

The Witness

Volume 27, Issue 11

Welcoming Worshipping Working

November 2023

Special points of interest:

Sunday
8:00 AM Service
10:00 AM Service with coffee hour following the service

Wednesday
12:15 PM Service



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Q. Why do we pray for the dead?

By The Rev Ian M Delinger, Rector

This question is presented in The Catechism on page 862 in the *Book of Common Prayer*. November 2 is the day that the Church (in the West) commemorates the faithful departed, known as All Souls' Day. This year, our services will be on Wednesday, November 1. The Episcopal Church has a long tradition of reading the names of those known to the congregation who have died in the past year at a Eucharist as a continuation of commending their souls to God. At St Stephen's, we read the names of any person submitted (*public figures are remembered by category, not by name, to prevent having to choose who is "in" and who is "out"*).

In the Orthodox Churches, the commemoration of the dead takes place on the Saturday of Souls, which happens twice a year. The first is in February, the Saturday before Meat Fair Sunday immediately preceding Ash Wednesday. The second is the Saturday before Pentecost Sunday. This past summer, during my travels, what I thought was a backstage pass to Orthodox Pentecost was actually a backstage pass to Saturday of Souls! And it was extraordinary!

A large parish in Athens held their celebration at Vespers on Friday. [*Following on from our Jewish heritage, the Church calendar day begins at sundown the previous day, which is where Midnight Mass and the Easter Vigil come from.*] And a small convent outside of Marathon held theirs early Saturday morning with The Divine Service (Holy Eucharist).

The Church of the Holy Trinity in the Ampelokipoi neighborhood of Athens was on a busy boulevard. Hundreds of commemorators slowly filled the Church as Vespers was being chanted. They each brought their dish of Koliva, a "cake" made from wheat berries that is specifically for commemorating the dead. The Koliva is blessed during the service, and then everyone shares. The names get "prayed" in a way that we would call chanting, but Fr. Nektarios assured me that it's much more spiritual than chanting. Thousands and thousands of names! The names probably took 40min! Prayed by two priests at a simultaneously. Bread to be blessed and olive oil for candles were also offered.



A view of the Saturday of Souls Vespers Service at Church of the Holy Trinity, Ampelokipoi, Athens

The monastery was much more subdued. About 15 people, all of whom brought their Koliva. Coffee Hour was abuzz with people spooning their Koliva into dixie cups

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and sharing them around; some mixed all the different Koliva together into one cup.

When I asked two women what it meant to them to bring Koliva to the service to be blessed, they responded, “We rejoice over our sleeping brothers and sisters as if they were present.” “[After we take it out of the church]... we distribute it to the world and say, ‘God bless them, sons and daughters, God bless them, and good rest!’”

This was part of – and the motivation for – my sabbatical project. A series of videos will be published soon, and Koliva will be the fourth video of five.

But back to our Catechism question: Why do we pray for the dead? The answer is the same for Episcopalians, it seems, as it is for Greeks:

A. We pray for them, because we still hold them in our love, and because we trust that in God's presence those who have chosen to serve Him will grow in His love, until they see Him as He is.

All Souls' Day Services November 1, 2023

at 12:15pm and 5:30pm

The Commemoration of the Faithful Departed will be observed with Healing Services with Eucharist. All are welcome to this service of remembrance and of hope. The 5:30pm service will be livestreamed.

Sunday Servers' Training January 20, 2024

10am – Ushers & Lectors

11am – LEMs

All existing Ushers, Lectors and LEMs should attend this training. If anyone is interested in becoming an Usher, Lector or LEM, please contact Fr Ian to discuss.

*O send out your light and your truth; let them lead me;
let them bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling.
Psalm 43:3 (NRSV)*

Fellowship Hour

Let's spend some time just enjoying one another's company! For the next couple of months, the St Stephen's family is going to carve out time to simply enjoy one another's company. On the last Monday of the month, we'll have an hour-long "event" starting at 5:30pm. Any person from the congregation can volunteer to take a month and host whatever event they want to host. Learn how to knit; game night; look-how-cute-my-grandkids-are night ... whatever. The host will decide how hospitality will be offered: They can provide snacks or a meal, or ask people to bring stuff, or have nothing. It will be up to them. If people want to mingle more after the event is finished, they can do so. To kick this off, Fr Ian will host an evening about his sabbatical trip. Cassie will host a Carol Sing-a-Long in December. If you want to host, get in touch with Susannah Williams at susannahmercy@gmail.com. November 27 is available for any taker!





A Word of Thanks from the Senior Warden

For me, it was a summer like no other. I must admit that with Fr Ian on sabbatical, I was a bit nervous and anxious. Was I really the one responsible for church and a congregation? I've led academic departments and entire colleges, but never a parish. What if something terrible happens? And do I really have to lead Vestry meetings?

But, by the grace of God and with the help of the great Vestry and the amazing people of St. Stephen's, excitedly the opposite happened. Together, we launched a capital campaign that exceeded its goal and gave us the financial means to "refresh" our church and our campus. Plus, the campaign results enabled us to start building a repair and maintenance fund for future needs. For everyone who contributed to the "Refresh" St. Stephen's, I will always be grateful.

As a parish, we need to thank the person who really made all this happen, our Sexton, Lee Hollister. Without Lee's dedication, knowledge, and determination, we would not have a new parking lot, choir and music room, sustainable landscaping, and a repaired and newly carpeted church nave. Lee, for all you have done, THANK YOU.

We are an amazing and welcoming parish centered in the love of God. Let's go forth and share what we have with the large community.

- Dennis "Skip" Parks

O come, let us sing to the LORD;
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!
Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;
let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

Psalm 95:1-2 (NRSV)

From the Vestry

The Vestry meets on the 3rd Sunday of the Month to discuss the business affairs of the parish. Highlights from the October 15, 2022 meeting include:

- Approved Grass Roots II to use Children's Chapel for their outreach to the under-served.
- The Treasurer reported that our finances are in a precarious position. If we can meet our \$210,000 pledge goal for 2024, we can start to reverse the problem. The Vestry will contact those who are behind on their 2023 pledges.
- Re-Fresh Campaign is going swiftly!

The next meeting is November 19. If you have an issue that you think should be addressed by the Vestry, please submit your request no less than 2 weeks before the next Vestry Meeting to the Rector or Wardens. All Vestry Meetings are open to members of the parish. Requests to speak can be made, and approved on an individual basis. Executive Sessions are closed to Vestry members only, including the Clerk, Treasurer and Rector.

Hands on Stewardship

Thank you to Molly Wyer, Alicia Bisselle, Gail Taylor and Cassie Tarantino for the fun Blessing of the Animals that drew a crowd of 30 people and about 15 pets.

Thank you to Lee Hollister, Spud Schroeder, Ethan Stan, Ryan Hartzell and Rick Brady for moving the pews out of the sanctuary.

Thank you to Elizabeth Potter, Nancy Deovlet, Cheryl McCollum, and Gail Taylor for assembly of the Annual Pledge Drive letter.

Thank you to Jamie Hess for finding the crew to move the pews back into the sanctuary.

BIG Thank you to Lee Hollister for coordinating all of the carpet replacements and cleaning the heating vents along the way.

Thank you to everyone who supported our sponsorship for Light Up a Life by Hospice of SLO County. The event details are here: <https://hospiceslo.org/events/light-up-a-life-2023>

Thank you to Adele Butterfield, Bill Crewe, Lynn Hollister, Kay Lewis, Kathleen Pennington and Elizabeth Potter for counting the collection and preparing the deposits during October.

Thank you to Lynn Hollister, Kathleen Pennington, Elizabeth Potter, Jennifer Sayre and Gail Taylor for teaching Sunday School in October.

Thank you to Ethan Stan and Spud Schroeder for taking the trash cans to the street for trash pick up each week.

Thank you to Kathryn Bumpass, Cheryl & Craig McCollum, Rosey & Skip Parks, Elizabeth Potter, Kathleen Pennington and Charleen VonGortler for hosting coffee hour in October.

Thank you to Gail Taylor, Nancy Deovlet, Elizabeth Potter, and Cheryl McCollum who folded, taped and labeled The Witness.

Thank you to Elizabeth Potter for helping with the celebration cards.

Thank you to Jamie Hess, Rick Brady, Jennifer Sayre, Rev Jen Crompton, Craig & Cheryl McCollum, Beau Parks and Cassie Tarantino for their assistance in setting up for Sunday service in Ramsden Hall.

Thank you to Clark Lewis and Craig McCollum for picking up the no cook bags to distribute to those in need.

Thank you to the Clark Lewis, Craig McCollum and Beau Parks for live streaming the Sunday Services in October.

Thank you for reading The Witness and watching the services at home.

Notice Board:

Ministry Reports for the Annual Report are due to rector@ststephensslo.org by December 31.

Please check at home. It seems some of our service booklets have run away. We really do miss them, so if you see them return them.

November's flower of the month is Chrysanthemum.

In the United States, chrysanthemums symbolize friendship, happiness, and well-being. They are often tied to the arrival of autumn since they are one of the most popular fall flowers.



General Information

The Witness is a monthly newsletter published by St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, San Luis Obispo, CA to provide information about the parish to the congregation. Subscriptions are free to anyone. Send request along with your name and mailing address to the church office. Donations to help offset distribution costs are appreciated.

Make checks payable to St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

The Church's e-mail address is: office@ststephensslo.org

Contribution of articles is encouraged. Please e-mail submissions to witness@ststephensslo.org. The deadline for emailed submission of articles is the third Friday of the month. Email any questions to witness@ststephensslo.org. © Copyright 2023 by St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. All rights reserved.

POSTMASTER: Please send address corrections to: St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 1344 Nipomo Street, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401-3935

If you would like to make a donation to St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

You can scan this QR Code with your phone and be taken directly to our PayPal site or go to paypal.me/ststephensslo



Scan. Pay. Go.

The San Luis Obispo Ministerial Association
invites you to share in the annual Thanksgiving Service

“The Joy of Abundance”

An Interfaith Thanksgiving Celebration
Through Music, Spoken Word, and Reflection

Sunday, November 19th at 3pm

In-person at Congregation Beth David
10180 Los Osos Valley Road, SLO

Or you can join Via Zoom:



<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82622458601?pwd=NUVMN0FNSUgycTJ2NiJkVQmpiWk4dz09>

Meeting ID: 826 2245 8601 // Passcode: gratitude

An offering will be received for
40 Prado, Restorative Partners,
Lumina Alliance, and The Noor Clinic

The Ministerial Association of San Luis Obispo PayPal: <https://bit.ly/3ADriKY>
Or please make a check out to SLOMA and mail to United Church of Christ
(Congregational) of SLO, 11245 Los Osos Valley Road, San Luis Obispo, CA 93405

Additional Information: Jason Sisk-Provencio - jason@sloucc.org



The Time of Day

What time is it? Can you give the time of day referred to in the verses of Scripture provided below?

- 1) Mary Magdalene went to the sepulchre at _____.
- 2) In Jesus' parable, the bridegroom arrived at _____.
- 3) Paul saw his Damascus Road vision at _____.
- 4) "In the _____ it (grass) flourishes and is renewed."
- 5) At the crucifixion, darkness descended at the _____ hour.
- 6) The darkness at the crucifixion lasted until the _____ hour.
- 7) "Fool! This _____ your soul is required of you."
- 8) At Pentecost, Peter said the disciples were not drunk, "since it is only the _____ hour of the day."
- 9) The two disciples going to Emmaus wanted the "stranger" to stay with them because it was "toward _____".
- 10) Those who dwell in the shelter of the Most High need not fear "the destruction that wastes at _____".

Answers:

1. Dawn, Matthew 28:1 2. Midnight, Matthew 25:6 3. Midday, Acts 26:12-13 4. Morning, Psalm 90:6 5. Sixth, Luke 23:44 6. Ninth, Luke 23:44 7. Night, Luke 12:20 8. Third, Acts 2:15 9. Evening, Luke 24:29 10. Noonday, Psalm 91:1,6

From: Bible Quizzes for Church Newsletters by Frank Hoffman, copyright 1987 Baker Book House

Selected Bible Readings for November



	5-Nov-23	12-Nov-23
	23 Pent A - Track 2	24 Pent A - Track 2
1st Reading	Micah 3:5-12	Amos 5:18-24
Psalm	Psalm 43	Psalm 70
2nd Reading	1 Thessalonians 2:9-13	1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
Gospel	Matthew 23:1-12	Matthew 25:1-13

	1-Nov-23
	All Soul's Day
1st Reading	Wisdom 3:1-9
Psalm	Psalm 130
2nd Reading	1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
Gospel	John 5:24-27

	19-Nov-23	26-Nov-23
	25 Pent A - Track 2	Christ the King
1st Reading	Zephaniah 1:7,12-18	Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24
Psalm	Psalm 90:1-8,12	Psalm 95:1-7a
2nd Reading	1 Thessalonians 5:1-11	Ephesians 1:15-23
Gospel	Matthew 25:14-30	Matthew 25:31-46

SOCIAL OUTREACH COMMITTEE IS SEEKING MEMBERS

Vestry members are re-activating the Social Outreach Committee, which had languished during COVID. We seek additional members to help with and better coordinate social outreach projects already in progress, such as providing a lunch for the homeless the 4th Wednesday of each month. We also want to expand our offerings to address such things as racial reconciliation and the need for healthy, locally grown food for the needy,

If you have an interest in being a part of this committee please contact Molly Wyer, at mhwyer@gmail.com or Kathryn Bumpass at 805-709-0840 or kathrynb@mail.fresnostate.edu

This is a chance to work directly on one of our signature goals, "Working".

-Kathryn Bumpass

Brief update from your Sexton

As everyone knows we finally (after three years) have completed our parking lot. As often happens, one week after completing the asphalt work, we had a leak coming up out of the asphalt. Apparently the rollers were quite heavy and cracked an underground irrigation line. The good news is we have cut open the area, repaired the line and had the area repaved.

We have also just had the church recarpeted. Many thanks to Ryan Hartzell, Spud Schroeder, Ethan Stan, Rick Brady and Gus Gibson who removed the pews, replaced them when carpet was down and assisted me in getting the pews screwed down. We will have the Sacristy recarpeted in the next couple of weeks.

We had a very good result from the "Re-fresh St. Stephen's" campaign and hope to re-do the parking lot lights soon. Many thanks to our Senior Warden, Skip Parks for that campaign.

Finally, thanks to our Junior Warden, Shannon Larrabee for riding herd on our landscape company to get our grounds looking great.

- Lee Hollister

Celebrations for November



Birthdays

4-Nov Beau Parks
6-Nov Cheryl McCollum
9-Nov Charleen VonGortler
11-Nov Marcy Paric
12-Nov Carolyn Platt
23-Nov Skip Parks

No Anniversaries
this month

Are we missing your special celebration? Please let us know so that we can celebrate with you.

Call, email, snail mail the information to Stephanie in the office at 805-543-7212 or office@ststephensslo.org

Supporting Our Neighbors

For several years, St. Stephen's has coordinated with Transitions Mental Health Association to provide their residents – who are also neighbors – with Thanksgiving Dinner.

Please consider financially supporting:

- TMHA Adult Resident Neighbors – 8 gift certificates to a local supermarket
- TMHA Teen Resident Neighbors – A Thanksgiving Dinner Kit

To contribute financially, please put your contribution into the collection plate or bring it to the office, clearly marked with "TMHA Thanksgiving".

COFFEE CAFÉ

Fall is in the Air!!! Be a part of the café volunteers. We help celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, and just getting acquainted with new friends. The team does accept donations of fruit and cookies. Please sign up for a Sunday morning. First time, no problem. Volunteers are always around to help. Become a part of the Coffee Café volunteers.



SLO Food Bank Turkey Trot Sponsorship

It's that time of year again! We sponsor two of the Food Bank's big fundraising efforts: Hunger Awareness Day in June and the Turkey Trot in November. We raised quite a bit in the Spring, and let's do it again for our sponsorship of the Turkey Trot. Sponsorship is a great way to support the causes that align with our values and mission, AND to get far more publicity that we could ever buy in the newspapers.

In 2018 we received a lovely "thank you" card from the Teen Residents who reside near to St. Stephen's.



- We appreciate the food, it was delicious!
- Anthony

Thank you for making Thanksgiving dinner for all. Grateful for your time. It was enjoyed by all!
Laila

Thank you for making our Thanksgiving Day brighter!
Mia

Thank you so much for your care and support of our program!
Willy

Thank you for the food! And thank you for the love!

Thank you for making Thanksgiving special!
- Sarah

Thank you so much!
AVA

Nice things just seem to bloom from you.
you are the best! I appreciate you so much!
Deanna

Thank you for having an amazing granddaughter!
- Emily

Thank you!
We appreciate everything you do!
- Caitlyn

Thank you for the food!
our dinner crew
Dorinda my favorite
- Matt

Prayers of the People

In the Prayers of the People each Sunday, we pray for members of the St Stephen's Family who are on the 4-month Parish Cycle of Prayer" If you are like me, you always feel a sense of comfort when you hear your name being read! It feels good to know someone is thinking of us and praying for us. So, let's pay that feeling forward! Invite your friends to church, so we can pray with them together.



It's easy to invite friends, using the Saturday email sent by Fr Ian. You can forward the email with a brief, "I thought of you and wondered if you might want to join us at church tomorrow. I can save a seat for you." Or one of my favorites: "St Stephen's choir is doing some lovely music tomorrow and I know how much you enjoy great church music. Come join us and enjoy singing the hymns and service music with us."

Use your imagination – and invite your friends! And, reach out to our current parishioners if you don't see them at church - a quick phone call or note to invite them back and let them know they are part of our community!

-Rosey Parks

Update from SLO Canterbury Foundation

Beloved friends of the SLO Deanery,

"The SLO Canterbury Foundation Board extends our heartfelt thanks to all who responded to our Spring 2023 fundraising appeal to support Episcopal Campus Ministry at Cuesta College and Cal Poly. In June, we celebrated the ordination of our chaplain, the Reverend Jen Crompton. Rev Jen continues their outreach activities this fall, creatively engaging with and ministering to students, building relationships with campus administrators and other campus ministries, and guest preaching at parishes in our Deanery. The Board continues to meet monthly via Zoom, and at the moment has several openings. We appreciate the continuing support and prayers from your parish. Connect with us [@slocampusministry](#) on Instagram and Facebook."

*In the love of Christ,
Rachel Mann
Chair, SLO Canterbury Foundation*

Caroling



Bring your guitar, drum, finger cymbals, or other instrument! We'll have some jingle bells, tambourines and music with chord symbols in easy keys for sing-and-play-along on familiar Carols as we lead sing-alongs at local care facilities and/or wander the streets around the church. We'll have a couple of practices after Thanksgiving and schedule 3 or 4 caroling adventures in December. Watch for more info on bookmarks in the hymnals during November, or contact Kathleen, kapennington@netscape.net or 805-546-0880.

St. Stephen's

Episcopal Church

Welcoming Worshiping Working

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www.ststephensslo.org
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*The grass withers, the flower fades,
but the word of our God will
stand for ever.*

Isaiah 40:8



For Kids From Kids TOY DRIVE!!!

For Kids From Kids Toy Drive Begins November 5

Once again the Kids of St Stephen's give you a chance to help them bring Christmas joy to less fortunate children in our community through their toy drive. When you're purchasing gifts for the children in your life, please consider also getting a gift for a child in need. If you've been given gift cards that you're not

likely to use, consider re-gifting them to our toy drive. Any kid-appropriate gift is welcome and there will also be wish lists for children served by CAPSLO/40Prado and other local agencies on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall by the middle of November. If you'd like a wish list emailed (or snail mailed) to you, contact Kathleen (kapennington@netscape.net, 805-546-0880). Of course, checks dropped into the collection plate or mailed to the church are welcome, too. Write "Toy Drive" on the memo line. The church's mailing address is St Stephen's Episcopal Church, 1344 Nipomo, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401.

