

# Church of the Epiphany

Socorro NM

Parish Profile 2018





## Overview

The Church of the Epiphany in Socorro NM is seeking a part time, possibly bi-vocational, vicar for our 126 year old mission. We are a small but financially secure church with no debt and substantial reserves. A vibrant and diverse congregation, we are committed to living out our Baptismal Covenant by loving God and our neighbor.

Socorro enjoys a moderate climate, and we have outdoor activities in the form of worship services, meals, pet blessings and a Palm Sunday procession. Many of our members take advantage of a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities, and even help beautify our environment through community cleanup.

Epiphany is a “Rite II” parish, using the BCP, the 1982 Hymnal, and the RCL readings. We do mix it up some with an occasional Rite I service, Anglican chant, or folk mass. Worship for us is a joyful, participatory experience, centered on our coming together at the Lord’s Table!

Epiphany is a mission with a mission—we have a small congregation of a dozen folks that meets twice monthly on Sunday afternoon in Magdalena, about 30 miles to the west. With strong roots in ranching, the village is now growing as an art center. Services here are more casual, with guitar hymns and an open forum discussion of the lessons, but still center around Eucharist and the Book of Common Prayer.

We have a long history of lay leadership with members participating in worship, weekly Breakfast and Bible Study (we call it ‘B&BS’), care of our buildings, and service in the community. Our lay leaders enjoy using their training and energy to serve God, supporting the vicar and fellow members.

Participation in music opportunities such as the parish choir, children’s choir, folk mass, and special events is important to us, and often draws people into the church. We have resources to support this strong music program, both local talent and instruments.

We see room for growth in several areas. We would like to build on campus outreach to better support and engage the 2,000 students across the street from the church. We would like to enhance/expand the Sunday school programs and other activities which support young families. We also want to continue building on the strength of the music program particularly in choir leadership, and open more opportunities for quiet meditation.



## Outreach and the larger Socorro community

We are an active community in a small college town in picturesque central NM. We own our own building and are self-supporting which allows us to reach out to others in need. We give of our time and talents, as well as money--several Epiphany members are on the boards of the local food pantry, Chamber of Commerce and homeless day shelter.

In the last few years, we have collected over a ton of pinto beans for the food bank, and almost a thousand pairs of socks for the homeless shelter! Many members also give financially to these organizations, or use their talents by offering hand-made quilts to be auctioned.

The Socorro Fiber Arts Guild uses our hall for their meetings and classes, and we also share our buildings with two small local congregations from other denominations, and with AA.

Other outreach activities include:

- Camp Stoney, the DRG's youth camp
- Bell-ringing for Salvation Army
- Community Clean up
- Community "Friendsgiving" dinner

One example of successful outreach is the International-Student Green Chile Roast. A local farmer roasts the chiles, but the church provides a bounty of side dishes for the 60 to 70 students. The students enjoy the immersion in local culture, devour all of the congregation's casseroles and enchiladas, and enjoy chatting with our parent and grandparent-like members. The next year, they bring their friends! We'd like to build on the success of this event through other campus activities in the future.



Our larger community includes New Mexico Tech, the research university across the street from the church, and several research institutions affiliated with the university. We have numerous doctors and dentists, a small hospital in the Presbyterian Medical system, both charter and public schools, and a Walmart. Although award-winning green chile cheeseburgers are our local specialty, there are a variety of restaurant options in town. Socorro is about an hour via interstate from the International Sunport airport and the urban center of Albuquerque, which offers all the amenities of a city of 800,000 residents.

## Music

We are blessed to have so many musicians and vocalists involved in services and special events at Epiphany, using their gifts to glorify God. We have an adult choir, a children's choir and a folk mass team (usually made up of guitar, mandolin, flute and vocalists). We have a beautiful historic pipe organ, a Steinway piano...and marvelous acoustics!

We have several trained musicians who participate in a variety of special music, such as the Messiah sing-along, our Advent gift to the larger Socorro community. Some of them are involved in the lively music scene at local cafes, and concerts in the recital hall. NM Tech hosts an excellent Performing Arts series, featuring dance, theater, and a gamut of musical genres.



### **Lay Leadership**

Many members participate in worship, whether as acolytes, greeters, lay assistants, or reading the lessons and prayers of the people. One member said he liked the varied levels of responsibility that lay leadership provides, because it allows him flexibility in participation.

### **Outdoors**

Our moderate climate encourages a wide variety of outdoor activities. We have incorporated the outdoors into the ecumenical Easter Sunrise Service, our

Water Canyon picnic/service in September, our blessing of the animals, picnics for Mother's Day, Fourth of July, and a 'welcome back' cookout at the start of the NM Tech fall semester.

Many people from the community (and from around the world!) visit the Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge, 18 miles south of us in San Antonio, NM. Here people can enjoy world-class birding and wildlife viewing. Others enjoy golfing year round on NMT's golf course, playing tennis, or hiking/biking/exploring in the many recreational areas surrounding Socorro, including mountains that rise to almost 11,000 feet. Pueblo ruins, petroglyphs, and hot springs are within an easy drive.

### **Areas for Growth**

- We hope to build on our music program with additional music leadership and opportunities.
- We'd like to offer more meditative quiet activities in worship and during the week, encouraging us to seek the Holy Spirit in all that we undertake.
- We want to grow the college ministry through a greater presence on campus and through additional outreach activities.
- We have recently seen the addition of several young families to our congregation, and we hope to build our Sunday school programs and youth/family activities.

For a more extensive look at Epiphany, please see our expanded profile on our website: <https://www.epiphany-net.org/>



**We look forward to meeting you and serving the Risen Christ together!**