



EPIPHANY
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

The Examiner

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

August 2026

Words from Our Pastor

Like many others, I got caught up in World Cup fever this summer. I never really watch that much soccer (or “football”) on a regular basis, but there was something about the spirit of countries and athletes competing against each other on a grand stage that was captivating to me. Perhaps the thing that really grabbed my attention most of all was the amount of communal singing involved in all of the matches. Soccer and singing? Who knew? Whether it was entire stadiums singing “Take Me Home, Country Roads” after a U.S. win or groups of Scottish men belting out “Flower of Scotland” when their players took the pitch, we were repeatedly treated to hearing large groups of complete strangers united in song. One article I read suggested that these sporting events are some of the only times we hear men sing in public anymore. If true, that’s a shame.



As I heard these choruses rise from the stands it occurred to me that I get to hear voices united in song each Sunday in worship at Epiphany. We have a congregation that really sings well...both men and women! In fact, my favorite part of worship may be standing in the aisle at the end during the sending hymn and being surrounded by the sound of all kinds of voices. Kevin has done an excellent job nurturing this in us.

As you know, communal singing has been a fundamental part of Christian life since its beginning. From the psalms of the Hebrew Bible to the hymns included in Revelation, we know that vocal music has anchored our forebears’ faith. There are even a few beloved modern hymns that we belt out just as loudly as “Take Me Home, Country Roads.” Singing brings people together. It brings joy. Hymns help us express our faith in ways that mere spoken words can’t. But might God be doing something even more profound with our singing in worship?

I think so. I have come to believe that the Holy Spirit uses group singing to build our confidence in sharing our faith in other ways. When you sing you have to “put yourself out there,” trusting that you will be heard and graciously received rather than judged. Said differently, I bet none of those soccer fans ever held back from singing because they thought, “I don’t have a good voice.” They just joined in the song knowing that the whole sound would envelop them. It gave them pride in being a fan.

I think something similar is going on when we sing as church. If I venture to let others hear my voice, even when I think it’s shaky or off-tune, I might discover more bravery in speaking or acting on behalf of Christ in other arenas. Perhaps that’s one unintended consequence of our tradition of inviting professional singers to perform the national anthem before sporting events. It can subtly suggest that only certain people deserve to have their voices heard, while the rest of us should simply listen. And yet God is not a music critic! No matter what we think our individual voice sounds like, God likes to hear it. And when the sound envelops us, we realize more deeply that others are with us on this journey of faith.

Thank you for sharing your voices with me each time we worship, for carrying me through our difficult times when the words won’t come to my mouth. It is a joy and an honor to be on this team with you...this winning team of faith!

With you in the chorus of the church,

PASTOR PHILLIP

Welcome aboard, Elizabeth!

We welcome to our staff Elizabeth Hurst, our new Finance Manager. Elizabeth joins us with years of experience in finance from working for the Commonwealth of Virginia in the Department of Human Resources. She also currently serves as a part-time bookkeeper for a Presbyterian church on the south side. While many of you may never see Elizabeth, she comes in about once a week with a variety of finance-related tasks, including helping the Treasurer submit reports to Council, assisting with budget preparation, and managing payroll. We are grateful for her service and expertise and look forward to having her on our team!



Upcoming Opportunities to Serve Our Neighbors

Looking Ahead!

September 13 - God's Work. Our Hands. Putting 750 personal care kits together for LWR in Price Hall.

September 29 - Liberation Veterans Services Meal

October 11 - Blood Drive in Price Hall

October 25 - Moments of Hope Lunch Service Event.

November 3 - Cookie Bake for Kairos Prison Ministry

November - Thanksgiving Collection

November - Annual Congregation Meeting-TBD

December - Giving Tree Collection



GO.



SERVE.

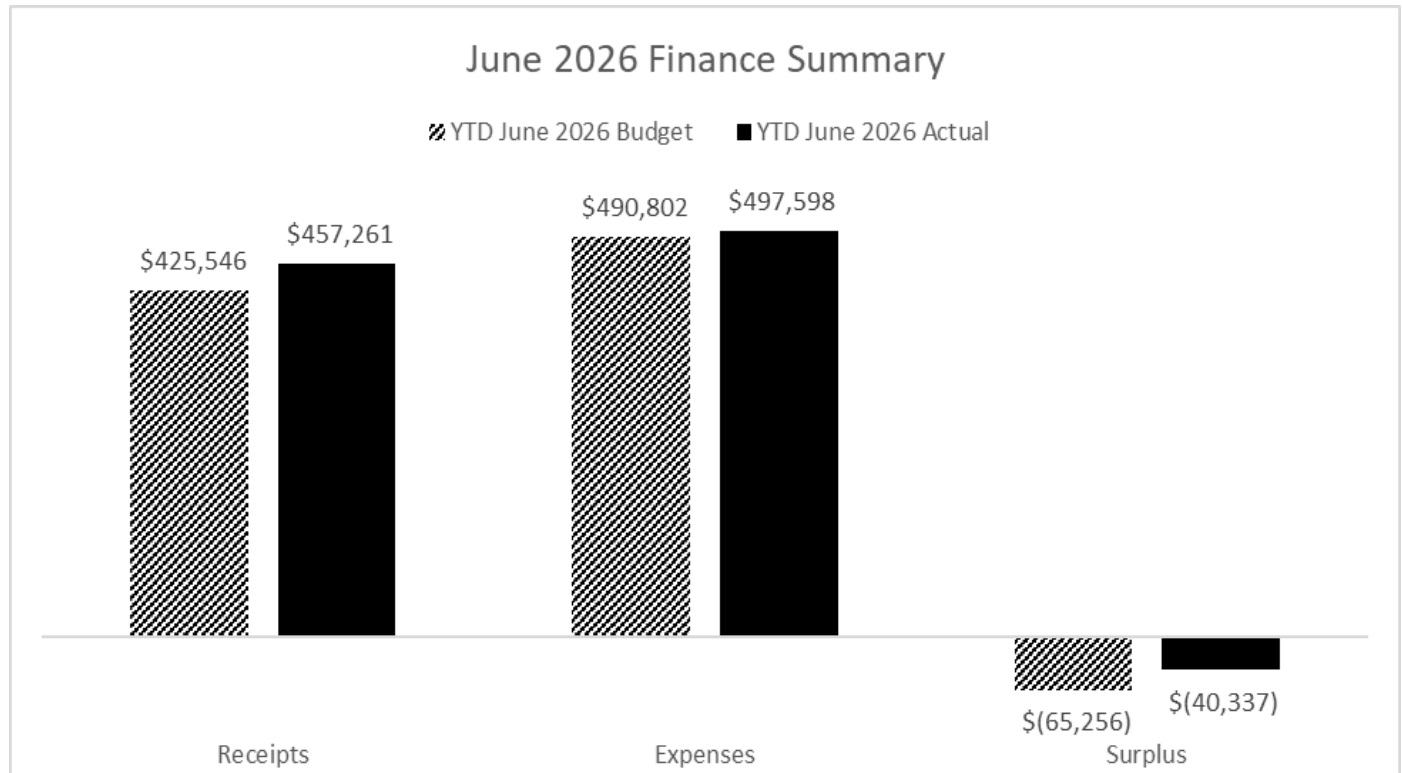


LOVE.



REPEAT.

Music Ministry



YTD June receipts are \$457,261 which is \$31,715 ahead of plan and up 6% vs 2025.

Expenses were \$497,598 which is right on plan. Property expense is unfavorable \$6.5k due to electricity bills being higher than normal due to the cold winter.

We have a net deficit of \$40,337 which is less than planned deficit of \$65,256 by \$24,419 due to earlier than planned contributions. We typically run a deficit through the early part of the year and make it up in the 4th quarter.

Music Ministry

NOTES FROM THE CHOIR LOFT – AUGUST 2026

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. 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. 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!



?? ? Bible Quiz ? ?

In the final poem of Psalms, what musical instrument is mentioned as a means to praise the Lord?

- A. brass
- B. percussion
- C. strings
- D. woodwinds
- E. all of the above



Answer: E (See Psalm 150:3-5.)

August Baptism Birthdays



Altar Care

Thank you to those who served in June and July:

Altar Care for June:

First Service - Bonita and Alvah Wyatt

Second Service - Jean Henry, Linda Martin, Hanne Hamlin

Altar Care for July:

First Service - Michele Frese and Stephanie Hamlett

Second Service - Chris Crouch and Tracy Bucknam

Altar Care for August:

First Service - Bonita and Alvah Wyatt

Second Service - Jeanette Linka and JoAnn Fawley

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 if you are interested.

The Finance Team Ministry will meet on 4th Tuesday, August 25 at 7:00 pm.

If you would like to attend, please let Jim Huddle know.

Jrhuddle1us@gmail.com

704-779-3307



Faith Formation



Faith Formation Volunteers for 2026-2027

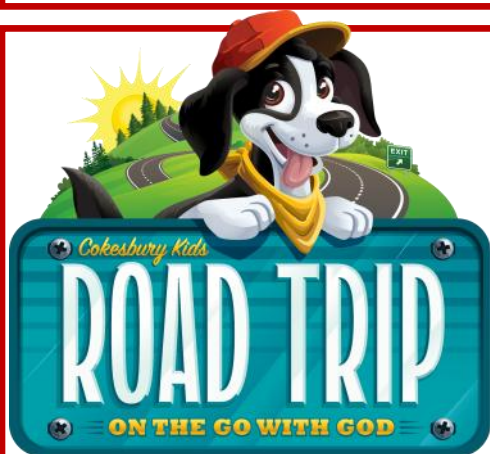
We're already planning for Sunday School in 2026-2027, and we're looking for teachers who love children and are willing to share their faith! If you're interested in serving as a Sunday School teacher next fall and spring or are interested in learning more, talk with Pastor Sarah (slang@epiphanyelca.org).

We're especially in need of teachers and classroom helpers for our 2-year-Old and 3-Year-Old class as well as our Pre-K/K class.



Back-to-School Blessing Sunday, August 23 - both services

Our annual Back-to-School Blessing is scheduled for Sunday, **August 23** 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!



VBS 2027 Save the Date!

Join us June 14-18, 2027 for a Road Trip as we travel with God! Registration will open in January 2027.

Faith Formation



Knights of North Castle: VBS 2026

In June, 84 knights and 53 volunteers completed their quest to find the King's armor! On each of the days of VBS, we searched for a different piece—the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of peace, the shield of faith, and the helmet of salvation. Stories from the Bible came alive each day through storytelling, science, crafts, music, games, and snacks! We're so grateful for the children, families, staff, and volunteers who shared their gifts, time, patience, and creativity with us this summer.

Our knights grew in generosity during the week, too, as together we collected 448 granola bars, 762 fruit snacks, 555 snack bags, 397 water and juice boxes, 153 art supplies for Greater Richmond SCAN, an organization whose mission it is to protect and strengthen children and families, especially those who have experienced abuse and trauma. We're grateful for the work they're doing in our community and thrilled to partner with them for the week.



Faith Formation



Middle School Servant Adventure

In July, 23 Middle School Youth along with 5 adult leaders and 3 high school counselors served throughout Richmond during our Summer Servant Adventure Day Camp. We gathered each day from 8:30 am until 3 pm and served, played games, made crafts, studied the Bible, and grew as a community in Christ.

Thank you to Dana Lauder, Megan Edwards, Kellie Brown, and Jon Lauder who served as our adult leaders and to Ryan Urban, Greyson Castle, and Caroline Samos who served as our high school counselors. Thanks to Shalom Farms, EnCircle, Soar 365, Friends of the James River Park, Red Door Ministry and Epiphany's Quilters for partnering with us throughout the week.

We pray you continue to grow as branches of the vine of Christ and bear good fruit!

Peace,

Pastor Joseph and Pastor Sarah

EYG - From Pastor Joseph

Our next Summer Service Trip will be to Puerto Rico during the week of **Sunday, June 27 through Saturday, July 3, 2027.**

This experience will be for youth who are current rising 8th through 12th grade students (and those who will have completed 8th through 12th grade at the time of the trip).

Puerto Rico is part of the United States and passports are not needed to travel, and yet this is a big adventure. Parents are welcome to join us ~ indeed we will need several of you to join us to make this happen!

Imagine this experience for our group! It will include four solid days of service along with strong relational connections to the communities we visit. We will be serving in a place where Spanish is the primary language which will give our group an opportunity to step into a genuine cross-cultural experience. There will be fun evening activities and we will take part in the vibrant culture by learning local history from local leaders and enjoying regional cuisine.

This will be a chance to experience the church working in a truly unique way and we will be addressing the effects of poverty and natural disasters in a community that manages daily life with limited resources. Most service projects will include supporting children, older adults, and marginalized communities through relationship-building and hands-on projects. YouthWorks has been serving in the metro area since 2005 so the partnership runs deep.

We will begin registering for this trip soon, but I wanted to get you the dates so you can plan to join us. As you think about this opportunity, you may want to consider that the total cost per person will be about \$1,000, which will require some light fundraising (think car wash, talent show, etc). The portion we will ask you to pay is \$150 in the fall and an additional \$280 in January for a total of \$430. Epiphany will cover the difference. As always, *if you would like financial assistance please just speak with me.*

This is a thrilling opportunity to take part in ministry with individuals, churches, schools, and service organizations invested for the long run, through four days of meaningful service, a unique cultural experience, relationship-building, and fun.

Peace+

Joseph



Property Ministry

Doors, Floors, and Roofs

facilities article August 2026

As expected, June and July went by in the blink of an eye and there is much to relate regarding our property and facilities.

Epiphany Shines to 75 has yielded the funds for the repairs and upgrades, and I'll try to list what's happened and what is planned.

One of the biggest line items was our "final" roof replacements. The Narthex, Sala Music Chapel and the Star Lodge are all newly shingled. Thank you all for enabling this to be taken care of as some hidden damage was discovered and repaired. I put final in quotes because we've just discovered a leak in the garage roof, but that is not immediately critical and will be addressed as we can.



The reoccurring water incursions in the upstairs classrooms have FINALLY been fixed. A few incidental leaks in the Franklin St hallway will be fixed shortly before we replace the ceiling tiles. I don't know if you've noticed how bright and cheerful that hallway is now, ready for phase 2 & 3.

The Quilters have completed their move downstairs into those beautiful cabinets.

At the entrance and end of that hallway, the two sets of double doors had not been closing properly for some time. With Steve Collin's help I was able to fix the set leading off Price Hall. The double fire doors were another matter entirely. Grayson Castle gave me a hand to try and remedy, but it ultimately fell to Jim Behren's welding skills to put things right. I can't estimate how many thousands of dollars he saved the church by taking this on. More on Jim shortly. Areas of Price Hall will be cordoned off for a period in September as the new AV system gets installed. That must happen first before we consider replacing that floor.

And about flooring, room 104 housing the ELNS office, classroom and storage is finally going to be installed this month. It's the last room in the education wing to be done and will be quite the job to move furniture and cabinets out, and then back in. Can you help? We have until the 10th to clear the room. And of course, moving everything back in! Speaking of help, and clearing the room, the whole point of moving our Quilting ministry downstairs was to free up room 201 for the growing needs of the day school. I desperately need some muscle soon to move the original built-in cabinets downstairs. Can you help?

Tod Mitchell and I will patch the floor up there, a few licks of paint and the room should be good to go for this fall's session.



Continued next page...

Property Ministry, cont'd

Jim (and I) were able to take down the dead tree that bordered our entrance driveway. The man's got skills!

We generated a bit of mulch, and if anyone wants some of the wood that is still lying there, please help yourself.

Otherwise, it's an item for this month's **annual clean-up party**.

I'm suggesting **Saturday the 29th of August** from 9:30 to 2:30 pm. Can you help?

Here is a sample of areas where you could contribute:



- power washing the Trinity doors and façade, Trex benches
- painting the two ELNS red doors in the drop-off loop/painting the labyrinth cross, both red
- painting some touch up areas in Price Hall and room 201 white
- replacing 2 worn out road signs in the ELNS loop with new ones
- collecting branches around the property to be hauled off
- assembling some shelving for future use
- weeding around the property, drainage basin, Columbarium and playgrounds, ivy off trees
- relocating the Chrismon tree and decorations to the main building (currently stored in Star Lodge)
- dusting the baptismal font "roof" and touch-up woodwork

And here's a shout out to all of you, like Macon Sizemore and Faye Coppage, who just show up and start pulling weeds.

Many areas could use some TLC, and 2 days out of the year is not enough to take care of it all. Can you help? Before I run too long on this article, I'll say that any area of the proposal that I have not mentioned here is in the works. Choreography of these repairs and upgrades is quite the job, and your humble servant is churning away as best he can. It's easy to forget how far we've come! Stay tuned, each month continues to show progress.

Rob Hamlin
Facilities Manager

Fellowship Ministry



Join us on Thursday, August 20th at 7:00 pm for an evening of fellowship.

We will gather at Capital Ale House 4024 Cox Road Glen Allen, Va. 23060.

All men are welcome, we hope to see you there!

For more information contact Joe Barnes 804-836-5394.



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)



Fellowship Ministry, cont'd

Women's Circles

The Clara Sullivan Circle's next meeting will be on Wednesday, September 9, 10:00 am in the Parlor.

We will have a devotion, talk about the programs for upcoming meetings, and sign birthday cards for Epiphany members who are 80+.

Light refreshments will be served while we hear about everyone's summertime adventures!

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@microtelsystems.com

Margaret Miller Circle We Love Sharing Our Gifts With Others: Welcome to Fall!!! We will gather for our first meeting of the church year on Tuesday, September 8 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.

The Katie Luther Circle will meet again on Thursday, September 10 with Stephanie Horacek as our hostess. Final plans/invitations will go out about a week before this date.

We meet at noon (occasionally in the evening) for a potluck meal on the second Thursday of each month September through April. If you are interested in joining or visiting our group, please contact Tatter Hartmann at 804 338 3578 or maryhartmann279@gmail.com.



Women
of the
EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN
CHURCH
IN AMERICA

Community Service Ministry

The Community Service Ministry Team offers many ways for you to serve others. These opportunities are perfect for families and individuals with a busy schedule, work and school commitments and holiday seasons.

Chose one or more of these opportunities to do God's Work through you today!

Community Service Ministry Team Meeting

The Team is meeting on Tuesday, August 18 at 7:00 pm in the Conference Room and by Zoom. Come and see what we do to help our community. Ideas? Bring those too! Questions? Contact Peggy Hinson at psumd76@verizon.net or (703) 472-8701.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

Our Mission Statement: The Prayer Shawl Ministry has been created to provide comfort for those in need of God's embrace.



One of the most important parts of our ministry is to offer our congregation the opportunity to request and provide a Prayer Shawl for someone they know who is in need of comfort. There are so many reasons for us to share a prayer shawl with those we care about: those with health issues; those in distress; those who mourn; those who travel or move away from friends and/or family; new baby; graduate; newlyweds; to name a few.



Simply go the church office and Hanne or Linda can assist you with your need.

The Prayer Shawl is a symbol, garment, shroud, canopy, or cloak which envelopes the wearer both physically and spiritually, in prayer and celebration, in joy and sorrow. The Prayer Shawl is a commanded blessing, given by God.

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 or need more information, or product, please contact Jackie Collins at 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.

Save the
Date
God's Work
Our Hands
and
Rally Day



GOD'S WORK OUR HANDS / RALLY DAY EVENT

Please mark your calendar for **Sunday, September 13**, when our congregation will gather for Epiphany's annual day of service, God's Work Our Hands congregational project and Rally Day picnic.

Additional information regarding the project and the picnic will be posted in upcoming weekly announcements and Sunday bulletins. Stay tuned!!

Community Service Ministry, cont'd

LAMB's Basket June 2026 Food Drive

Our June Food Drive was amazing! As of the end of July (yes, money and food are still coming in!), we have collected 1808 pounds of food and \$1910.00 in checks and cash. We are so blessed to have such a giving congregation. Thank you for your continued support for this food pantry. As always, the need for food does not end just because we don't have a food drive, so feel free to drop off food in the basket right next to the display table across from the office at any time!

For those new to Epiphany, here is a little history and mission of LAMB's Basket. In 1999, when demand quickly exceeded what the various churches in the Lakeside area were capable of providing, an initiative among Lakeside area churches was begun to form a larger food pantry in order to meet the growing needs more efficiently. LAMB's Basket opened in 2002 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The name is an acronym for Lakeside Area Ministries Board. Today, churches outside the Lakeside area, including Epiphany, are huge supporters of this ministry.



Those who wish to receive food from The LAMB's Basket are referred from area churches and organizations such as Central Virginia Food Bank, Catholic Charities, and Henrico County Social Services. It is located at 8419 Oakview Avenue in Henrico. It is open to these individuals on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:00-12:00 each of those days.

QUILTERS INGATHERING

September 19, Noon until 2:00 PM

The quilters are sponsoring another ingathering. We will be sending quilts, school kits, fabric kits from our church along with quilts and kits from other Lutheran churches to a Lutheran World Relief warehouse. Once there, the boxes will be repacked and sent to disaster sites, refugee camps, and our neighbors in need.

We will need a good number of strong helpers that can help load the boxes onto the truck from Lutheran World Relief. Please save the date and watch weekly bulletins and Constant Contact for more details closer to the date.



Community Service Ministry, cont'd

Hello Hanne and Epiphany Family! ☺

I hope your summer is going well!

I believe that Dr. Kristin Powell and Jim Huddle are a part of your fantastic congregation at Epiphany and we are SO blessed to have them as members of a couple of our Mountain Medical Teams that serve in Honduras! I've also heard Dr. Powell speak at events for Friends of Barnabas and I love her passion and enthusiasm for our mission! She is awesome!

I've attached a little link above that highlights some of our extraordinarily-awesome kiddos with Down Syndrome. We're bringing some awareness to them this summer as we continue to provide life-changing support and healthcare for fifteen (15) of them in our Healthy Kids program. We love them and they inspire us!

If you all have a protocol for sharing this video, [Extraordinary Children](#) and story with your great folks at Epiphany, we'd be so grateful!

Thank you for all that you all are doing in RVA to touch lives and share Jesus!

Blessings!

Joseph

Joseph Sedivy, RN

Development Coordinator

804.744.5624, Opt. 3/ (C) 804.629.8449

www.fobf.org

Heal, Educate, Empower.



The mission of Friends of Barnabas is to empower families in Honduras through healthcare and education.

House of Hope Collection for Liberation Veteran Services

Thank you to everyone who donated to the Community Service Ministry Team's House of Hope household and personal care collection to support Liberation Veteran Services.

Your generous donations provide much needed and appreciated resources to help these veterans rebuild their lives.



Epiphany Lutheran Nursery School News



ELNS is gearing up for another exciting school year! Our teachers will return to begin preparing their classrooms on Monday, August 24th and the school year will begin on Monday, August 31st. This year we will have eight classes of preschoolers learning and growing together in the education wing here at Epiphany. Our staff includes 20 teachers and we are expecting 100+ 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 17th. 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

Regular Size Disappearing Purple Glue Sticks
Paper Towels
Stickers (any theme suitable for children)
Snacks for the teachers (grab and go items)

Masking Tape
Baby Wipes
Boxes of Facial Tissue
Blunt Children's Scissors

Thank you for your prayers and support as we prepare to begin another school year at ELNS. If you are in school, have children or grandchildren 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



Members in Our Prayers



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 - Elizabeth Hurst
ehurst@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.

9:00 am - 3:00 pm Monday through Thursday

9:00 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 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

In-Person Summer Worship Times

May 24 - September 6
8:30 am and 10:30 am

Summer Worship on YouTube
May 24 - September 6
10:30 am



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 Instagram: epiphanyelca