

THE WORD from St. Andrew's

January 2024

The Feast of Epiphany

It's January and in the secular calendar that means many people are thinking about New Year's resolutions and fresh starts and getting back to a normal schedule. But in the church year, the first week of January is still part of Christmas. The Twelve Days of Christmas begin on December 25 and end on January 5—Twelfth Night. On January 6, we celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany.

The word “epiphany” comes from the Greek and means “manifestation.” But it isn't just any manifestation—it refers to the manifestation of a deity. The feast commemorates the visitation of the Magi (Matt. 2:9-11), so it is associated with Jesus's revelation of himself to the Gentiles (represented by the Magi). Because the Magi brought gifts, in some traditions it is a day of gift giving. In the Eastern Church, it is also a celebration of Jesus's baptism. As you can see, Epiphany is a major feast in the church, although it often goes unobserved—maybe because we're all so exhausted from the holidays!

But I like to think about January and the new year through the lens of Epiphany. Epiphany is all about the revelation of Jesus Christ and the recognition by the Magi that Christ is Lord. The Magi brought gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh fulfilling Old Testament texts like Isa. 60:6, “They shall bring gold and frankincense” and Ps. 72:15, “May gold of Sheba be given to him.” Frankincense and myrrh were both sweet gum resins used in incense and as burial spices. Perhaps these gifts represented both the kingship of Christ and his death and resurrection. More importantly, the Magi prostrated themselves before Christ and paid him homage, submitting themselves to his lordship.

As we look forward to the new year ahead, perhaps instead of setting New Year's resolutions, we can consider offering Epiphany gifts—the spiritual gifts we would like to give Jesus. What are your spiritual gifts? Have you ever explored them or sought to identify them? There are online surveys that can help you determine your spiritual gifts (such as [Spiritual Gifts Inventory](#)), but often the best way to learn what they are is to listen to those who know you best. “Charlene, you always make people feel so welcome!” (gift of hospitality); “George, whenever you speak, I feel energized and want to get out there and do more!” (gift of exhortation); “Roslyn, thank you for bringing me soup and medicine when I was sick.” (gift of healing). “Joseph, I love your comments during Bible study. I always learn so much from you.” (gift of teaching).

As Paul says, “To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good” (1 Cor. 12:7). If we hold our gifts inside us, we are not using our gifts as God intends—they are *meant* to be shared, even if sharing them terrifies us or forces us out of our comfort zones. Every spiritual gift is an asset to the church as long as every member is expressing their gift(s) through service. Even if you don't feel like you have much to offer, you absolutely *do*! As you seek your spiritual gifts, listen carefully. Pray that the Holy Spirit will guide you in how you should express your gifts, and then offer yourself to Christ's church as a living gift more valuable than gold, frankincense, or myrrh.

Susan +



What can I give him
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd
I would give a lamb.
If I were a wise man
I would do my part.
But what I can I give him?
Give him my heart.

“In the Bleak Midwinter” by Christina Rossetti (originally published in 1872 under the title, “A Christmas Carol”)

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Clerk Janet Macaluso

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December Vestry Meeting Report

- Mtr. Susan reported the 6:00 P.M. Christmas Eve Worship Service will include the Adult and Children's Choir and the new Handbell Choir.
- Mtr. Susan will be on leave the week of December 26-28th
- Mtr. Susan is planning to hold Morning Prayer starting this spring. More information to be forthcoming in the near future.
- In January a letter will go out to all parish members requesting updated directory information for the new ParishSoft accounting software.
- Thank you, Daughters of the King, for the Christmas cards, and thank you, Women of St. Andrew's, for the reception and food after the Celebration of New Ministry
- Wings for Life will start a new program in January at the Chaves County Detention Center.
- For election at the Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 28th, the Nominating Committee will put forth the candidates Cat Husby, Ken Hernandez, and Jerry Odette for the Vestry and Sissy Mayne, Twyla Robb, and alternate Sue Evans as delegates to the Convention.
- The Advent Festival had an attendance of about 100 people, the offering plate received \$72.00, and donations of \$4,622.00 were also received. The expenses totaled \$2,724.00. The remainder of \$1,969.63 will go toward seed money for next year.
- The Vestry reviewed a draft 2024 budget for final approval at the January vestry meeting.
- Under Old Business the Vestry approved the Compensation Committee recommendation for 2024 staff raises which follow the 3.2% COLA standard.
- Under New Business, the Vestry approved the annual Housing Allowance for the Rector and a \$50.00 Christmas bonus for all staff members, except clergy.



Merry Christmas and a prayer for a Happy New Year to All,
Cory Butler,
Senior Warden

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Christa Kelley, Fr. Bob Tally, Cleis Jordan, Beth Bierwirth, Sean K., Abby R. & Family, Husby Family, Emma Cortez, Alice B. Smith, Pat & Karen Hendricks, Janet Macaluso, David Knadle, Gary and Enid Smith, Lynn Townsend, Julie Deaton, Carol Anne Linson and her mother, Nancy Hartwick. Suzanne Berry, Pat Walker, John Fuss, Melody Green, Sevie Bates, Kate Dorff, Aaron Burkett, Earl & Kathleen Pittman, Craig Lysak, Manuel Linares, Jeremiah Bryant, Burnitta McClung, Bruce Currier, Billie Weber, Lorinda & Royce, Cory Woodbury, Jeanelle McGuire, Andy Morehouse, Kelli, Marilyn Manatt, Michelle, Ann Wonders, Isabel Castillo, Lisa Huff, Molly Pittman, Betty, Kim C., Maddy, Victoria Cobb, Pat Wiberg, Andrew W., Matthew, Rachel, Amanda Olivo, Florence Carr, Beth Rogers, Jeannine Byron, Marisa, Lew Hightower, Clayton Thompson, Bill & Meredith Patton, Annette Mader, Julian Linares, Raymond Linares, Jennifer Linares, Cassie, Sandi Olivo, Fern Simpson

- Ministries of St. Andrew's: Mother Susan, the Vestry, and the Foundation; Layreaders & Chalice bearers, Ushers, Altar Guild, the Adult Choir, Children's Choir and Bell Choir,
- our Sexton Ernie Meda, Parish Administrator, Janet Macaluso, and receptionist, Sarah Gifford.
- Outreach ministries: Four Paws Pet Pantry, Andy's Community Breakfast, Needle Arts ministry; Starting Line, Wings for L.I.F.E, Community Kitchen
 - The Diocese of the Rio Grande, Bishop Michael Hunn, Canon Lee Curtis
 - For Camp Stoney, and the new Missioner for Christian Formation, Rev. Le Anna Brun
 - For Br. Angel Roque, and all seminarians. For the Bishop's School for Ministry (Iona)
 - For Diocesan Councils, Committees, Commissions, and the Cathedral Chapter
 - Borderlands Ministries, bridge chaplain Ana Reza
 - For the SE Deanery, Fr. Maurice Geldert, Dean
 - RCC Inmates & Officers; Guards & Teachers; CCDC inmates & staff;
 - Those who are sick and those who care for them; for nurses, doctors and all medical staff
 - Those who Mourn
 - All those in the Armed Forces and their families; First Responders, keeping us safe
 - The People of Ukraine, Gaza, and Israel and all who suffer the horrors of War
 - For those fighting Injustice or Suffering it, the Women of Afghanistan and Iran, and others
 - Refugees, and those providing help for them; our shelter at St. Christopher's, El Paso
 - All victims of storms, floods, fires, freezes and other disasters falling disproportionately on the poorest, and all who seek to relieve and support them
 - For the homeless; For the needy and hungry; For the will and means to help them
 - For the unloved and those who have no one to pray for them;
 - For our leaders in the city, state, and nation: wisdom and grace in the exercise of their duties
 - For peace, and for those who threaten it, turning the hearts of those who would harm others

For our Annual Parish meeting



Epiphany

O God, by the leading of a star you manifested your only Son to the Peoples of the earth: Lead us, who know you now by faith, to your presence, where we may see your glory face to face; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen. BCP p. 214

The celestial event that led the Magi to Jesus was an extremely rare and symbol-packed happening.

The conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter that happened on December 21, 2020, was billed as a “Christmas Star.” Because the two massive planets appeared to be just one degree apart, they looked to Earthlings like one big bright star, suggestive of the Star of Bethlehem that heralded Jesus’ birth.

But if Grant Mathews’ theory is correct, it pales in comparison to what happened in the sky 2,020-odd years ago, leading “wise men from the East” to seek out the newborn king. Mathews, Professor of Theoretical Astrophysics and Cosmology and Director of the Center for Astrophysics at the University of Notre Dame, normally pursues research in the fields of the origin and evolution of matter in the universe. But as an avocation, he has been pondering just what it was that was so significant in the skies around 6 B.C. that would be immortalized in the Gospel.

Mathews says that the Magi were Zoroastrian priests from Babylon, and that they understood that the constellation Aries referred to the land of Judea.

“There is evidence from the writings of the famous astronomer Claudius Ptolemy and also from the minting of Roman coins at the time that Aries was the constellation thought to be associated with the region of Judea,” he says. “This was particularly significant as Aries was also the constellation containing the Vernal Equinox at that time and an event that occurred in Aries would therefore imply the redemption and new life associated with the coming of spring.”

So a major planetary alignment in that particular part of the sky — where Aries was — would catch their attention.

“Interestingly, they had their own belief in a coming messiah, but their beliefs reflected a sense of determinism, which in their view was connected with the motions of the Sun, Moon, and planets in the sky,” Mathews said in a lecture he gave a few years ago at Notre Dame. “In their belief system, each constellation of the Zodiac was assigned to a different geographic region of influence. The location of the Sun, Moon, or planets in a constellation spoke of the character of a person born on that day. Especially if they were born in the geographic location associated with that constellation.”



Jupiter in retrograde

But what was the planetary alignment?

In a 2016 interview, Mathews noted that Michael Molnar put forward the hypothesis in the book *The Star of Bethlehem* that the Sun, Moon, Jupiter, and Saturn appeared in Aries, “with Venus in the next-door constellation Pisces along with Mercury and Mars on the other side in the next constellation Taurus.” What’s also significant is that Jupiter was in retrograde, meaning that from Earth’s perspective, the planet was following a course contrary to the other planets, but that it then reversed course, after appearing to stop.

The Gospel of Matthew notes, “The star came to rest in the place where the child was.” Mathews explains that it was “coming to rest” in Aries — the constellation associated with Judea, where the Christ Child was.

“In this case the star coming to rest would have been the planet Jupiter (*the symbol of a ruler*) that literally stopped its retrograde motion and ‘came to rest’ in the sky during its motion among the stars. The other planets and the Sun and Moon being there would have strengthened this and held great significance to the Magi. That is why they would have arrived in Herod’s court to ask, “where is the newborn ruler of Judea?” Ancient Roman coins attach Aries the Ram to the land of Judea.

In the belief system of the Magi, this was a very unusual and special event. At that time Aries was the location of the “Vernal Equinox.” The Sun located there was a symbol of spring and redemption. The occurrence of the Moon and Jupiter there at the same time were the symbol of a special destiny of the new ruler. Saturn was the symbol of life. The other “attending” planets were holding this up as something special.

It also intrigues Mathews that it was Zoroastrian priests who would have been the protagonists in the story.

“Today we would call them astrologers, but they had a somewhat different belief system than that of modern astrology,” he said in the interview. “This was a very ancient religion that had its own belief in a ‘trinity’ and a coming messiah. Zoroaster literally means ‘Shining light.’ They had a belief that the stars, planets, Sun and Moon were tokens of the divine. Frankincense to them was a symbol of ‘eternal light’ used in their ceremonies.”

No wonder, then, that that was one of the three gifts they brought Jesus.

CELESTIAL EVENT



"The most surprising thing to me about this story is that God would have timed His arrival to coincide with the belief system of a group of non-Hebrew astrologers," Mathews said. "Indeed, astrology was forbidden in the Jewish belief system. This explains why no one in Herod's court was aware of 'His star in the East' of which the Magi spoke. What was God intending to say?"

Mathews believes that the answer might be two-fold. "One is that this is symbolic of the gift of redemption to all peoples brought by the Christ child," he said. "The second is something of a personal message to humankind. As one who studies the heavens myself, I can somewhat empathize with the Magi in that even in modern science, as was the case of those ancient astronomers, we explore the heavens in search of evidence of creation and the creator. And then, as today, God is a rewarder of those that seek him with all of their heart. I believe that the Magi sought with all of their resources and being for evidence of the creator of all things in the heavens. And that God chose to reward that."

-John Burger

<https://aleteia.org/2020/12/15/physicist-star-of-bethlehem-may-have-been-planetary-alignment/>

Thank you, Shelly Currier, for sharing this fascinating article!

St Nicholas Day

On **December 6th**, we had a very special guest at our Wednesday Night Supper: **St. Nicholas** himself, the famed Bishop of Myra, known far and wide for his love of children, dropped by to meet the children of St. Andrew's.



He read them a story, and visited with each child, giving them a stocking to hang for Santa Claus on Christmas Eve.

For more pictures, check out the January edition of the online Word: <http://www.standrewsroswell.com/the-word.html>

There is a new program just getting started here at St. Andrew's. It's called "**St.A.R.S.**" which stands for "**St. Andrew's Ride Share.**" Stephanie McDaniel has stepped up to organize the program, which will provide rides to church for those who need them.

Would you like a ride to attend evening events like our weekly Wednesday night dinners, or Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, or the Lenten Study Series that will be coming up?
Could you provide a ride for someone?

Just send an email to st.a.r.s.standrews@gmail.com to let Stephanie know if you need a ride or can provide one. She'll take it from there to match up riders and drivers!



"Be a Star! Share your car!"

More St. Nicholas Day Pictures...



Tree trimming



Story time...



Stockings...



ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Sunday, January 28th

Parish Hall, following Eucharist

Come and join us in this celebration of the year just passed, and in preparation for the year to come.



The Parish Annual Meeting will be held after the Eucharist service on Sunday, January 28th. This is the chance for Vestry members and ministry leaders to report on the year just past. And What a Year We've Had! We have much to celebrate. We'll also look ahead with plans (and budget) for the coming year, including the election of members to the Vestry, and as delegates to Diocesan Convention.

Candidates for Vestry

The Nominating Committee has nominated the following candidates, and they have agreed to serve: For Vestry, each for a three year term:



Ken Hernandez,



Catherine (Cat) Husby,



Jerry O'Dette

For Delegates, staggered terms:



Sissy Mayne



Twyla Robb.



For Alternate: Sue Evans

Thank you, ladies and gentleman, for agreeing to serve St. Andrew's in this way.

Our By-Laws provide for nominations from the floor of the Annual Meeting.

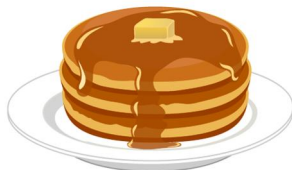
“Additional qualified candidates either for the Vestry or for the positions of delegate or alternate to the Diocesan Convention or Convocation may be nominated from the floor by any member present at the Annual Meeting. All nominees will have agreed to stand for election before their names are reported to the Vestry and before they are nominated at the Annual Meeting.”

Just be sure your nominee has agreed to serve, before you name them on the floor.

Andy's Breakfast!

Saturday, January 27, 2024

7:30 – 10 am



Andy's Breakfast is serving up pancakes and eggs, breakfast meats, fruits and fellowship. Wonderful to see guests and volunteers mingling in the Parish Hall.

Everyone is Welcome!

We can always use help with the clean up. Please call Greg Anderson (575-420-1300) to find out how you can help. Or just **show up** in the Parish Hall at 9:30 for clean-up crew.

Donations ALWAYS Needed !!!

Monetary donations are welcome. Be sure to note in the memo line: **Andy's Breakfast Supplies**

Also needed: Toiletries, (especially small toothpaste, toothbrushes),

razors and shave cream, deodorant, hand lotion, etc., men's and women's socks, hand sanitizer. With Winter upon us, warm hats, gloves & coats are very welcome.

You can bring items to the Church office, or place them in the basket in the Narthex.

If you would like to help in the kitchen, call Greg Anderson, 575-420-1300.

To help with the other distributions, call Carol Anne Linson, 575-420-5814



Women of St. Andrew's will meet on Monday, January 8th at Sue Evans's home at 9:30 am.

All St. Andrew's women are members and are welcome. Please come and get to know these busy, loving people.



- 1/1 - Angela Craig
- 1/6 - Amos Smith
- 1/8 - Gary Hartwick
Sharon Pummer
Breanna Hickey
- 1/12 - Brenda Malone
- 1/17 - Kelly Pigott
- 1/24 - Mikell Kelley
Mitchel Kelley
- 1/26 - Mary Alice Lysak
- 1/27 - J.J. Sanchez
Sally Pretti
- 1/28 - Barbara Baker
Marina Blake
- 1/30 - Bronson Newton
Karen Hendricks
- 1/31 - Johnathan Steinback



Daughters of the King

Thursday Jan 18th

11 am Hunker Room



All women of St. Andrews are welcome!



Fellowship Meal

Wednesday Night Fellowship Suppers

Start up again
January 17th

The Menus are still being planned, but they are sure to be delicious!



Supper at 5 pm
\$5 a plate. Kids under 12 eat free.

Needle Arts Ministry

In November, **Needle Arts** took 6 receiving blankets and 10 knit baby hats each to ENMMC and Lovelace.

The nurses again thanked us for our support. Thank you so much to all those who sew the blankets and knit the baby hats and those who make the monetary donations which help us buy the flannel and yarn !!! We continue to keep Rev. Susan supplied with mini prayer quilts . There are also mini prayer quilts and comfort shawls in the office if you know someone who could use a little cheer.



The group will meet on **Thursday, January 11th** at 10 am, in the Office, with coffee and doughnuts. All are welcome! (whether you knit, or sew, or just like the company)

The deadline for the February **Word** is **Jan 25nd**. Send anything you would like to share to Charmaine: Word@standrewsroswell.com.

Join **the Word Gang!** The extraordinary crew of Folders and Label-stickers! Thank you to Diane Marshall, Betty Cosio-Avalos, Gini Bartley, Shelly Currier, Almata LeBarre, and sometimes Rich Altans.

Tuesday, Jan **30th** at 9:30 in the Church Office

FOUR PAWS PET PANTRY

Next Pet Pantry Day:

Wednesday, JAN 17, 2024

3:30 to 5:30 at the 5th Street Entrance

Bagging (and visiting) begins at 2:30. Please come and help!

Dog Food and Cat Food NEEDED!!

also Gallon size Ziploc Bags

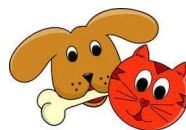
Make monetary donations payable to St. Andrews, and write "Pet Pantry" in the memo line

OR just buy a bag of dog or cat food and drop it off at the Church

If you prefer you can order Pet food from

Chewy.com

They deliver!!



In November we helped 106 people and handed out 270 gallon zip lock bags of dog food and 135 zip lock gallon bags of cat food for a total of 405 bags of pet food. We had 11 volunteers who helped with bagging and the distribution. We continue to have a limit of 4 total bags of food for each household. We really appreciate those who have been donating food, zip lock bags and making monetary donations. We are still buying about 90% of the food we distribute although we have had a few more donations of food. Thank you so much for your continued support.

Debbi Smith
Donna Eastes
Four Paws Pet Pantry



Nursery

is available during the Sunday service! The room is located in the Education wing, off the Parish Hall, and all children **ages 6 and under** are welcome.

Helpers are welcome too.

We are continuing to freshen up our Nursery—recently, the carpet was cleaned. We had to dispose of some old furniture, including a crib, and are now asking for donations to purchase new up-to-code equipment.

Please donate: make your check payable to St. Andrew's, and note "Nursery" in the memo line.



The Choirs of St. Andrew's

graced our Christmas Eve service with heavenly music. (if you missed it, you can find it on our Facebook videos page: <https://www.facebook.com/St.AndrewsRoswell/videos>)

The Adult choir meets on Wednesday nights at 6:00 pm
The Bell Choir meets on Monday nights at 5:30 pm, and
The Children's Choir meets on Sunday mornings after the Eucharist service (about 11:15 am)

All three choirs are open to new members. Experience not necessary: being in a choir is in itself an education (and a lot of fun!) For more information, contact John: jfussnm93@gmail.com , or 575-626-9624

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: Jan 18 - 25

"You shall love the Lord your God ... And your neighbour as yourself" - (Luke 10:27)

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is an international Christian ecumenical observance kept annually around Pentecost in the Southern Hemisphere and between 18-25 January in the Northern Hemisphere.

With roots going back over 100 years, the dedicated octave (8 days) of prayers has been jointly commissioned and prepared since 1966, after the Second Vatican Council, by the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches.

Each year ecumenical partners in a different region are asked to prepare the materials. For 2024, Christians in the African nation of Burkino Faso prepared the draft materials adopted by the commission.

You can download the materials here, and learn about Burkina Faso, about ecumenism, and the team working on this year's event. There is also a liturgy for use in ecumenical services, and perhaps of most interest, Daily Reflections for each of the 8 days.

<https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/resources-for-the-week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2024>

Angel Tree



St. Andrew's made 24 children's Christmas so much brighter. Thank you for them! Many of the children are living with grandparents or single moms. They are all so appreciative. One older brother really thanked me for his younger brother.
- Sara Armstrong

Contemplative Prayer

"Contemplative Prayer is a process of interior transformation, a conversation initiated by God and leading, if we consent, to divine union. One's way of seeing reality changes in this process."

"Open Mind, Open Heart" Thomas Keating

Starting January 9th, on Tuesdays at 4:30pm, there will be Contemplative Prayer in the Howden Room. Entry to the church will be through the alley door. After prayer, there will be a study of "The Rule of Benedict." The book we will be using is Spirituality for the 21st Century, by Joan Chittister, OSB. There are 2 copies in the church office, on a first come basis. Otherwise the book is available on Amazon and Kindle. The book is a daily devotional and it starts Jan. 1st.

These two events are separate and you do not have to attend both. They are also open to anyone, not just St. Andrew's. If you know someone who would like to attend let them know. PJ Greer will be leading both the prayer time and the study. Contact her if you have questions.

Brother, give us a word...

Gift

Sometimes the things we wait for do not arrive. We seek, we suffer. And in God's time, a gift does indeed arrive, but it is not at all what we had imagined or hoped for. In its place, there stands a thing we needed so deeply that we could not name it. Until it arrived, looked us in the face, and changed everything.

- Br. Keith Nelson, [SSJE](#)

Sulking Jonah

- Charles Currier

In the last article, Jonah was in the belly of the great fish where his “soul fainted,” a euphemism for dying. The text says that the fish vomited Jonah onto dry land. The last article cited news reports of two people being swallowed by whales and the ambergris (vomit from the giant sperm whale). On December 11, 2023, there was another report of a massive sperm whale that was at risk of being stranded, only 100 yards offshore at Port Beach, Perth, Australia. It returned to sea without help. No reports of men being vomited onto the beach but another suggestion that maybe the story of Jonah is not necessarily just allegorical.

After being “vomited” onto dry land, and Jonah’s repentance from trying to flee the Lord’s command, Jonah reaches Nineveh. Readers of the book of Jonah may be curious as to why the Ninevites would pay much attention to a young Hebrew from Galilee telling them they were wicked and announcing an apocalypse.

Jonah must have been a sight to behold, if the story about James Bartley is true. James Bartley was said to have lost all his hair and his skin bleached white. If that’s the way Jonah looked, no doubt he would have attracted attention. Moreover, the local god of the Ninevites was Dagon, a fish-man god! According to mythology, Dagon is the father of Baal.



So, Jonah, bald and bleached white, enters Nineveh. He proclaims that in 40 days Nineveh will be overthrown. Amazingly, all the people of Nineveh, including its king, put on sack cloth and ashes (demonstrating repentance), fast and cry out unto G-d. This must have been the first revival in history. G-d accepted their repentance, which drove Jonah crazy. Jonah knew that if the people repented, the G-d of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, would have mercy and forgive their evil ways. Jonah hated the Ninevites so much that he begged G-d to take his own life so he would not have to witness G-d’s grace.



Nevertheless, Jonah lived, but not without sulking. Jonah went outside the city, made a booth and sat under it to watch the city. Perhaps Jonah was hoping the Ninevites would backslide and yet feel the wrath of G-d. Instead, G-d made a vine to grow up over and around the booth to give

Jonah shade. Jonah, not realizing what G-d did, delighted in the comfort. The next day, G-d caused a worm to attack the vine and it withered and died. Jonah, always the victim, cried out again that he should die, now that the vine was gone. Poor Jonah, the people of Nineveh, all their children and all their animals and livestock were not burned to a crisp and his vine was gone. G-d reminds Jonah of how foolish he is to bemoan a dead vine, that he never even watered, rather than celebrating the repentance, if not the conversion, of all the people in the largest city in Mesopotamia.

Perhaps the story of Jonah is more parable than provable fact, but Jonah was a real person. He is mentioned as a prophet in 2 Kings 14:25. Being called a “Jonah” by sailors over the last 2,500 years, has meant someone who is bad luck – really bad luck. Not too shabby for a “fictional” character.

As a parable, commentators point out that Jonah is the first example, maybe the only example, of a Jewish evangelist. Reluctant, but very successful. After all, how many Jewish proselytizers have you met?

As an allegory, some commentators suggest Nineveh represents the non-Jewish world that awaits awakening following a message from G-d. The great fish is Babylon swallowing the Israelites. The disgorgement of Jonah on the land is a metaphor for the return of the Israelites from exile. Jonah’s dissatisfaction over the repentance of the heathens parallels the spirit of Judaism in the post exilic world. Jonah also presents the universality of repentance, even for the most despised. Importantly, Jonah demonstrates that the LORD always seeks to make His mercy manifest.

One last observation. In verse 2:6, Jonah describes going to the depths of the Mediterranean, to the “roots” or “moorings” of the mountains. Scientists have concluded that Mauna Kea in Hawaii the highest mountain in the world, as measured from its base (moorings), 20,000 feet below the sea, to its summit, 13,803 feet above the surface. Query, was that concept as a measurement known 2,500 years ago?

Jonah, just another fish story?



From the Calendar of Saints..

Conversion of St. Paul (January 25)

On January 25 we remember how Saul (or Paul) of Tarsus, formerly an enemy and persecutor of the early Christian Church, was led by God's grace to become one of its chief spokesmen.

Our chief sources of information about the Apostle Paul are (1) several of his own letters, preserved for us in the New Testament, and (2) the account of him given by Luke in the book of Acts.

Here we read how Paul at first opposed and persecuted the Church, how he had a vision of Christ and was converted, and devoted the rest of his life to spreading the Gospel of Christ, as he described in his testimony before King Agrippa (Herod Agrippa, grandson of Herod the Great):

"I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And that is just what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the Lord's people in prison, and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. Many a time I went from one synagogue to another to have them punished, and I tried to force them to blaspheme. I was so obsessed with persecuting them that I even hunted them down in foreign cities.



"On one of these journeys I was going to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests. About noon, King Agrippa, as I was on the road, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, blazing around me and my companions. We all fell to the ground, and I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.'

"Then I asked, 'Who are you, Lord?'

" 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,' the Lord replied. 'Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen and will see of me. I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

"So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven. First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and then to the Gentiles, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds. That is why some Jews seized me in the temple courts and tried to kill me."
– Acts 26:9-21

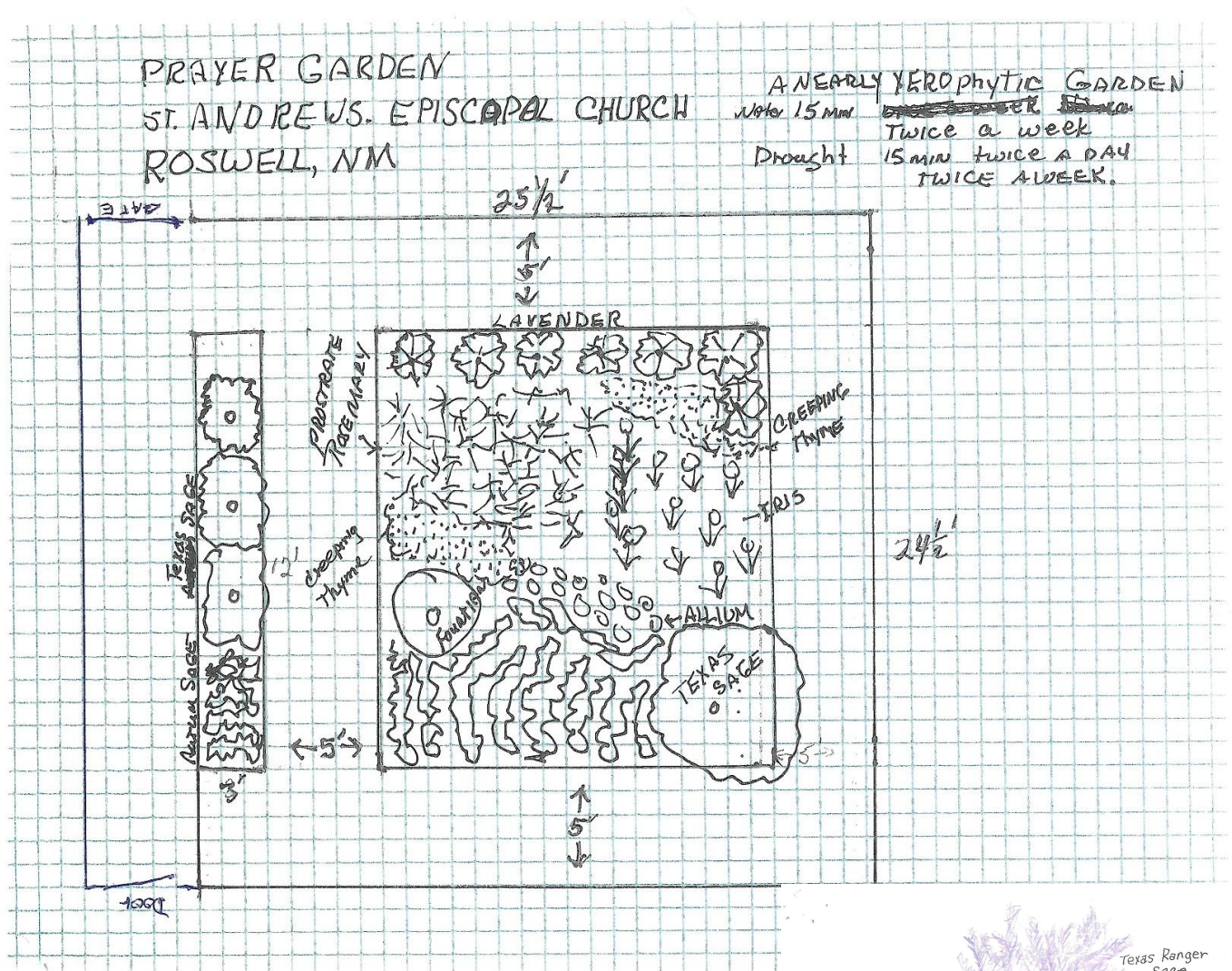
O God, who by the preaching of your apostle Paul has caused the light of the Gospel to shine throughout the world: Grant, we pray, that we, having his wonderful conversion in remembrance, may show ourselves thankful to you by following his holy teaching; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen



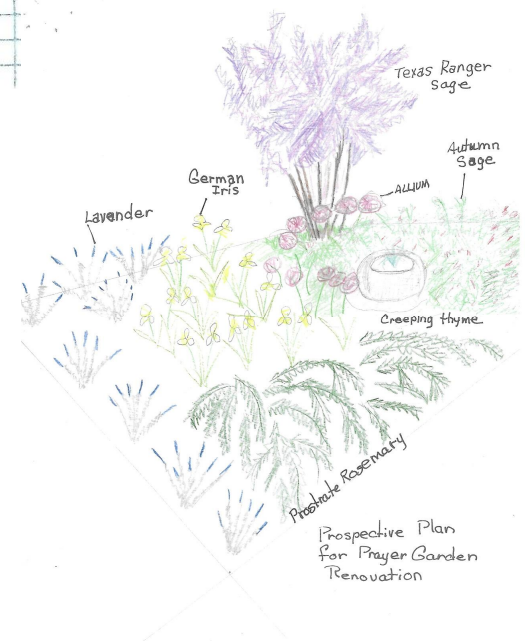
Our rector in the nineties, Fr. Steve Birdwell, told of a time he wondered aloud why he never had a Road to Damascus conversion. An elderly and acerbic Aunt replied, "Because God doesn't use cannon to shoot down sparrows."

Prayer Garden

Sarah Gifford brings her long experience as a Master Gardener, and her more recent research into South-western flora, to a project within our own courtyard: the walled Prayer Garden beside the office. Planting according to her plan over the next year, the result will be a drought resistant, beautiful and aromatic place to sit and contemplate. Funding has already been donated, so work will begin soon.



The Texas Sage and Autumn Sage are already present. Soon they will be joined by Lavender, Rosemary and Thyme, Iris and Allium





The Journey towards Love, An Epiphany Reflection

I imagine that in the times of biblical shepherders, Magi, and stables where babies are born, the nights were bitter, cold, and isolating. Travelers attempting to navigate the perils of journeys in the wilderness must have been filled with curiosity, and maybe some trepidation. The text tells us the Magi noticed a star that shined differently in the sky – something had changed, the wind had shifted, and they wanted to know more. The Magi set out to follow a star: a star that shined so bright it filled the sky with unparalleled light; a light beckoned the magi onto a journey that led them along a path. Not just any star, not just any journey, and not just any path, this path led the Magi to witness Love incarnate.

It wouldn't be too much of a stretch to see parallels to our contexts. At the conclusion of the Christmas season, this time of celebrating the birth of our savior we may find ourselves seeking light and love. Maybe the holidays were filled with opportunities to relish in the glory of the birth of Christ and we are now searching for ways to share that joy. Others may have felt the enormity of shorter days and yearning for the light to pierce the heaviness. For the Magi, as well as for us, God has promised that Love incarnate is within in our reach. All that is asked of us is to follow the proverbial star.

The season of Epiphany allows us to be intentional about recognizing the ways in which God's love is tangible even in the most unconventional places.



For Reflection: What "stars" are you willing to follow, or what journeys are you willing to pursue to help make Gods love known in the wilderness spaces of our world?

The Rev. Glenna J. Huber is the 15th Rector at Church of the Epiphany in Washington D.C., situated on the ancestral grounds of the Piscataway.



From the Treasurer:

As our Stewardship Campaign winds down, I'd like to thank everyone who filled out an Estimate of Giving Form. These really help us in planning what ministry we can do in 2024.



If you haven't made an Estimate of Giving yet, it's not too late. In fact, it's never too late to make or change an estimate. Forms are available in the Narthex, the Parish Hall, and the office. (and one estimate came in the form of a simple email.)

All things come of thee, O Lord
and of thine own have we given thee.

Trust

The wise act not out of fear, but in anticipation and trust of the good. Be courageous. Step out to take risks. Live your ordinary life to be a blessing with what you've been given: time, talent, treasure - all gift, all grace. Risk trust as you participate in life.

-Br. Luke Ditewig

[Society of Saint John the Evangelist](#)

Online bonus... Around the Diocese....

Bishop Hunn was in Roswell on December 15th for a very special combined Celebration:

The Celebration of Mother Susan New Ministry as our Rector, combined with the Confirmation of Stacy Galassini and the Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows of Gini Bartley. All three are valuable and valued additions to our St. Andrews Community!

If you missed the service, you can watch it on our Facebook video page:

<https://www.facebook.com/St.AndrewsRoswell/videos/1014485283001632>



And in Taos...

Common Grounds cafe in Taos, New Mexico, to open as ministry run by and for teens, young adults

BY DAVID PAULSEN Posted Jan 3, 2024

<https://www.episcopalnewsservice.org/2024/01/03/common-grounds-cafe-in-taos-new-mexico-to-open-as-ministry-run-by-and-for-teens-young-adults/>

[Episcopal News Service] [Common Grounds Cafe](#), a 2,700-square-foot multipurpose facility nearing completion in Taos, New Mexico, will be made for young people like Haroula Maillis.

She was 16 in 2021 when she first learned about [St. James Episcopal Church](#)'s youth-led Common Grounds ministry and began attending peer support group meetings at the church. "It was just a safe place to kind of share what you were going through and share how your life is going," Maillis, now 18, told Episcopal News Service.

Young people supporting other young people has been central to the success of Common Grounds' ministry for years, since it formed as part of the community's response to a rash of Taos-area teen suicides in 2016. Common Grounds has expanded beyond the church's peer support group to include a food truck run by teens and young adults, and their plan all along was to eventually open a cafe, both as a safe gathering place for young people and as a facility that would offer a range of activities and social services.

Maillis, who was homeless for about a year after graduating high school, now serves on Common Grounds' Youth Advisory Council, which makes most of the youth ministry's decisions with oversight from the adults on its Board of Allies. She and others involved in the cafe project are finishing site renovations and planning for a possible opening in January.



Hate to Take the Christmas tree down? Tradition to the rescue...



The British will leave their Christmas decoration up until Candlemas (Feb 2nd)

But what IS Candlemas?

Candlemas, also known as the **Feast of the Presentation of Jesus Christ**, is a Christian holiday commemorating the presentation of Jesus at the Temple. It is based upon the account of the presentation of Jesus in Luke 2:22–40. Under Leviticus 12, a woman was to be purified by presenting a lamb as a burnt offering, and either a young pigeon or dove as sin offering, 33 days after a boy's circumcision. It falls on 2 February, which is traditionally the 40th day (postpartum period) of and the conclusion of the Christmas–Epiphany season. While it is customary for Christians in some countries to remove their Christmas decorations on Twelfth Night (Epiphany Eve), those in other Christian countries historically remove them after Candlemas. On Candlemas, many Christians (especially Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholics, and some mainline Protestant denominations including Lutherans, Anglicans and Methodists) also take their candles to their local church, where they are blessed and then used for the rest of the year; for Christians, these blessed candles serve as a symbol of Jesus Christ, who is the Light of the World.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Candlemas>

In the account in Luke 2:22-40, the Holy Family is met by Simeon, a holy man who had been promised he would not die until he had seen the Messiah. From this encounter, we get the wonderful canticle, the Nunc Dimittis (from the Latin for the first line)

The Song of Simeon *Nunc Dimittis*

Luke 2:29-32

Lord, you now have set your servant free *
to go in peace as you have promised;
For these eyes of mine have seen the Savior, *
whom you have prepared for all the world to see:
A Light to enlighten the nations, *
and the glory of your people Israel.
BCP p 93



Outreach Ministries Funds — November 2023

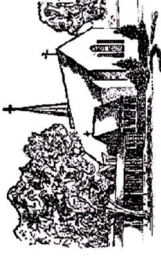
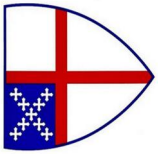
FUND	Beginning Balance		NOVEMBER DONATIONS	NOVEMBER EXPENDITURES	Nov 30, 2023 FUND BALANCE
Andy's Breakfast	\$ 3,446.91		\$ 555.94	\$ 164.11	\$ 3,838.74
Capital Improvements Fund	14,091.89		0.00	0.00	14,091.89
Needle Arts	4,152.87		0.00	0.00	4,152.87
Pet Pantry	3,881.03		0.00	492.88	3,388.15
Rector's Outreach (Discretionary)	21,746.24		1,178.00	9,603.37	13,320.87
Starting Line	1,280.91		0.00	188.37	1,092.54
Altar Fund	790.34		0.00	124.99	665.35
Unspecified Mission and Outreach	9,127.52		100.00	100.00	9,127.52
Choir Fund (& Advent Fest)	1,478.25		4,213.93	0.00	5,692.18
Children's Choir	4,016.77		0.00	0.00	4,016.77
Youth Group	4,401.42		0.00	.00	4,401.42
Scholarship Fund	6,440.00		0.00	0.00	6,440.00

In addition to monetary donations, these ministries are advanced through donations of time & talent. Thank you!

Income and Expense Report — November 2023

	Nov 2023	Nov Budget	YTD	YTD Budget
Ordinary Income:				
Plate Offerings	\$ 0.00	\$.00	\$ 1,661.80	\$.00
Current Pledges	7,937.00	15,667.00	123,684.00	172,333.00
Pre-Paid Pledges	72,000.00	20,000.00	73,000.00	20,000.00
Unpledged Contrib	7,095.00	2,000.00	31,825.00	22,000.00
Special Offerings *	0.00	0.00	642.00	0.00
Foundation Income	0.00	0.00	113,579.71	113,579.71
Altar Flowers	70.00	108.00	1,020.00	1,192.00
Other Income	0.00	125.00	1,611.00	1,375.00
Income—Total	\$ 87,102.00	\$ 37,900.00	\$ 347,023.51	\$ 330,479.71
Payroll Expenses	19,705.90	26,589.00	221,958.01	251,388.45
Other Expenses	12,483.88	14,086.86	151,959.07	160,896.25
Total Expenses	32,189.78	40,676.76	373,917.08	412,284.70
Net Ordinary Income	\$ 46,911.36	\$ (2,776.76)	\$ (26,893.57)	\$ (81,805.00)

*in addition to the donations to specific funds—see first table.



January 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Dec 31 Eucharist 10 am	1 New Year's Day	2 Tai Chi 4 pm	3	4	5 12th Day of Christmas	6 EPIPHANY
New Year's Eve	8 Women of St, Andrew's 10:00 Handbell Choir 5:30 pm	9 Men's Group 7:30 am Contemplative Prayer 4:30—Howden room	10 Choir Practice 6 pm	11 Needle Arts 10 am	12	13
7 Holy Eucharist 10 Children's Choir 11:15	15 Vestry 5:00 pm Handbell Choir 5:30 pm	16 Tai Chi 4 pm Contemplative Prayer 4:30—Howden room	17 Pet Pantry Church Supper 5 pm Choir Practice 6 pm	18 Daughters of the King 11 am Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Jan 18-25	19	20
14 Holy Eucharist 10 Children's Choir 11:15 Episco-School Howden Rm	22 Handbell Choir 5:30 pm	23 Tai Chi 4 pm Contemplative Prayer 4:30—Howden room	24 Church Supper 5 pm Choir Practice 6 pm	25 Word Deadline	26	27
21 Eucharist 10 am Children's Choir 11:15 Episco-School Howden Rm	29 Handbell Choir 5:30 pm	30 Fold the Word Contemplative Prayer 4:30—Howden room	31 Church Supper 5 pm Choir Practice 6 pm	Feb 1	Feb 2 .Candlemas	Andy's Breakfast Clean-up Crew 9:30 Feb 3
28 Holy Eucharist 10 Children's Choir 11:15 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING						

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church
PO Box 1495
Roswell, NM 88202

Phone: 575-622-1353
E-mail: church@standrewsroswell.com
Website: standrewsroswell.com
Asset Map: <https://www.episcopalassetmap.org/dioceses/diocese-rio-grande/map>

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Sunday Services
In-Person and Livestream

[https://www.facebook.com/
St.AndrewsRoswell/videos](https://www.facebook.com/St.AndrewsRoswell/videos)

10 am

Followed by:
Coffee Hour in the Parish Hall
EpiscoSchool in Howden Hall
Children's Choir Practice

Masks available but not required.



ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
January 28th
After the 10:00 Service
In the Parish Hall