



EPIPHANY  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH

# The Examiner

*The Newsletter of Epiphany Evangelical Lutheran Church, Richmond, VA*  
Walk the Journey + Worship the Christ + Witness with Joy

## August 2025

### A few words on Politics and the Church

The influential and well-loved evangelical pastor Tony Campolo, who died last November at the age of 89, once said, “Putting religion and politics together is like mixing ice cream with horse manure. It doesn’t hurt the horse manure, but it ruins the ice cream. I think this merger of church and state has done great harm to religion.” He was speaking about the religious right’s cozying up to state and national politics in the 1980s and 90s, but in many ways his prophetic words speak to all times. Even ours now.

Over the course of our country’s history, many American politicians have spoken about their faith and have made their church involvement a part of their political identity, and that is fine. But over the past year or so there has been an increase in the mixing of religious language with politics on both national and state levels. Legislation regarding the posting of overtly religious texts and images, like the Ten Commandments, in public spaces has been proposed and passed in multiple locales. The Trump Administration recently announced that the IRS would no longer revoke tax exempt status for churches that endorse specific political candidates and platforms. These kinds of movements and actions can be confusing for people of faith and very off-putting for people who are not churched at all. I thought it might be helpful to review some of the main guiding ideas and principles regarding religion and politics in America because I suspect we’ll be hearing more about these issues in the coming years. Consider this a kind of glossary for the expression of religion in American political contexts.



**The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution:** “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.” The first two clauses of the first Amendment are what mainly apply to the relationship between religion and government. The first clause is often referred to as “the establishment clause” and the second one as the “free exercise” clause. Together they ensure that the tentacles of official government power stay out of religion and vice versa. The government is not allowed to do anything that looks like it is establishing a state religion or preferencing one faith over another. It also must make sure there are no barriers on letting people practice (“exercise”) their faith. This creates a very fine line on which to walk, and the courts have gone back and forth on how to interpret them against each other.

**The wall of separation between church and state.** Although this phrase never occurs in the Constitution, it has widely been used to illustrate how the first amendment is fleshed out. The phrase first appeared in a letter Thomas Jefferson wrote to the Danbury Baptists in 1802. The Danbury Baptists were a religious minority in Connecticut who were worried that as the young America got off the ground the government would demonstrate some kind of preference to larger, more influential faith groups that disagreed theologically with the Danbury Baptists. Jefferson, who was president at the time, assures them in his letter that he agrees that religion is a “matter which lies solely between man and his God.” He sees that there is a “wall of separation” between government influence and church beliefs.

**The Johnson Amendment.** This is a provision in the U.S. tax code, added in 1954, that prohibits all non-profit organizations from endorsing or opposing political candidates. It is named for Lyndon Johnson, the Senator from Texas who introduced it. He would go on to serve as President. The Johnson Amendment has long applied to churches (as non-profits) even though there has been concern that it restricts the free speech of religious organizations.

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Many churches have flagrantly violated the Johnson Amendment over the years, even handing out sample ballots in worship, but only one church has actually lost its tax-exempt status for doing so. Endorsing or opposing a candidate is not the same as merely praising or critiquing one. Communities of faith and their leaders still have a responsibility (and a right) to speak truth to power when necessary. We also are subjects of a particular Lord who expects that we will use our faith to make informed decisions about political and social issues that impact our neighbor.

As America moves toward its 250<sup>th</sup> birthday, I have found it helpful to remember that a great number of our forbears were immigrants and refugees who came to this country specifically for religious freedom. They left places like England, Norway, France, and Germany, just to name a few, precisely because the governments there were too involved in controlling the religious landscape. The Huguenot refugees who settled in Richmond, for example, were some of the first. These immigrants found that the mixing of church and state not only made the government one-sided, but it stifled the vitality of the gospel—even when the government codified beliefs they agreed with! I have had the experience of living in countries where the government has either officially or unofficially established a state church or religion, and I have seen how detrimental it is in the long run to the church in its mission. The Founders of our country and its first settlers understood that both the government and the church do better when they don't try to climb over that wall between them. And what a rich religious tradition we now have.

And yet...I also find it helpful to remember that Jesus says and does many things that have political impact, even in his day. Ours is not a religion of escapism. This brings us to one of Martin Luther's great teachings... the theory of the Two Kingdoms. Luther claimed that each follower of Jesus must acknowledge that until Jesus comes again in glory he or she must live in two realms simultaneously. We give God thanks for the security provided by our earthly rulers and governments, we obey their authority, and we try to perfect them when they go astray. But at the same time we realize that Jesus Christ is still *"seated above all things, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come"* (Ephesians 1:20-21). We must ultimately answer to him, and his kingdom will have final sway.

Frustratingly, because of the political structures of his day (things weren't democratic back then and there were no elections yet, nor a concept of rights), Jesus didn't leave us with many specific pointers on how his followers were to engage in politics, especially over 2000 years later. We are each going to have to figure out how to live in the tensions of those two kingdoms on our own. This is why it is good that churches and congregations not become echo chambers of one political party or another. We can speak of politics, but be on guard against becoming partisan. We can learn from our different perspectives and work together as faithful Christians to make our country as prosperous and godly as we can...all the time remembering how bad manure ice cream tastes.

Yours in Christ's service,

Pastor Phillip

## **WELCOME BACK, PASTOR Joseph and PASTOR Sarah!**

Pastor Joseph will return from his sabbatical leave on Monday, August 11. Please join us for light refreshments during coffee hour on Sunday, August 17 to welcome back Pastor Joseph, Sarah and his family upon their return from sabbatical.



# Confirmation Guides Needed

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What is the confirmation Guide ministry?

This backbone of our confirmation program pairs one adult with one high-school-aged youth for periodic, regular guided conversations about the life of faith. As we all know, familiarity with Christian faith is developed and strengthened not simply through classes or lectures or the reading of books. Those things can help, but faith is always primarily about building relationships—a relationship with the God who comes near to us in Jesus and the relationships we have with other members of the body of Christ. The counsel, friendship, and listening ear that adult mentors can offer our young people in confirmation become valuable ways in which those relationships are fostered. In fact, studies in youth ministry repeatedly indicate that one of the most influential factors in keeping a youth active in the life of faith as they make the transition to adulthood is ongoing, meaningful connections with five or more adults in that community of faith.

When an adult volunteers his or her time to make this kind of investment, they are helping form a new generation of Christ-followers. However, the guide relationship is not a one-way street! The guide's own faith and relationship to the church is also blessed and nurtured through this ministry.



This fall we will be welcoming up to seven ninth graders into our confirmation ministry. This means we are in need of 7 adults (3 men, 4 women) to serve as confirmation guides. Can you help? The commitment will be a total of two years, over which time you will engage a student (the same student each time) in twelve 30-minute conversations. Orientation and a conversation guide booklet are provided. Please prayerfully consider being an integral part in accompanying a young person in the journey of faith.

Please watch for a sign-up in the Commons later this month or email [pmartin@epiphanyelca.org](mailto:pmartin@epiphanyelca.org) and he can answer your questions!

## Upcoming Opportunities to Serve Our Neighbors

**Blood Drive** - We need you! Sunday, August 3, 8:00 am - Noon.

**God's Work. Our Hands.** Sunday, September 7!

**Liberation Veterans Dinner** - September 30

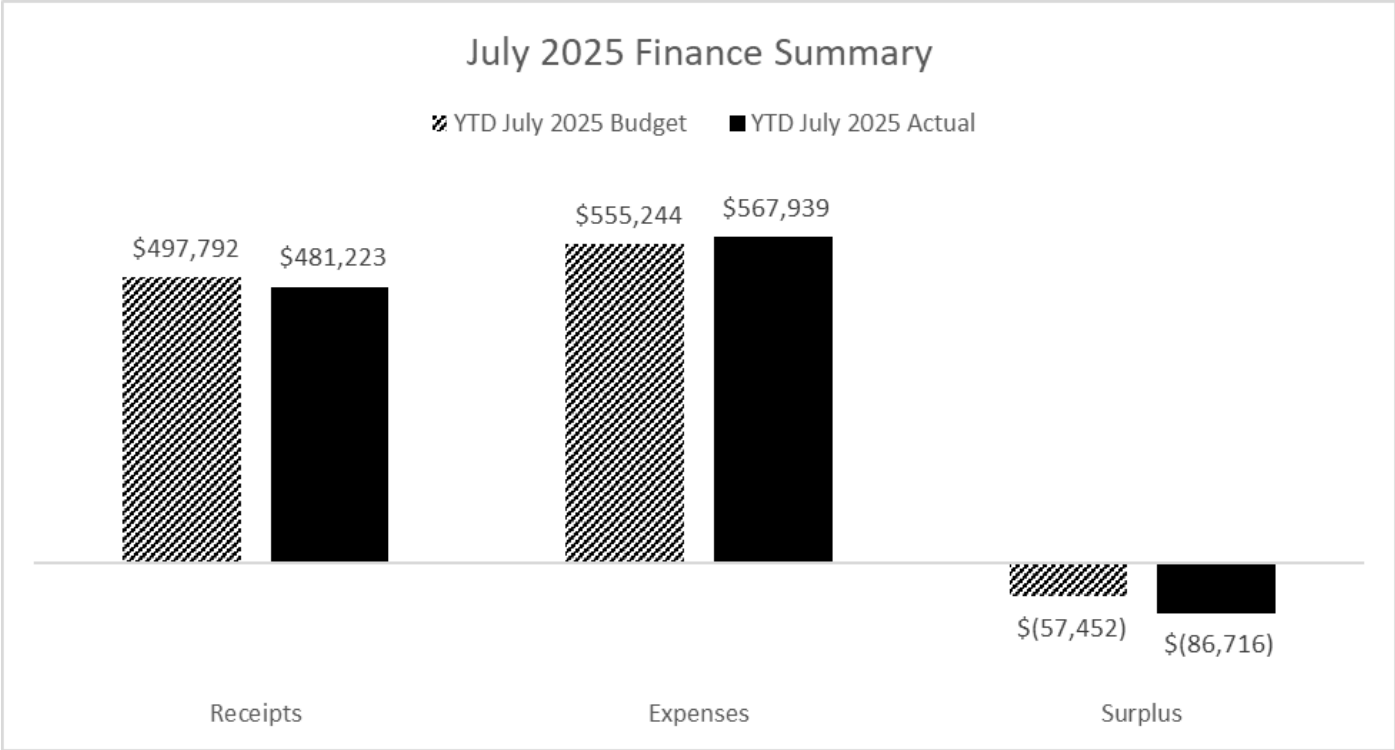
**Thanksgiving Box Collection** - October 19 - November 9

**Moments of Hope Lunch Service** – October

**Liberation Veterans Dinner** – December 30



# Finance Ministry



YTD July, we had receipts of \$481,223 which were 97% of our budgeted receipts of \$497,792 and \$18,245 or 4% lower than 2024.

Expenses were \$567,938 and \$12,694 unfavorable to plan due to the following:

- Christian Ed expense (unfavorable \$4,816) due to earlier than planned spending in Youth and VBS due to sabbatical. Should be on plan for the year.
- Building & Equipment expense (unfavorable \$3,402) as several projects were completed earlier in the year.
- Admin expense (unfavorable \$8,977) due to catch up on tech support billing as we moved from using our church credit card to check payment due to increase in credit card processing fees and timing of Audit bill paid in July and budgeted for August.



# Music Ministry

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## NOTES FROM THE CHOIR LOFT – AUGUST 2025

### *The Raleigh Ringers in Concert at Epiphany*

We are excited to be hosting the world-renowned handbell group – the Raleigh Ringers – in concert on Sunday, August 24, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. You may register for the concert with payment on Realm using this link:

<https://onrealm.org/EpiphanyLutheran/PublicRegistrations/Event?linkString=YjBlNWM0NzktMjk1MS00YjU3LThiZWQtYjMwNTAxMTc5ZTFm>



You can also drop off your check made payable to Epiphany Lutheran Church to the church office (1400 Horsepen Road, Richmond, VA 23226). Please include “Raleigh Ringers” on the notation line. Beginning August 1, tickets are \$25 per person or a group rate of \$18 per person is available for groups of ten or more. Please reach out to Linda Martin or Kevin Barger with questions. We look forward to you joining us!

### *Instrumentalists*

Given the movement (graduating, moving away, needing a break, etc.) of our many talented members, we like to refresh our listing of those instrumentalists that we have who are willing to share their talents. If you play an instrument of any kind and are willing to share your talent in worship, please email Kevin at [kbarger@epiphanyelca.org](mailto:kbarger@epiphanyelca.org). This will help us make sure we include the greatest number of folks!

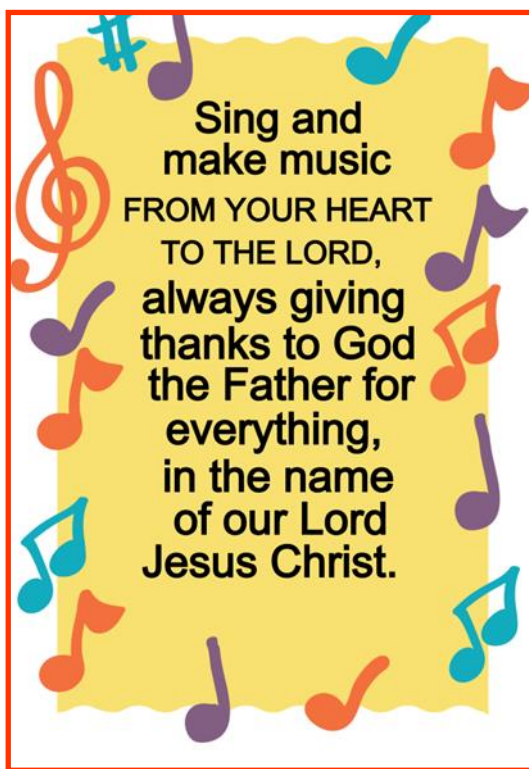
### *Special Worship Music*

If you are interested in sharing your talents as part of our worship services, please reach out to Kevin at [kbarger@epiphanyelca.org](mailto:kbarger@epiphanyelca.org). We have room for you to share those talents! We have been enjoying offerings from several members this summer, and look forward to some more! Thank you for sharing with us!

### *Musical Ensembles starting again in September*

We look forward to the return of our musical groups in September – check out our offerings in next month’s newsletter. We hope as you begin planning return to school and fall calendars that you have room for

our musical groups in your schedule! All ages – all varieties – singers, handbells, instrumentalists (including piano), steel drums...you name it, we have it! Join us in the fall!



## August Baptism Birthdays



### Altar Care



#### Thank you to those who served in June:

First Service - Greg and Teresa Rollins,  
Alvah and Bonita Wyatt  
Second Service - Margaret Risher and Jean Henry

#### Thank you to those who served in July:

First Service - Michele Frese and Cathy DeLesDernier  
Second Service - Chris Crouch and Tracy Bucknam

#### Altar Care for August:

First Service - Bonita and Alvah Wyatt  
Second Service - Jeanetta Linka and Mary Sue Oehler

**Would you like to join the Altar Care Team? We could use your help!**

Please contact Linda Martin at 804-282-6066 or [lmartin@epiphanyelca.org](mailto:lmartin@epiphanyelca.org) if you are interested.

### Altar Flowers



We are in need of Altar flowers, 2 vases, for Sunday, August 31.

Please consider donating flowers. The cost is \$20 per vase. You can sign up either on the sign up sheet in the Commons under the monitor, on Realm, or contacting the Church office.

Thank you!

# Faith Formation



## Blessing of the Backpacks

Our annual Backpack and Briefcase Blessing is scheduled for Sunday, **August 17** during worship at both services!

Lanyards are available for children, youth and adults to place on their backpacks, laptops, or briefcases and will be

distributed on Sunday during worship or may be picked up from the Commons during the week. Additionally, a variety of resources for back-to-school as well as a prayer station will be available in the Commons.

Stop by to write or draw a prayer for back-to-school!



## Faith Formation Volunteers

We're already planning for Sunday School in 2025-2026, and we're looking for teachers who love children and are willing to share their faith! If you're interested in serving as a Sunday School teacher this coming fall and spring or are interested in learning more, talk with Pastor Sarah ([slang@epiphanyelca.org](mailto:slang@epiphanyelca.org)).

**Sunday School Teacher Training** is set for Sunday, August 24, Noon—1:30 pm. Lunch will be provided!

## Sunday School Registration for Children and Youth

Sunday School kicks off on September 7 with Rally Day!

Help us plan for the year ahead by sharing information about your child on [this simple registration form](#).

Receiving this info helps us plan for teachers, supplies, curriculum, and helps us plan for the best experience for your child.

Thank you for your help!





# Faith Formation



## VBS Camp Firelight Highlights

What a spirit-filled Vacation Bible School we experienced in June! We spent the week learning about how to trust God in all times and places. Psalm 56:3 guided our time together: "Whenever I'm afraid, I put my trust in you!" Through the story of Jacob, we remembered to trust God goes with us; through Ruth, we learned to trust God to lead the way; Jesus taught us

to trust God to share wisdom; Jesus calming the storm highlighted how to trust God to bring peace; and through the story of the early church in Acts, we learned to trust God to spark joy!

Thank you to the youth and adult volunteers who shared their time, energy, patience, and many gifts to make this week such a success! This year we had an enthusiastic group of 80 children, 31 adult volunteers, and 22 youth volunteers. Seeing so many new faces among our volunteers was a true joy!

For our service project, we supported different kinds of camp experiences. On Monday and Tuesday, children painted quilt squares. Thank you to our marvelous quilters, especially Cathy DeLesDernier and Susan Bracken who coordinated this project. Once sewn together, the squares will become a quilt for someone living in a refugee camp around the world. On Wednesday and Thursday, children created cards and tied fleece blankets for Camp Noah, a ministry of Lutheran Social Service in Minnesota that provides a summer camp experience for children who have experienced natural disaster. Several have already been distributed this summer in Lutheran congregations and camps in nearby Western North Carolina!

This year we concluded with a closing program on Friday morning and sweet treats from the Kona Ice Truck. Children and youth had one last chance to connect and celebrate the week.

We were sad to see it end!

We're already looking forward to next summer's VBS and all the joy it will bring!

Pastor Sarah





# Faith Formation





# Youth Ministry 2025-2026

*All youth of Epiphany are welcome at any events listed. Friends are always welcome to join you at any event as well! Parents are always welcome to join as well, but it is not necessary. Our Timothy Ministers, who are our adult leaders, assist Pastor Joseph with ministry. All events take place in the Star Lodge from noon to 2:00 pm unless otherwise stated.*



## Youth+News

Pastor Joseph will return from his Sabbatical refreshed and raring to go!

So stay tuned for updates for the first of our EYG Gatherings!



### CALLING ALL COLLEGE ADDRESSES!!!

The church office needs updated mailing addresses for all of our college/university students. If you are at college/university or have a child at college/university this fall, please send updated mailing info to [hhamlin@epiphanyelca.org](mailto:hhamlin@epiphanyelca.org) or drop it by the church office when you come to worship on a Sunday.

Thank you!!



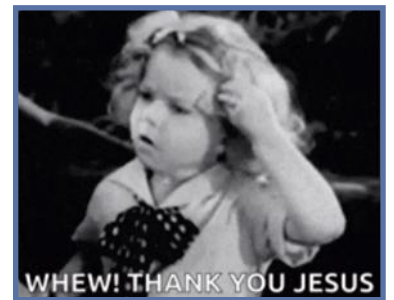
# Property Ministry

Blessings

August 2025

Summer 2025 lasts just a little bit longer this month and, as always, it seems to have flown by way too fast. Tans fade, and the last bits of sand are hosed away from beach gear. School starts soon with mixed feelings, dreaded by a few (students) and a blessing to some (parents). “The most wonderful time of the year” as the Staples ad goes! The heat wave has just broken this week, and more comfortable temperatures are sorely welcome.

Of course, the biggest elephant to address is the status of our sanctuaries’ AC replacement. We have thankfully been blessed with a (relatively) mild summer, but there is no denying that it has been a bit close in the pews at times. Our outdated unit (1963) that supplies AC to the sanctuary gave out at just the right (wrong) time. It was on our list of recommended items to replace but just couldn’t wait for us to budget and schedule. This project is a bit more complicated than our boiler installation 2 years ago, and at least as costly. A job of this size is no easy bid. We’re not just replacing a window unit. Our current set-up is very complicated, heavy, and not conveniently situated for removal or repair. It’s gratifying that the congregation has been so patient as we await these bids. We have contacted 4 companies, we have 1 quote in hand and are about to receive the other 2 so Council and Finance can decide on who will do the work. (1 company has declined to respond). You will continue to be updated in the announcements as this moves forward. The hidden blessing is that once completed we should have a system up to today’s technology that will serve the church for many years. A big thank you to Steve Collins for his continued expertise!



In other large project news, Willet-Hauser will contact us soon with a firm date regarding the work on our stained glass. They projected the work to be done sometime in September-October, and while we had hoped this could be done over the summer, artisans who perform this work are few and tightly scheduled. Again, I guess the hidden blessing here is they’ll be able to perform their work in cooler temperatures. The Eickhof repair team has replaced our second broken columbarium stone panel and inspected all the others. Thanks to Wayne Shimko, Ken Reckenbiel and all others on the team for their continued maintenance in this sacred area.

Budgetary constraints have put some of the projects needing attention I have mentioned in previous articles on hold. I’m confident we will revisit them in 2026. We have, though, recently gotten our ELNS carpets cleaned. Stanley Steamer also passed over the areas we recently had stretched in the rear of the Sanctuary so they are looking smooth as ever!

Many thanks to Brian Hellenga, Stew and Marilyn Gloyer, the Sizemores and all others who have stopped by to do a bit of weeding around our church grounds. We are blessed with many of you who volunteer your time to help during our clean-up sessions.

Continue next page....



## Property Ministry, cont'd

SPEAKING OF WHICH, won't you join us for our next clean-up party on Saturday August 16<sup>th</sup>? Constant Contact has a date of the 23<sup>rd</sup>, but I'd like to back that up a week to hopefully get our work done before the ELNS school year begins. We'll gather at 9, break for lunch around noon, and wrap up around 2. There are plenty of light duty jobs that anyone can tackle, as well as some medium ones like power washing, trimming along fence line and weeding (especially around the Labyrinth). Thank you ahead of time for joining us!



I'm ready for some blessings  
that aren't in disguise



Rob Hamlin  
Facilities Manager

## Fellowship Ministry



**Guys' Night**

All men of  
the church

are welcome to join us on Thursday, August 21 at 7:00 pm for an evening of fellowship. We will gather at Waygone Brewery 10610-12 Patterson Ave, 23238, located in the Canterbury Shopping Center. Contact Joe Barnes (804) 836-5394 for more information. We hope to see you there!





# WELCA Year in Review

## Epiphany Evangelical Lutheran Church

### Women of the ELCA (WELCA)

We have three Circles at Epiphany. They are Margaret Miller, Clara Sullivan and Katie Luther. Margaret Miller meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month, Clara Sullivan on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month and Katie Luther on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month. Jointly our Circles continue to support Safe Harbor, Moments of Hope and Reinhart House. Each Circle continues with other ministries that interest their group such as sending birthday cards to all Epiphany members 80+ years young, assembling cookie trays to be given to Moments of Hope Outreach at Christmas, assembled winter blessing bags for Moments of Hope senior ladies (gloves, candy, lotion, sanitizer, Chapstick), enjoyed a presentation from Katie Hamann (Next Chapter) and Jaime Ebanks (PBS Legacy) on downsizing, celebrated the arrival of Spring with a class on botanical art led by one of our members, continue to support GracelInside Prison Ministry with greeting cards, Readers Digest magazines and calendars. Several members from our Circles visited the Virginia Holocaust Museum in October.

Our Christmas Tea was held on December 5 in Price Hall. We had about 35 women in attendance. A devotion was given by one of our members entitled The Teacup which was so appropriate as we enjoyed a variety of teas served in members fancy teacups and finger foods. We donated dried beans, rice and Masa corn flour to our donation recipient Safe Harbor. We enjoyed Pastor Phillip and Pastor Joseph leading us in Christmas carols and a White Elephant Exchange with a guest visit from Santa Claus!



The Women of the ELCA Circles held their annual meeting/spring luncheon May 6, 2025. Approximately 30 women attended. Sheila Weisensale did a presentation on "Cooking with Herbs". We learned so much about different herbs and suggestions on how to use them as well as some tasty treats. We also enjoyed delicious, boxed lunches from Sally Belle's Kitchen. Our donation recipient was Safe Harbor, and we provided much needed laundry detergent.

## Fellowship Ministry, cont'd

### Women's Circles

**Clara Sullivan Circle** next meeting will be on September 10, in the Parlor.

Corky will give our devotions. The new 2025 - 2026 WELCA yearbook will be distributed. We will sign birthday cards for Epiphany members who are 80+.

Light refreshments will be served while we "catch up" with everyone's summertime activities!

Please call Eileen or Bonita if you are interested in more information about the Clara Sullivan Circle. We will be glad to talk with you and include you in the email chain. Everyone is welcome!

**Call, text, or email:**

Eileen Johnson: 804-513-3005 jay3boating@gmail.com

Bonita Wyatt: 804-347-5357 bwyatt@microtel systems.com

**Margaret Miller Circle** We Love Sharing Our Gifts With Others: Welcome Back: The Margaret Miller Circle will gather for our first meeting of the new church year on Tuesday, September 9 at 11:00 am. at the home of Sally Trone in celebration of our Annual Fall Luncheon.

We welcome the opportunity to share our circle with others. If interested in joining our circle or have any questions, please contact Donna Josephson (804) 883-5955.

**Katie Luther Circle** meets on the second Thursday September through May. Each hostess decides where we will meet.

We will meet on Thursday, September 11, 6:00 pm. If you are interested in joining us, please contact Tatter Hartmann at [maryhartmann279@gmail.com](mailto:maryhartmann279@gmail.com) or 804 338 3578 (phone or text).



Women  
of the  
EVANGELICAL  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH  
IN AMERICA

### Men's Lunches

Epiphany has two men's lunches that meet every month led by the pastor(s). Come join in fellowship and lunch!

**The Second Tuesday** of the month is our Men's "Manna" Lunch which meets at 11:45 am, at Tony's Italian Restaurant, (3409 Cox Rd, Richmond, VA 23233)

**The Third Tuesday** of the month is our Tuesday Men's Lunch which meets at 11:45 am, at Frank's West-located at 11238 Patterson Ave, Richmond, VA 23238 (Tuckahoe Village Shopping Center)



# Community Service Ministry

## *House of Hope Collection - Sunday, August 3*

Sunday, August 3, is the last day of the Community Service Ministry Team's House of Hope drive to collect various personal and household items for Support Works Housing. You can learn more about this organization and its mission at

[www.supportworkshousing.org](http://www.supportworkshousing.org).

This week, we are collecting household items such as, but not limited to, paper towels, napkins, tissues, bath tissues, food storage items, and aluminum foil/clear wrap. You can still donate personal, bathroom, bedroom, and other household items even though that collection Sunday has passed!

Your support of this ministry is greatly appreciated.

Questions? Contact either Mary Sue Oehler at [msoehler3@gmail.com](mailto:msoehler3@gmail.com) or (804) 929-8301 or Mike Long at [mlong@holidaysigns.com](mailto:mlong@holidaysigns.com) or (804) 955-5248.



## PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY MEETING

We are in need of more people who would love to help us in knitting or crocheting prayer shawls!

One of the many ways we can share God's love with family, friends and neighbors, is through the giving of a prayer shawl made by the members of Epiphany's Prayer Shawl Ministry Team.

A prayer shawl is not only a symbol of one's love and caring for the recipient, but also is a garment, shroud, canopy, or cloak that envelops the wearer both physically and spiritually in prayer and celebration, in joy and in sorrow.



There are many reasons to give a prayer shawl: health issues, distress, mourning, moving away from family or friends, new baby, graduation, newlyweds, to name a few. Do you know someone who would welcome the warm embrace of God's love by receiving a prayer shawl? If yes, the Church office can assist you with your shawl selection.

We will be sharing our skills **by working from home** unless there is a need to start meeting back at the church. Should anyone be interested, need more information or product, please contact Jackie Collins at [ejc070944@gmail.com](mailto:ejc070944@gmail.com)

We are interested in sharing our shawls with the Epiphany homebound. Let us know if you know of someone that would benefit from our shawls. We are blessed to have such workmanship.

# Community Service Ministry, cont'd

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## HOW DOES STEPHEN MINISTRY WORK?

Throughout our lives many of us are confronted with life situations that require extra effort from us, maybe help from others, and certainly prayers to our Heavenly Father. Health issues, loss of a loved one, stress or anxiety, depression, job loss, dementia, family problems, or other issues may come at any time. During times as these it helps to know that you are not alone.

A Stephen Minister will be there for you. But how does that happen? How does this special ministry program work?

### BELIEF

The person receiving a Stephen Minister may or may not be a member of Epiphany. It doesn't matter. What is important is that he or she is a person in need of God's comfort and care amidst a troubling time. Through talk, scripture, and prayer, the individual accepts God's healing spirit.

### REFERRAL

You, a pastor, a family member or a friend may be concerned about your current struggle and suggest help from a Stephen Minister. The Stephen Leader (Ben Droste) is contacted in absolute secrecy about your situation and the availability of a Stephen Minister for you. The Stephen Leader talks with you or the referred person for information, and then contacts you to explain the program (below) and confirm your interest. Once there is private agreement, the Stephen Leader assigns a Stephen Minister for You (man to man and woman to woman). No one else is aware of you or your situation.



### VISITS

First and foremost, the program works in private and behind the scenes. Your visit with your Stephen Minister is between the two of you. You and your Stephen Minister agree on a day, time, and place to meet on a weekly basis to talk about your situation. For about an hour the Stephen Minister will listen to you, without judgment, listen to you in strict confidence, and listen to what you are really saying.

### RESULTS

Your Stephen Minister will visit with you, one-on-one, week after week, month after month, for as long as you want the visits to continue. The Stephen Minister will not fix your situation; more importantly, he or she invites you into Christ's healing love to relieve your stress and anxiety. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you." (John 14:27). It is only when you let your feelings out that Christ can come in and help you so that together your situation is addressed. For almost twenty years men and women with various life conflicts have been helped by Epiphany's Stephen Ministers and their Christ-centered care.

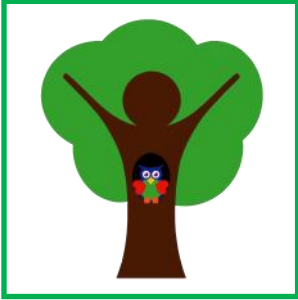
### SCRIPTURE

Matthew 11:28—"Come to me all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."



# Epiphany Lutheran Nursery School News

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ELNS is gearing up for another exciting school year! Our teachers will return to begin preparing their classrooms on Monday, August 18th and the school year will begin on Monday, August 25th. This year we will have seven classes of preschoolers learning and growing together in the education wing here at Epiphany. Our staff includes 17 teachers and we are expecting nearly 90 students to join us this year. We can't wait to get to know each of the students and families we will serve this school year.

One of the wonderful ways that Epiphany supports ELNS each year is by helping us gather the supplies needed for our classrooms. This is so much appreciated each year and we would love to have your help again this year! Below is a wish list of some specific items we need for our classrooms. If you are willing and able to help, donated items can be dropped off in our supply wagon outside of the church office by August 18th. Alternatively, you can also shop these items and more on our Amazon wish list using the link below and have items delivered right here to Epiphany.

[https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/B3ZRAXWPGD87?ref=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/B3ZRAXWPGD87?ref=wl_share)

Regular Size Disappearing Purple Glue Sticks

Paper Towels

Stickers (any theme suitable for children)

Snacks for the teachers (grab and go items)

Masking Tape

Crayola Washable Broadline Markers

Crayola Jumbo Crayons

Thank you for your prayers and support as we prepare to begin another school year at ELNS. If you are in school, have children in school, or are an educator, we hope you have had a marvelous summer and that your school year begins smoothly as well!

Melinda Martin

ELNS Program Director

[elnsdirector@gmail.com](mailto:elnsdirector@gmail.com)



# Epiphany Lutheran Nursery School News

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**Epiphany Lutheran Nursery School** and **Clothes Bin®** have partnered to collect and recycle old clothing, shoes and textiles!

Don't throw your items away,  
just place them in the **green** recycling bin in our parking lot  
the next time you come to church!

**Every pound of recycled items supports **ELNS!****

Below is a list of items that can be placed in our bin:

**Clothing:** pants, jeans, skirts, dresses, suits, shorts, shirts, tees, tanks

**Footwear:** shoes, boots, heels, sneakers, sandals, socks, tights

**Undergarments:** bras, underwear, slips, camisoles

**Accessories:** hats, belts, ties, scarves, headbands

**Handbags:** wallets, totes, luggage, backpacks, briefcases

**Linens:** towels, sheets, comforters, blankets, tablecloths



As you clean out the old and bring in the new,  
you can help the environment and **ELNS** too!

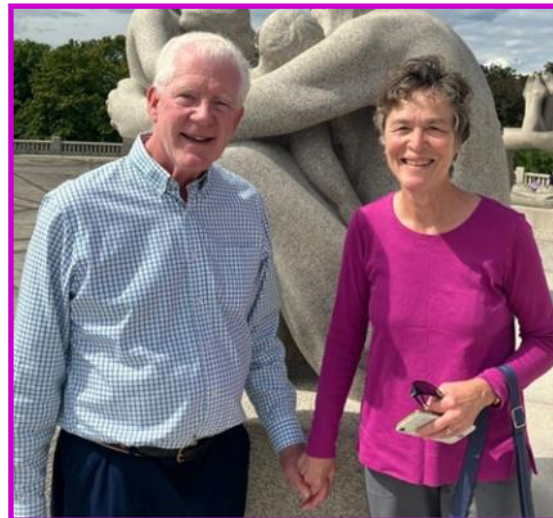


# Happenings in the Congregation

We are so glad to welcome back into Epiphany's membership Pastor Chris Price and his wife, Terry. Chris is Epiphany's Pastor Emeritus, having served as pastor of this congregation from 1983 until his retirement in 2013. "Emeritus" is an honorific title that is bestowed on someone who retires from a position of distinction, which Chris most certainly did!

It does not give Chris any official role on our church staff, but his presence with us, along with the experience he received as a parish pastor, will bless us in many other ways. After "retiring" from Epiphany, Chris served four years as an Assistant to the Bishop of our synod, and then served twice as an interim pastor in local congregations. In short, and in his own words, he is ready to be in the pew where he can appreciate pastoral ministry rather than provide it. The Price's headshots are already uploaded into Realm. He and Terry are thankful to find a congregational home among us, especially now that their daughter and son-in-law, Megan and Rob Ragusa, and their grandchildren, Stella and Nick, are members here too. Please join me in welcoming them back and receiving the many gifts they bring.

Phillip Martin



## A note from Moments of Hope...

Somewhere along the way another note will show but... You do so much for us. Easter baskets, Thanksgiving boxes, prayers, meals, and funding. The difference you make for our guests and the way in which you do it is an inspiration to me (and MoHope). You give us the encouragement to face the tasks ahead.

Betty Jo

Moments of Hope

Dear Epiphany family:

Thank you so much for the recent altar flower deliveries.

By way of Carol Anton and Marcia Donovan, I received the flowers as well as a visit from Carol. I really enjoy the flowers, as well as the visits.

Thanks also to Pastor Sarah Menke for her recent visit as well as Holy Communion. It is nice to be remembered by a church where I was once very active.

Thank you with Christian love.

Carolyn Kronk

What a lovely surprise! The flowers are so beautiful and we feel so blessed to have received them. Epiphany has a special place in our hearts. Thank you so very much for remembering us.

Bev Kelley



# Members in Our Prayers

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## **CHURCH STAFF**

Pastor - The Rev. Phillip W. Martin, Jr.  
pmartin@epiphanyelca.org

Pastor - The Rev. Joseph L. Bolick  
jbolick@epiphanyelca.org

Pastor - The Rev. Sarah E. Lang  
slang@epiphanyelca.org

Visitation Pastor - The Rev. Sarah Menke  
smenke@epiphanyelca.org

Director of Music Ministry - Kevin Barger  
kbarger@epiphanyelca.org

Office Administrator - Hanne Hamlin  
hhamlin@epiphanyelca.org

Coordinator of Community Life - Linda Martin  
lmartin@epiphanyelca.org

Finance Manager - Debbie Sexton  
dsexton@epiphanyelca.org

Facilities Manager - Rob Hamlin  
rhamlin@epiphanyelca.org

Technology and Media Support - Turner Barger  
tbarger@epiphanyelca.org



***We will be in the office during these listed times.***

9 am - 3 pm Monday through Thursday

9 am - Noon on Friday (Pastors off on Fridays)



Epiphany Evangelical Lutheran Church  
1400 Horsepen Road  
Monument Ave. at Horsepen Road  
Richmond, VA 23226  
Phone: 804-282-6066  
Fax: 804-282-6067  
www.epiphanyelca.org



Address Service Requested



### **In-Person Summer Worship Times**

May 25-August 31  
**8:30 am and 10:30 am**

### **Online Summer Worship Times on YouTube**

May 25-August 31  
**10:30 am**

### **In-Person Worship Times**


September 7-May 17  
**8:30 am and 11:00 am**

### **Online Summer Worship Times on YouTube**

September 7-May 17  
**11:00 am**



**[www.facebook.com/EpiphanyLutheranRVA](https://www.facebook.com/EpiphanyLutheranRVA)**

 Instagram: epiphanyelca