



## EPIPHANY E-NOTES

November 2023 - ISSUE 28

*We will embrace all we meet with words and deeds of:*

*Welcome and acceptance*

*Service*

*Growth in a life of prayer and faith*

*Healing and reconciliation*

*Celebration*



*Athena and Susan her "voice"*

### **Toward Transformation and Peace**

Father Steve's *[medical circumstances]* meant that the service at Epiphany on Sunday, October 15, was not Holy Eucharist but Morning Prayer with Deacon Athena Gassoumis as the officiant and preacher. Since last August she has served at St. Paul's in Truth or Consequences on her path toward

ordination as a priest. She says she has been 'fully engaged in learning all there is to learn about being a deacon—patience, humility, and stick-to-it-ness. It's about the process, the call into a life that requires digging deeper into oneself and the world.'

Unfortunately, Athena came down with laryngitis and could not talk. "Cleared of anything contagious. Don't worry," read a tag she wore. Her words in the Morning Prayer litany were said by Susan Stone, who also read her sermon that began with a quote from Sister Miriam, popular on the religious talk-show circuit, "Suffering that is not transformed is transmitted." "She said this about her own life's journey and of ours. Why is this important? Because suffering can create barriers, confusion, and hatred within ourselves and others," Athena said. "Our bishop's question for us clergy this year is, How can the church, and ourselves, become more loving, liberating, and life-giving? What does this mean in light of the struggles, oppression, and current carnage in our world?"

Athena wove into her sermon all the day's readings—Isaiah 45:1-7, Psalm 96:1-13, 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10, and Matthew 22:15-22. Here are more excerpts: "In Isaiah God anoints Cyrus, a Gentile, for a special task, to rebuild the 'City of Peace.' If tasked to keep love in our hearts, as we are daily, we may be struggling like the Thessalonians. Paul tells the young congregation, who have a multitude of distractions, I'm proud of you, keep it up. He praises them for accepting the power of the Holy Spirit, the change agent in their hearts and ours. So, we hear and hold the Word of incarnation in our hearts.

"Again, what are we asked to do? One of the important themes Paul shares with us in chapter 4 of 1 Thessalonians is not to fall asleep so we may stay awake in and with him. This is where we begin to experience transformation so we may be able to handle what we are tasked these days with one another and the world. This is what Jesus wants us to see and tasks us with when he says, 'Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's.' We are dual citizens in this world. We live in one where we are required to pay taxes and the other, where we are required to commit to a journey of transformation and peace, to know intimately the incarnation, to create the kingdom at hand. 'The suffering that is not transformed is transmitted.' Amen



## What's Happening in November?

The Christian feast of All Saints begins November in the church's liturgical year. On All Saints' Day, Wednesday, the 1<sup>st</sup>, an Evening Prayer service led by Warden Bill Stone took place in the church, and on All Saints' Sunday, the 5<sup>th</sup>, loved ones requested by Epiphany parishioners are being named in the prayers at the Holy Eucharist service.

The last Sunday of the month, the 26<sup>th</sup>, brings to an end the liturgical year with Christ the King Sunday and the remembrance of him as the Messiah.

Events in-between on Epiphany's calendar include:

+ The 7 a.m. breakfast and Bible study on Thursday, the 2<sup>nd</sup>, that begins a new study of the Apostle Paul's letter to the Galatians in parallel to the letter to the Hebrews not considered written by him and what it means to be a Jewish Christian. Taught by Fred Phillips, the study continues each Thursday morning through the month. Participants take turns serving the breakfast.

+ The year's pledge drive launched in the Holy Eucharist service on Sunday, the 5<sup>th</sup>, with a short presentation on his thoughts about stewardship by Ben Bankson, a member of the bishop's committee. Such presentations by other parishioners are to follow on the other Sundays in October.

+ The 71<sup>st</sup> convention of the Diocese of the Rio Grande on Friday-Saturday, November 10-11, at St. Alban's Episcopal Church in El Paso with Epiphany's delegation made up of Father Steve, Susan Stone, and Ben Bankson. At the church's annual meeting last January, Susan and Bill Harris were elected to our two delegate positions and Lois Phillips and Ben, alternates. Since neither Bill nor Lois could attend, Ben now joins Susan as the delegates.

+ The church's first sit-down luncheon on Tuesday, November 14, at 12:30 in the parish hall for "seniors, retirees, and opinionated elders" with former vicar Woody Peabody speaking on "The Art of Healing." See the separate story about the luncheon in this issue.

+ The month's meeting of the bishop's committee at 5:30 preceded at 5 by the Taize service of prayers and meditative singing.

+ A "Chats" session on our Book of Common Prayer given by Father Steve and Warden Stone on Sunday, the 19<sup>th</sup>, following the Holy Eucharist service. The session includes lunch.

+ If someone volunteers to organize it, a "Friendsgiving" dinner on the afternoon of Thanksgiving Day, the 23<sup>rd</sup>, intended for Tech students who cannot go home, those who are alone, and any church or community member who may want to be part of the dinner.

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## Light a Candle for Someone

All Saints' Day on November 1 followed by All Saints' Sunday on the 5<sup>th</sup> provide occasions to call attention to the votive candle stand along the east wall of Epiphany's sanctuary. Parishioners are invited at any time to go to the stand, light a candle for someone, and kneel to say a prayer for the person.

The stand as well as the tall sculpture made of wood and stained glass next to it were gifts to Epiphany in memory of Michael Edmonson, 1956-2020, brother of our parish administrator, Annie Danielsen.

The oak kneeling bench at the stand was a recent addition given by parishioner Lois Phillips, who heads the Altar Guild.



## **Father Woody to Speak on 'The Art of Healing'**

Epiphany's vicar from 2001 through 2014, Woody Peabody, returns as the guest speaker at the church's first luncheon for "seniors, retirees, and opinionated elders" on Tuesday, November 14, at 12:30 in the parish hall. Woody has chosen "The Art of Healing" as his topic.

A "cradle Episcopalian" who was born in Maine but grew up in Central California, Woody received a bachelor's degree in history from University of the Pacific in Stockton in 1966 and then studied for the priesthood at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific in Berkeley, graduating in 1969. He was ordained in August of 1970 at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Visalia, where he was the youth pastor. After serving several parishes in his home diocese, he did interim work for the Diocese of Olympia in Washington state, being based in Bellevue, and next organized and was rector of Good Samaritan Episcopal Church in Sammamish.

In 2001 Woody and his wife Trish relocated to her home state of New Mexico to become, as he likes to call himself, a "farmer-priest." They bought an acreage in Lemitar on which they slowly built an adobe house largely by hand. However, his priestly calling prevailed for the next 13 years in his taking on Epiphany and turning it into a thriving congregation. After stepping down as mandated by the Church Pension Fund when he turned 72, he continued to be a supply priest. For the past nine years he has been at St. Paul's in Truth or Consequences.

As indicated on the mailed invitation to the November 14 luncheon, please RSVP by November 7 to Annie Danielsen at [epiphany.socorro@gmail.com](mailto:epiphany.socorro@gmail.com) or 575-517-0211 if you plan to attend.

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## Notes From the Bishop's Committee

The citing of what is coming for Epiphany in November and the Advent season in December made up a lot of what took place at the meeting of the bishop's committee on Wednesday, October 18. Due to Father Steve's continuing recovery, the meeting did not take place in person at the church but remotely via Zoom. Seven of the nine members of the committee participated. One absentee was Eileen Comstock and the other was Brewster Bird. Parishioner Lois Phillips and Vicar Emerita Linda Wilson also joined the Zoom meeting.

For the November events mentioned, see the standing feature, "What's Happening in November?" December events mentioned were a "Quiet Day" on Saturday, the 2<sup>nd</sup>, from 9 a.m. to noon and Evening Prayer with a soup supper and reflections on a word or two from the previous Sunday's gospel reading on Wednesday evenings the 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, and 20<sup>th</sup>.

Among the several matters about which Father Steve spoke was that with his mandated retirement when he turned 72 in October, he expected in January to be relicensed as required for one year for service as a priest in the diocese.

Being a postulant or candidate for the Episcopal priesthood, Warden Bill Stone reported to the meeting that he had spent the previous weekend studying at the Bishop's School for Ministry and that he will next do so the second weekend of November. He said that Bishop Michael Hunn intended to meet monthly with the members of the class via Zoom.

The approved treasurer's report covering January through September showed total income of \$103,093.87, the budgeted amount's being \$97,494.96; and total expenses of \$93,804.45, the budgeted amount, \$97,003.25. Approval was also given to the minutes of the last meeting on September 20.

Two other actions approved by the committee were to have the grand piano in the church sanctuary tuned and the two trees on the east side of the church property trimmed and not removed as was an option in a proposal about the trees submitted by Manuel Lucero. Annie Danielsen was to contact him and request proof of liability insurance of \$2 million before he went ahead with the work.

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## Water Resources Report Wins Award

Epiphany parishioner Fred Phillips, emeritus professor of hydrology at New Mexico Tech and a member of the Tech faculty since 1981, was among the authors of a formative report published last year on the impact of climate change on New Mexico's water resources over the next 50 years. In October the report became the recipient of the John C. Frye Award in Environmental Geology given annually by the Geological Society of America and the Association of American State Geologists in memory of a glacial geologist who once was the executive director of the GSA.

The award's formal presentation took place on Sunday, the 15<sup>th</sup>, as part of the GSA's annual meeting in Pittsburgh. Fred was joined by two of the other authors, Anne C. Tillery and Nelia W. Dunbar, in accepting it. In the photo above, they are shown from left to right with President John Metesh of the Association of American State Geologists and the Montana state geologist. Anne is a hydrologist in the investigations section of the New Mexico Water Science Center in Albuquerque while Nelia directs Tech's Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources and is the New Mexico state geologist.

When Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham took office in 2019, she tasked the Interstate Stream Commission to produce a 50-year water plan for New Mexico focused on the stewardship, equity, and sustainability of the state's water. The commission in turn tasked Tech's Bureau of Geology to develop the report. The 218-page results underwent vigorous peer review. Called both "compelling" and "stark" for the bleak picture it presented, the report became the foundation for the governor's Water Policy and Infrastructure Task Force to develop recommendations for action by the state legislature.

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*[Section redacted]*

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## And Pray!

**For a greater sense of gratitude** in this month of Thanksgiving, that we may recognize all the ways that God has shown his love for us and be filled with awe and thankfulness for God's gifts.

**For the growth of peace**, that God will touch the hearts and change the minds of all who are leading violence and warfare and give them courage to enter dialogue and establish ceasefires.

**For all those suffering from war and are refugees**, that the God of refuge will hold them close in loving care and protection, give them strength to endure great hardship, and fill them with the hope of freedom and peace.

**For our parish family**, that we may share the good news with one another and others and live as signs of God's love.

**For those among us commended to our prayers** -Skeeter Leard, Gaby Benalil, Christopher Bechtol, David Davis, Cindy Madrid and her sister Celeste Taylor, Randolph Elliott, Bill Giebitz, Joyce Bankson, Laurie Gregg, Malik Osman, Jewels Wolf, Felix Bernard Clayton, Laurin and Phil Threatt, Moneic Wing, JoAnn Powers, and Jeffery Clayton.

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**EPIPHANY E-NOTES** is a monthly email newsletter about the programs and people of Epiphany Episcopal Church, 908 Leroy Place, Socorro.

Mailing address: PO Box 692, Socorro NM 87801

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or our website at: <https://www.epiphany-net.org/>

***If you have something you would like included in a future newsletter, please send it via email to the church [epiphany.socorro@gmail.com](mailto:epiphany.socorro@gmail.com) . We would also appreciate your feedback.***

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