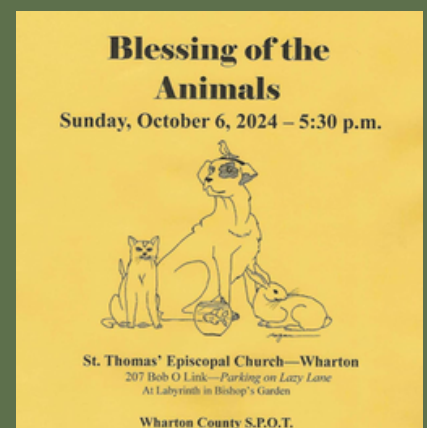
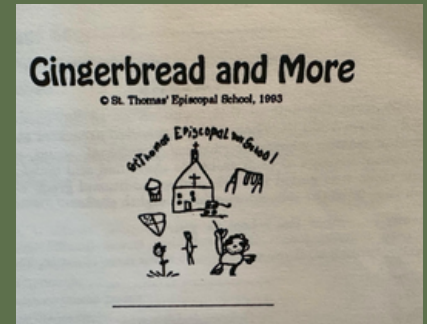
The Bishop's Garden & Cinerarium

- *A peaceful area on the church grounds where loved ones are laid to rest. Features an outdoor altar and benches used during Lent and other services throughout the year.*

Celebrations That Welcome All

Annual Events like the Blessing of the Pets

- *Open to the public and warmly inviting for the wider community to share in joyful fellowship.*





ST. THOMAS'
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Parish Life

A Community of Worship

ST. THOMAS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH

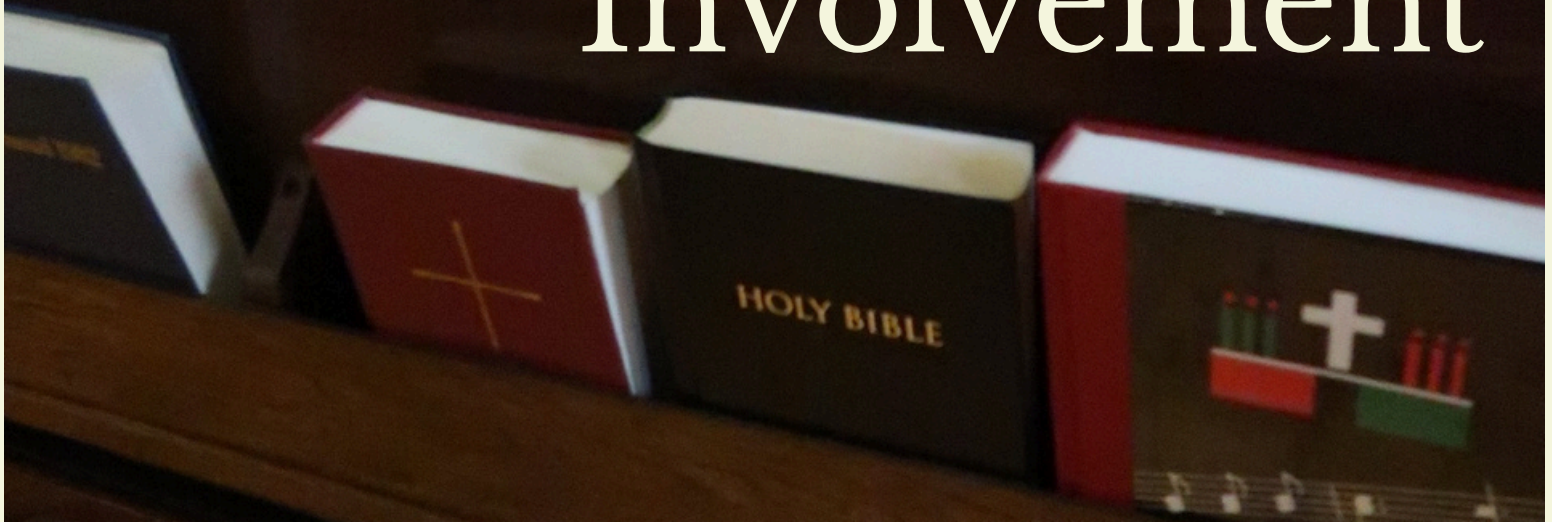
TO THE GLORY OF GOD
AND IN HONOR OF
HIS SERVANT SAINT THOMAS
APOSTLE
A. D. 1951

What We Believe

At St. Thomas' Episcopal Church in Wharton, we are rooted in the rich traditions of the Episcopal Church and guided by the teachings of Jesus Christ. We believe that all people are beloved children of God and welcome everyone—regardless of background, identity, or life journey—to join us in worship, community, and service. Our faith is grounded in scripture, reason, and tradition, and we find spiritual depth in our liturgical and sacramental worship. With open hearts and reverent practices, we seek to reflect God's love in all we do, embracing both the beauty of our heritage and the diversity of God's people.



Parish Involvement



St. Thomas' is a vibrant parish where members are actively involved in many ministries that support both worship and fellowship. **The Altar Guild** prepares our sacred spaces for services, while the **Bread Ministry** lovingly bakes the communion bread we share each Sunday. Our **Blue Aprons** cooking group helps provide hospitality at parish events, and our **Greeters** warmly welcome everyone who walks through our doors.

Acolytes and Lay Readers assist in leading our traditional worship services, and our **Junior Warden and A-Team** keep the church grounds and facilities running smoothly and beautifully.

We also nurture spiritual growth through our **Tuesday Bible Study**, which is open to members of other churches in our community. **Music** is a cherished part of our worship, supported by an active organ and a small but mighty **choir**. Throughout the year, we host joyful gatherings like our **parish picnic, Mardi Gras bingo night**, and **Angel Tree ministry** during Christmas.

Our parish hall is a place of hospitality, regularly used by local organizations such as the **Girl Scouts and 4-H** chapters, reflecting our commitment to being a welcoming space for the wider community.

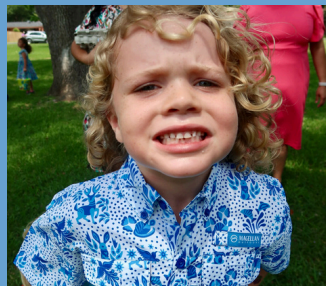
Our members feel involved, supported, and excited to be part of a church family where everyone has a place to serve, grow, and belong.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



Nursery

Our nursery provides a safe, nurturing environment where our youngest children are lovingly cared for during worship and church events.



Godly Play

Godly Play invites our younger elementary-aged children into a rich, storytelling-based Sunday school experience that helps them explore faith and scripture through wonder and imagination.



Youth Group

Our youth group offers a welcoming space for middle and high school students to grow in their faith, build friendships, and serve others through fellowship, study, and outreach.



ST. THOMAS'
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Our Community

Wharton, Texas





The City of Wharton: Where we Live

History of Wharton

Wharton, the county seat of Wharton County, is on the east bank of the lower Colorado River, forty-five miles from the Gulf of Mexico. It was part of the Caney Run mail route established by the Republic of Texas in 1838.

The community was named after two leaders in the struggle for Texas independence, brothers John and William Wharton. The plantation community was first settled in 1846 by some of Stephen F. Austin's original colonists, and a post office was established in 1847. The first lieutenant governor of Texas, Albert Horton, was an early settler.

Land for the courthouse square was donated by William Kincheloe and surveyed by Virgil Stewart and William J. E. Heard. Early settlers came from Alabama, Kentucky, Virginia, Georgia, and Mississippi. Jewish immigrants, arriving as early as the 1850s, established additional businesses and began the Congregation Shearith Israel, the only synagogue in a three-county area.

About Wharton Today

Population

8,742

Location

Wharton is located on the Colorado River, 30 miles southwest of Sugar Land and 55 miles from downtown Houston. Located 45 miles from the Gulf of Mexico, the elevation is 101 feet.

Education

In addition to primary and secondary education offered by Wharton ISD, Wharton Junior College's main campus is located in the city, offering a diverse range of certification and degree programs.

Government

Wharton's municipal government consists of a Council/Mayor/Manager system. Full-time fire and police personnel serve the city and surrounding area.



ST. THOMAS'
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Our Ministries

How We Show God's Love



St. Thomas' Thrift Shop and Outreach Center



Established in 1982, the St. Thomas' Thrift Shop & Outreach Center has been a cornerstone of our church's mission to serve the Wharton community. Located at 530 E. Milam Street, the shop is entirely volunteer-run and operates through the generosity of our parishioners and community partners. All proceeds from the thrift shop directly support our outreach ministry, providing financial assistance for essentials like rent, utilities, temporary lodging, and pharmacy expenses to individuals and families in need. We also collaborate with Wharton County Junior College (WCJC) to offer student volunteer opportunities, fostering a spirit of service and community engagement. Through this ministry, we strive to reflect God's love by meeting practical needs with compassion and dignity.

The Outreach Team at St. Thomas' Episcopal Church is dedicated to serving our neighbors with compassion and purpose, reflecting the love and teachings of Jesus Christ. Our mission is to identify and respond to the needs of our local community by building meaningful partnerships, organizing service projects, and promoting a spirit of generosity and care. Every initiative we take on is deeply rooted in our faith and in alignment with the values of the Episcopal Church.

Our team works to assess real needs in our area and respond with thoughtful, sustainable solutions. From coordinating community events to collaborating with local organizations, we strive to create opportunities for service that are accessible and impactful. We aim to cultivate a culture of outreach within our parish—one that invites every member to participate and fosters long-term relationships that strengthen both our church and our community.



Outreach Team



ST. THOMAS'
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Our Next Rector

A New Leader for our Community



What are the qualities we're looking for in the next rector?

At St. Thomas' Episcopal Church, we are prayerfully seeking a rector who will lead us with faithfulness, warmth, and a heart for both tradition and community.

We value our traditional style of worship and hope for a priest who will honor and uphold our liturgical heritage while helping us grow spiritually through thoughtful preaching and sacramental leadership.

We are looking for someone who is excited to be an active presence in both our church family and the wider Wharton community—someone who will lead Christian education for all ages, nurture our children and youth, and provide compassionate care to our elderly and those who are sick or homebound.

Most of all, we seek a vibrant, approachable, and joy-filled leader who is eager to walk alongside us in faith, service, and love.



ST. THOMAS'
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Membership & Financials



Average Sunday Attendance	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
		54	34	46	48	55
Membership						
Children 0-12				12	12	
Young Adults 18- 34				14	14	
Youth 13 - 17				6	6	
Middle Adults 35 - 64				38	38	
Senior 65+				32	28	
CGS (16+)	82	82	81	84	80	68
CGS (16-)	24	19	20	18	18	11
Race/Ethnicity						
White / Non-Hispanic				90%	90%	90%
Hispanic				7%	7%	7%
Black				3%	3%	3%
Multiracial						
Celebrations						
Easter Attendance		N/A - COVID	61	93	85	105
Christmas Attendance		N/A - COVID	85	88	108	82
Baptisms	7	0	0	2	0	1
Confirmations	5	0	1	1	0	4
Receptions	0	0	0	2	0	0
Finances						
Number of Pledges	48	43	39	36	34	33
Amount of Pledges	239,120	233,808	214,842	215,880	199,240	198,860
Pledge + Plate	239,656	237,047	255,307	222,849	223,814	207,581
Capitol Campaign, etc.	0	23,150	2,430	0	0	0
Total of Revenue	240,134	237,451	285,966	223,108	225,048	208,681
Outreach Beneficiaries	4476	1024	1037	2209	2243	563
Total Expenses	213,682	226,897	222,103	214,642	222,725	157,052