



EPIPHANY
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

The Examiner

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

December 2025

The Nativity of Our Lord

Wednesday, December 24

Our worship services at 3:00pm, 5:00pm, 7:00pm, and 9:00 pm will point us to Bethlehem to celebrate the birth of Christ.

Those services are described more fully below.

3:00 and 5:00 pm – Children’s Christmas Eve Services with Tableau and Candlelight

At this service, all children are welcome to be angels and shepherds during the reading of the Gospel lesson. Halos and staffs will be given to all children to use during the service. Those wishing to be angels will stand in the side aisles, and the shepherds will stand in the center aisle. Entrance cues will be given to help the angels and shepherds. There will be baskets in the Commons to return the halos and staffs for future use.



7:00 and 9:00 pm – Festive Christmas Eve Communion Services with Candlelight



With shepherds, angels, and fellow Christians around the world, we worship at the birth of Jesus Christ. The Most High God is in a lowly manger – the God whom the universe cannot contain is enfolded in Mary’s arms – the presence of Almighty God is found in the trusting vulnerability of a newborn! The mystery of the incarnation of God in Christ Jesus awes the faithful with the wonder of God’s grace.

Wishing you and yours an Advent full of hope, and a Christmas full of joy.

***the 7:00 pm Service will be livestreamed.**

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28 *The First Sunday of Christmas (Holy Innocents, Martyrs)*

(NOTE, ONE SERVICE ONLY!!)

10:00 am worship with Holy Communion



Filled with Joy; Abounding in Hope

CONSECRATION SUNDAY 2025: December 7

During one of our recent worship services our Cherub Choir sang a song that included a loud refrain, “Again I say rejoice!” Their enthusiasm and mastery of the lyrics was so powerful it was as if they were inviting us into a competition. Who can say “rejoice” louder? The wide smiles on the congregation as the children sang made me really wonder who might win!

As the congregation prepares for Consecration Sunday on December 7, we will be reflecting on the ways God has given us opportunities to rejoice. We will also be thinking ahead into 2026 and pondering the hopes we have for ministry here as we walk the journey of faith, worship the Christ, and witness together. Part of that celebration will involve a special worship message on December 7, given by members of our congregation, and a breakfast in the Commons between services. Members will be given the opportunity to respond in their joy and hope by returning a commitment card with their intended giving for 2026.

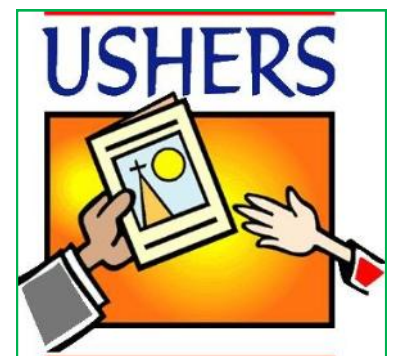


We are also happy to announce the return of the celebration meal on the evening of Consecration Sunday. At 5:00 pm we will gather for a sit-down meal in Price Hall, graciously prepared by a member of the congregation. Once we are finished eating we will travel to our front lawn for a grand illumination of our Christmas lights display. This year will be the second year that our newly-refurbished cross will shine from the top of the cross.

Filled with joy, abounding in hope. This is a refrain that we sing through our faith every Sunday, every week. We hope to see you on December 7 as we consecrate our gifts to the Lord and enjoy fellowship with our church family.

USHER MINISTRY

Thank you to all who have served in 2025. We've had several new ushers joining the team this year. We also have six youths who continue to serve. Thanks to those who have stepped up to serve at special services. Please know you are appreciated!



Mark Your Calendar!

WELCA Christmas Tea: December 3, at 2:00 pm

Consecration Sunday: December 7 events

Services at 8:30 and 11:00 am

9:30 am Buffet Breakfast between the services in the Commons

3:00-5:00 pm Decorate the Church

5:00 pm Celebration Dinner in Price Hall

6:00 pm Grand Illumination

Mid-Week Advent Worship Series:

Wednesdays, December 3, 10, and 17; at 7:00 pm

Beer and Hymns Fellowship Night: December 21, 7:00 pm, (Rare Olde Times)

Christmas Children's Tableau

Wednesday, December 24 at 3:00 pm and 5:00 pm.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services with Holy Communion

Wednesday, December 24 at 7:00 pm and 9:00 pm.

1st Sunday of Christmas December 28 - Please note! Only one service.

10:00 am Holy Communion Service

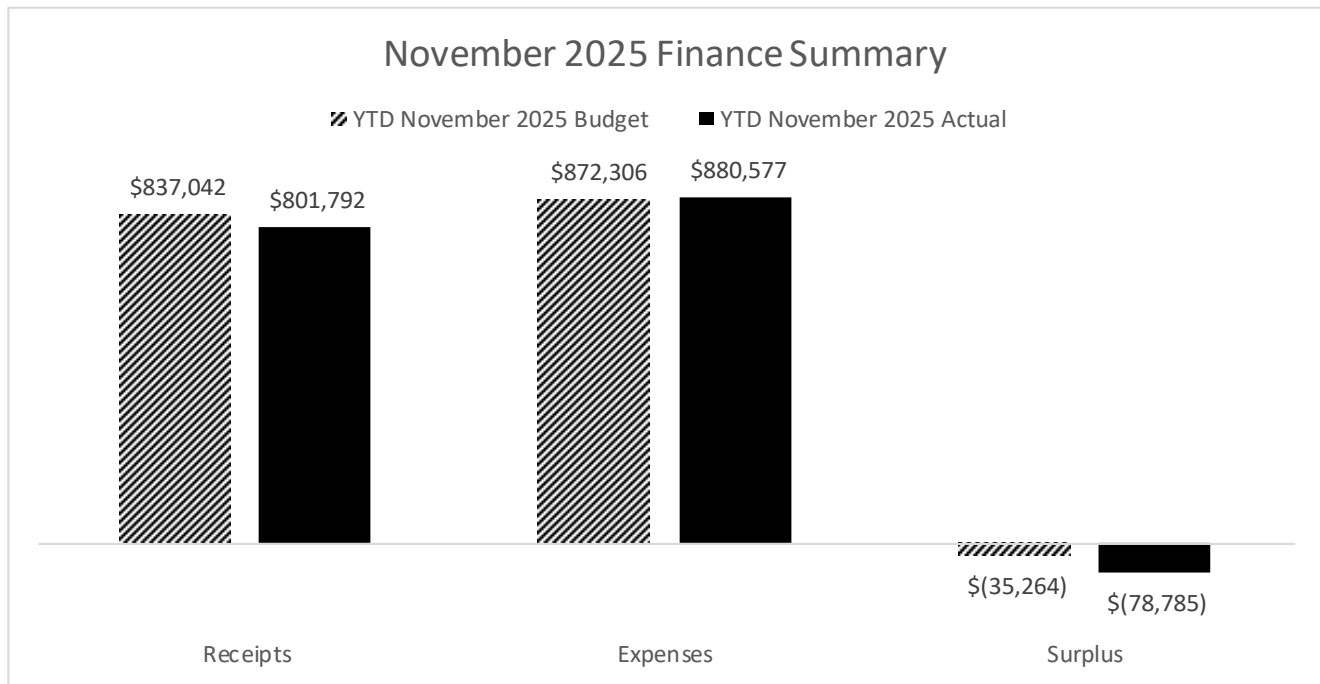


Newsletter Mailings

Due to increased cost of mailing newsletters out, we evaluated our lists. Many members on the list were regularly attending. Those members will no longer receive the mailings as we have printed copies of the monthly newsletter under the monitor in the Commons. We hope you understand as we try to be good stewards wherever we can. As an example, the November newsletter cost \$3.00 each to mail out. It was larger than usual, costing more postage.



Finance Ministry



YTD November, we had receipts of \$801,792 which were 96% of our budgeted receipts of \$837,042 and \$67,400 or 9% higher than 2024.

Expenses were \$880,578 and \$8,271 unfavorable to plan due to the following:

- Property (\$3.0k) – higher than planned Building Maintenance, Electricity and Janitorial Supplies, partially offset by favorable Grounds Maintenance.
- Admin expense (\$3.4k) – higher than planned mileage, Vanco processing fees for online donations and IT expense, partially offset by several smaller favorable expense categories.
- Service expense (\$3.4k) – annual service donations were processed in November and planned in December (will even out for the year).

ATTENTION: REALM ON-LINE GIVING

If you use our Realm on-line giving feature, please note that unless you extend the date (year), the on-line giving will NOT continue into the next year unless you designate it to do so! You can either renew your automatic giving for the current year or extend the yearly contribution until you decide on the date to end it.



Finance Ministry

Tithes & Gifts

The **2026 offering envelopes** (numbered 1-150) will be available at the end of the month for pick-up in the Commons. You are encouraged to pick the envelopes up as soon as possible. We are not able to mail the envelopes to you.

If you no longer need envelopes, please contact the church office at 804-282-6066 or email Hanne Hamlin at hhamlin@epiphanyelca.org, and we will provide you with a contribution number that is not associated with physical offering envelopes.



If you prefer to contribute on-line, you may do so in Realm!  If you would like assistance in setting up online giving, please call the church office at 804-282-6066 and Hanne or Linda can assist you.

****Please remember to turn in your 2026 Commitment Cards.** Commitment cards may be placed in either the white box on the table below the Announcement Display Monitor in the Commons or in the white box on the table at the Ushers' station. You may also return your card by mail. Should you need a Commitment Card, extra cards can be found near each of the white boxes.

2025 Contributions. Your offerings help us meet all our congregational commitments. For your contributions to be credited to year 2025, your contribution must be received by the Church office **no later than Monday, December 29**. This will allow our teller staff to process your contributions by year-end. Contributions received after that date will be credited to the 2026 year.

2025 Year-End Statements will be available in mid-late January 2026, when you will receive your statement through a Realm email. If you see an error on your giving, please contact our Financial Secretary, Greg Trone at grgtrone95@gmail.com or 703-851-5047.

Distribution of Christmas Offerings

Council decided at their November council meeting to the distribution of Christmas offerings:

GraceInside (20%)
Tuckahoe Rescue Squad (10%)
Waymakers Foundation (15%)
Camp Caroline Furnace (20%)
Crossover Ministry (20%)
Liberation Veteran Services (15%)



Music Ministry

NOTES FROM THE CHOIR LOFT – DECEMBER 2025

Children's Corner

December is a busy month for everyone - details for each group below.

Singing Saints

Wednesday, December 6 6:00-6:30 pm.
(time change due to Wednesday Advent service)
Sunday, December 7 Sing at both the 8:30 and 11:00 am services.

Rehearsals will then resume Wednesday, January 14 at 6:30 pm.

Cherub Choir

Wednesday, December 6 6:00 – 6:30 pm. (time change due to Wednesday Advent service)
Sunday, December 21 Sing at both the
8:30 and 11:00 am services.

Rehearsals will then resume Wednesday,
January 14 at 6:30 pm.

Steel Crossticks

Sunday, December 14 Rehearsal 12:15 – 12:45 pm.

Rehearsals will then resume Sunday, February 8 at 12:15 pm.

Junior Handbells:

Rehearsals will resume Sunday, February 1 as part of the 4th-8th grade gatherings.

Christmas Eve Music Ministry

We will rehearse the chancel choir anthem for use at the 9:00 pm. service on Christmas Eve during Wednesday evening rehearsals on December 17 (immediately following the Advent service) as well as a special rehearsal Tuesday, December 23 at 7:00 pm. If you would like to sing with us at the 9:00 pm. service, it is a great way to have a “short term commitment.” Please join us in the Sala Music Center for either or both rehearsals.

Adult Choirs Rehearsal Reminders

Please be reminded that the Epiphany Ringers will not rehearse on December 28; rehearsals will resume on January 4 at 9:30 am. The 8:30 chancel choir will not rehearse on December 28. Rehearsal will resume on January 4 at 8:00 am. The 11:00 chancel choir will not rehearse on December 24 due to services or December 31. Wednesday rehearsals will resume on January 7 at 7:15 pm.



ADVENT
A Season of Preparation





Beer and Carols!

with Epiphany
Lutheran Church

Rare Olde Times
10602 Patterson Ave

RESERVATIONS
RECOMMENDED
(804)750-1346

Sunday, December 21st 7-9pm

Altar Flowers - Price Increase

Our Florist, Coleman Brothers, have kept our weekly cost for each vase at \$20.00 since at least 2010!

Prices for flowers, containers, shipping, etc., have all increased over the years at the wholesale level. Coleman Brothers has done its best to send us weekly Sunday flowers at no extra cost to us.

Beginning January 1, 2026, the new cost for one vase of flowers will be \$28.00.

Please remember altar flowers are NOT part of our budget. We have weekly altar flowers thanks to your generosity in remembering your loved ones, honoring's, or celebrations.

Your altar flowers, when delivered to members who are hospitalized, homebound or home recovering have this note attached:

These flowers have been in the Sanctuary of the church. They have heard the hymns that were sung, the prayers that were offered, and the sermon that was preached. Now, they come to you, and in their silent way are telling you of God's love and healing power, and the wish of the members of Epiphany Lutheran Church that you be blessed with faith, hope, health, and happiness.



December Baptism Birthdays



Altar Care

Thank you to those who served in November:

First Service - Bonnie Garringer, Melissa, Ryan and Nolan Urban

Second Service - Gwen Newman, Tracy Bucknam, Linda Martin

Altar Care for December:

First Service - Cathy DeLesDernier

Second Service - Linda and Ken Reckenbeil, Maria Prince

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.



Upcoming Opportunities to Serve Our Neighbors

Giving Tree Begins - Ends December 9.

Liberation Veterans Dinner – December 30

LAMB's Basket - January 5 through January 25



Faith Formation



Sunday School for Children and Youth

Sunday morning learning for children and youth is in full swing! Join us for singing, playing, and learning! We will not gather on Sunday, December 28 or January 4 for Sunday School. Join us in Price Hall on Sunday, December 21 for Christmas Around the World at 9:45 am—an interactive celebration for all ages.

9:45 AM - Music Opening in Room 104 for Children 2 Years through 2nd Grade

10:00 am - Sunday school begins for our younger learners:

2 YO & 3 YO: Room 102

Pre-K & K: Room 101

1st & 2nd Grade: Room 104

9:45 AM - 10:45 am - Sunday School for Older Children and Youth

3rd, 4th, & 5th Graders: Room 201

Middle School: Luther Room

High School: Von Bora Room



SAVE THE DATE!

Vacation Bible School will be June 8-12, 2026!

Registration will open in early 2026. As you look towards summer plans and camps, we'll hope you'll save the date and plan to participate!

Vacation Bible School is open to children 3 years through 5th Grade.

Youth who have completed 6th Grade through High School are invited to volunteer.

Advent Resources & Devotions Available for use at Home



For Families—*Families Celebrate Advent & Christmas* is a colorful deck of cards that is full of rituals, prayers and reflections. Endlessly flexible for busy schedules, you can create a new after-meal ritual, use them as decorations, or carry them on the go. Explore the entire season from Advent to Christmas through Epiphany.

For Children and Youth—An Advent Calendar. Count the days leading to Christmas by opening windows on this calendar each day. Each day's message adds a character to the pop-up Nativity scene.



For Adults—An Advent Devotional book written by members and friends of Epiphany! Pick up your copy in the Commons today!

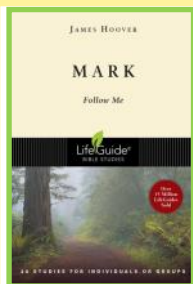


Join us on **Sunday, December 21 from 9:45-10:45 am in Price Hall** as we celebrate God's Love for the world! All ages are encouraged to attend!

We are blessed at Epiphany to have so many diverse members at Epiphany who come from all over the world—France, Germany, Egypt, Ukraine, Peru, Brazil, Germany, Denmark, Puerto Rico, Sweden, and more! There will be food, carols, crafts, and festivities! When you arrive, you'll receive a passport and have a chance to take a trip around the world.

Pastor Sarah is looking for a variety of Nativities from around the world to display for this event. If you have one to share, be in touch with Pastor Sarah Lang at slang@epiphanyelca.org

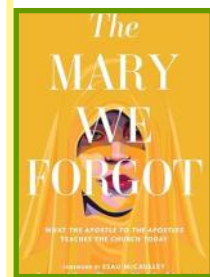
Faith Formation for Adults



TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Tuesdays, 10:30-Noon in the Parlor

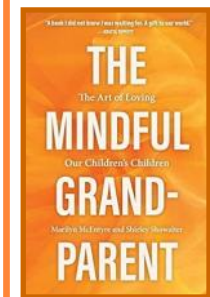
Our group continues studying the Gospel of Mark. The Gospel of Mark is the shortest of the four canonical Gospels and is known for its fast-paced, action-oriented narrative of Jesus's ministry, from his baptism to his death and resurrection. Join us!



MOMS' BIBLE STUDY

Thursdays, 7-8:30 pm

Moms' Bible Study (MBS) is open to moms of any age, with kids of any age. Our group started almost 20 years ago, and as our kids have grown, so has our group. All moms are welcome! We continue the book *The Mary We Forgot*, a book that traces the ministry of Mary Magdalene, the first apostle of the good news and a model of discipleship for both men and women today. Questions? Contact Amy Boyle aimandbub@msn.com or 804-347-2724.



Faith-filled Grandparenting: Continued Conversation!

9:45-10:45 am

Bonhoeffer Room

Sundays, December 7, 14

Join with facilitators Jim and Jane Huddle and other church members for conversation about grandparenting today! On December 7, we discuss ways to impart your faith with your grandchildren. December 14 our topic is yet to be decided. Join us for these enriching conversations! Recent and experienced grandparents are welcome!

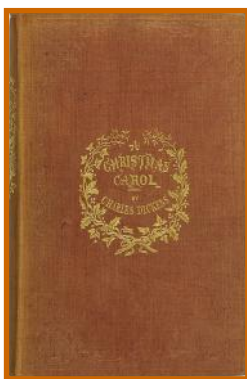


Blessed and Stressed

Sundays, 10:00 am

Parlor

Blessed and Stressed is a gathering for parents of younger children that meets in the parlor during Sunday school hour (beginning at 10:00 am). . The purpose of our gathering is to provide a casual setting where we can socialize and support each other. We will have a discussion topic and hear prayer requests each week. Join us!



Three Conversations on Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*

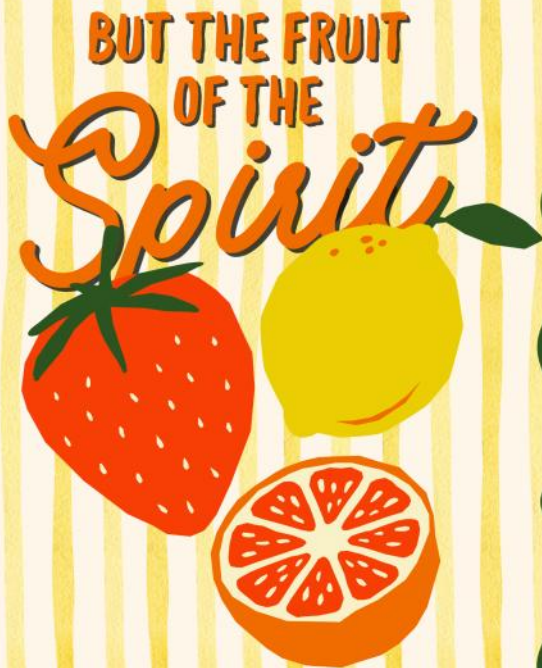
9:45-10:45 am

Star Lodge

Sundays, December 7, 14

"Three Conversations on Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*" is a three session class reflecting on the continuing influences of Dickens' novella, the work of the spirits, and the themes of hope, redemption, and transformation. Read or watch a telling of this story ahead of the classes if you can. Join with Tim Gorde, new(er) member of Epiphany and retired United Methodist minister, for this engaging Advent class!

GALATIANS 5: 22-23



IS LOVE, JOY, PEACE, FORBEARANCE,
KINDNESS, GOODNESS,
FAITHFULNESS, GENTLENESS, AND
SELF-CONTROL.

WOMEN'S RETREAT

February 28, 2026

9 am - 3 pm

EXPLORE THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT
AND THE GIFTS GOD
HAS GIVEN YOU!

**REGISTRATION
OPENS IN
JANUARY!**

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

Dear High School Families --

Winter Celebration is a weekend retreat which will take place Friday, **January 23rd through Sunday, January 25th, 2026** at Eagle Eyrie Conference Center in Lynchburg. Your friends are welcome to come with us.

Our group will meet up at Target in Short Pump and drive together to Eagle Eyrie, stopping along the way to eat dinner together and then from there we'll head to the retreat. During the weekend, we'll meet other seventh and eighth grade students from Lutheran congregations from around Virginia

This retreat is a TON of FUN! We sing songs, play games, and have small group discussions on God and life (and the food is really good too!). I hope you will come with us!! The cost of the event for youth is \$150 but Epiphany will cover \$100 and ask you to pay the remaining \$50. For adults the cost is \$50 but we will cover half and ask you to pay \$25.

There are two ways to register: 1) at vasynod.org, 2) or with the form sent to you by email and mailed to your home. Please let me know if you still need it. Also, please speak with me if additional financial assistance is needed. Epiphany would like to cover the difference because we believe this event is so much fun and so transformational that we want to do everything we can to make it easy for you to participate.

Epiphany will also rent a 12 passenger van and we'll travel together (we leave from Target in Short Pump on Friday at 4:00 pm (or a little later if needed) and return on Sunday at 3:00 pm).

I hope you'll join us for this awesome retreat!

Early Registration discount ends Dec. 15, 2025!



Winter Celebration
OUR ANNUAL WINTER FAITH FORMATION EVENT FOR 9TH
THROUGH 12TH GRADE YOUTH & THEIR ADULT ADVISORS
Jan. 23-25, 2026 - Eagle Eyrie Conference Center, Lynchburg



**Epiphany Lutheran Church
Richmond, Virginia**

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.
1 John 4:7

YOUTH MINISTRY 2025 – 2026

Epiphany Youth Group, or EYG, is ministry for, with, and by 7th through 12th grade youth and our adult leaders, called Timothy Ministers, and gathers about every other week. Lil Youth is our youth group for 4th through 6th grade youth, which meets once a month. These "Gatherings" are the heart of our ministry as we grow closer to God, one another, and as we serve the world God loves. Unless otherwise specified, our gatherings will be in Star Lodge from noon to 2:00 pm and include lunch. Parents are always welcome but not required to attend.

DECEMBER

Sunday, December 7 ~ Lil Youth (4-6th Grades) Star Lodge, 12-2pm

Saturday, December 13 ~ Epiphany Youth Group Christmas Party (7-12th grade) including Caroling, Tacky Lights & White Elephant Gift Exchange, 5pm-10pm

JANUARY

Sunday, January 11 ~ Epiphany Youth Group (7-12 Grades) Star Lodge, 12-2pm – Winter Olympics

Monday January 19 ~ Epiphany Youth Group and Lil Youth MLK Service Project, Star Lodge, 9am – noon

Friday -Sunday, January 23-25 ~ Winter Celebration Retreat (9-12th grade)



Lil Youths!

Epiphany's YOUTH GROUP just for 4th 5th and 6th graders!

We invite you to join us for our monthly gatherings this year which will include games, crafts, service projects, music, and much more!



Each gathering will begin in Star Lodge at noon with lunch and ends at 2:00 pm. We hope that each family might volunteer to provide lunch once during the year so that we can enjoy a nice meal together. We'll send you a link to a sign-up genius soon by email and you can sign up to provide lunch if you're able.

There will be a music element to each gathering and we'll use these times to prepare for leading worship on various Sunday mornings but if you prefer not to do music there will also be an alternate activity. Here is our meeting schedule for the year:

Sunday, December 7

Monday, January 19 – MLK Service Day 9:00 am - noon

Sunday, February 1

Sat-Sun, March 7-8 "7th Day" Retreat at Eagle Eyrie Center (in Lynchburg) more info to come!

Sunday, April 19

Sunday, May 17 – Field Day!

Friends are always welcome! Likewise, parents are always welcome to stay but are not required to attend. We look forward to a year of fun and growing in faith!

Peace+

Pastor Joseph and Mr. Kevin

Property Ministry

Merry Christmas!



As I'm writing this article, the Star, Angels, Bethlehem and Stable are being installed. Many thanks to Jim Behrens, Russ Johnson, Steve Collins, Brian Hellenga, Matt Greenshields and Jared Behrens for helping with assembly.

Soon the church will be decorated for the holidays. Deck the Halls!



End of year always prompts a look back. What a year we've had! Many major projects got accomplished that had been on the "list" for some time. The organ got a major cleaning and upgrade, our stained glass was repaired and conserved, and new landscaping plants dug in out front. The fall clean-up party was well attended and even more landscaping and trimming was done. Our hazardous carpet in the rear of the Sanctuary got stretched. Could it be that we have fixed the problem of rain leaks in rooms 200 and 201? So far, so good! And let's not forget that at the beginning of 2025 the Star Lodge got painted and new carpet installed! Many thanks to all of you who helped with all our property projects, we'll need you in the new year!



Work on our AC continues. The new unit dwarfs the old one. While the duct work is being welded into place, we have a temporary disconnect of our new(er) boiler, but this should be resolved soon.



Looking forward, Property will continue to work with Finance regarding timing and scope of the future capital improvements on our list. We hope to address the Sala, Lodge, and Narthex roofs, Price Hall flooring and windows, audio visual and security upgrades, and many other items too numerous to list here. I have faith they will all be completed this decade!

I hope to see you on the 7th for Consecration Sunday.

Happy New Year from us all!
Rob Hamlin
Facilities Manager

Fellowship Ministry



Guys' Night

There will not be a Guys' Night in December.
We hope you can join us in January!

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 met on November 12, at the Elizabeth Reinhart House. Circle members donated items and toured the facility. Afterwards, we had our regular meeting, then met at Jason's Deli for lunch. (Reinhart House offers rooms to family members and others who are staying with patients in St. Mary's Hospital.)

Carol Diehl gave the Devotion based on 1 Thessalonians. "Gratitude is an attitude." A good way to start each day is with a prayer of gratitude, thanking God for your blessings.

The Women of Epiphany Lutheran Church in America (WELCA) will hold their annual **Christmas Tea on Wednesday December 3 in Price Hall from 2:00 – 4:00.** Safe Harbor is the recipient of donations this year. There will be a White Elephant Exchange. All women are welcome! Call Eileen Johnson for more information.

The next regular Clara Sullivan Circle meeting will be on Wednesday, January 14 from 10:00 – 11:00. We will meet in the Church Parlor. Mary Sue Oehler will give the devotion. Our program will be filling Winter Blessings Bags for senior ladies. The bags will be distributed through Moments of Hope. **If you would like to bring items for the Blessing Bags, but have not signed up, please get in touch with Eileen.**

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

We offer a special welcome to the Women's Christmas Tea. All women of our WELCA Circles will gather this month on Wednesday, December 3, from 2:00 - 4:00 pm. in celebration of our Christmas Tea. All ladies and friends of the church are welcome.

Last month we discussed the life of Rebekah, the wife of Issac, daughter-in-law to Abraham and Sarah. See our pictures taken at our November meeting below.

The next regular Margaret Miller Circle meeting will be on Tuesday, January 13, 10:00 am, in the Commons. 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 will meet on Thursday, December 11. We normally meet at noon. Please watch for the invitation email a week or so before the meeting. If you are interested in joining our circle, please contact Tatter Hartmann at 804 338 3578 or maryhartmann279@gmail.com.



Women
of the
EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN
CHURCH
IN AMERICA



Christmas Tea



Women's Christmas Tea – All Ladies Invited! Wednesday, December 3, 2025 2:00 – 4:00 pm in Price Hall

The Women of the ELCA are hosting our annual Christmas Tea and invite all ladies of the congregation to join us. We will be serving a variety of teas in our fine China Teacups and finger foods.

This year there is a **White Elephant Gift Exchange***. Please bring a wrapped gift (or in a gift bag) with no identification on it, worth no more than \$10, quite possibly something you already have and would like to re-gift. There will be extra wrapped gifts on hand, should you need one for any reason. Look forward to having a fun time!

The recipient of our donations this year will be **Safe Harbor**. **Donations most needed are gift cards to Kroger or Walmart in the amounts of \$25-\$35**. Safe Harbor will be in a swing location preparing for their upcoming move so these gift cards will help the women purchase necessary items while waiting to move to their new location. Safe Harbor provides the support that survivors of sexual and domestic violence and human trafficking need to overcome their crisis and to transform their lives. <https://safeharborshelter.com>.

*What is a White Elephant Gift Exchange?

A White Elephant Gift Exchange is a party game where amusing, impractical, or festive gifts are exchanged for the entertainment of all. The goal of a white elephant gift exchange is to entertain party-goers rather than to give or acquire a genuinely valuable or highly sought item.

Each participant supplies a gift. Gifts are placed in a central location where everyone can see them. Ladies' will be given a number prior to the start of the game for their turn to select a gift.

The first person opens a wrapped gift and their turn ends. On subsequent turns, each person has the choice to either unwrap a new present or to steal another's. When a person's gift is stolen, that person can either choose another wrapped gift to open or can steal from another player. Each gift can only be stolen two times per game (which means the third holder of the gift keeps it). At the end of the game, the first player is allowed to steal someone else's gift, even a gift that is out of play.

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!



The Giving Tree

Thank you to everyone who is buying gifts for our Giving Tree this year. We put 222 stars on the tree and there are less than 20 stars left! What a generous church family we have!

Just a reminder that gifts are to be placed in a gift bag with the star ornament attached and **returned to Epiphany by Dec. 9.**

Questions? Contact Amy Boyle aimandbub@msn.com or 804-347-2724



Memory Tree

We will honor those close and dear to us again this holiday season with the Memory Tree. Doves are in the Commons near the Welcome Desk (beginning December 10) for you to write the names of loved ones that you want to honor or keep in memoriam. The Memory Tree will stay up through Epiphany.



Community Service Ministry, cont'd



Liberation Veteran Services Dinner Tuesday, December 30!

We're serving dinner to veterans in need on Tuesday, December 30 located at 1201 Hull Street, Richmond. Items needed for the dinner include:

- Chicken casseroles [3 slots available- recipes available on SignUpGenius]
- 2 28 oz. cans of green beans [3 slots available]
- 2 28 oz. cans of baked beans [3 slots available]
- 1 pan of brownies (to serve 24 per pan) [2 slots available]
- 2-dozen ready-to-serve dinner rolls [2 slots available]
- 12-pack of cola (e.g. Coke/Pepsi) [1 slot available]
- 12-pack of lemon lime soda (e.g. Sprite/7-Up) [1 slot available]
- 12-pack of diet cola (e.g. Coke Zero) [1 slot available]
- 4 people to serve dinner [4 slots available]

Please sign-up on the SignUpGenius link in the Sunday email announcements throughout December. Thanks!

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY MEETING

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 part of our ministry is to offer our congregation the opportunity to request a Prayer Shawl for someone you know that is in need of comfort. Simply go the church office and Hanne can assist you with your need.

The Prayer Shawl is a symbol, a 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.

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.

Community Service Ministry, cont'd

Lamb's Basket January Collection of Food and Money

Sunday, January 5 through Sunday, January 25 are the dates for our Lamb's Basket Food Drive. As always, we encourage you to contribute throughout the year as the need is great.



At this time, they are in need of

Canned or Non-Glass Jar of Pasta Sauce, 16 oz. box of Spaghetti, Canned Meat (chicken or tuna), Canned Potatoes, Canned Soups, Large & Extra-Large Boxed Cereal, Canned Fruit, Mac and Cheese or Velveeta Shells & Cheese, Peanut Butter, Small & Large Jars of Jelly. They also need afterschool snacks for the children such as Children's Fruit Cups, Children's Juice Boxes, Peanut Butter Snack Crackers, Granola Bars, Goldfish, and Pudding and Jello Cups. **NO GLASS CONTAINERS AND PLEASE CHECK THE EXPIRATION DATE ON THE FOOD THAT YOU SEND!**

How can you help?

There are a variety of ways that you can help us help our community:

Collected food can be brought to the church for us to distribute. Please leave your bag of food in the hall directly off the Narthex in the basket to the right of the Information Desk.

Any checks (made out to "Lamb's Basket") can be put in the mailbox directly to the right of the office door or mailed to the church office c/o Cheryl Hamm.

You can order food online and have it delivered to the church: Epiphany Lutheran Church, c/o Linda Martin 1400 Horsepen Rd., Richmond, VA 23226.

Questions? Give Cheryl Hamm a call at (804) 399-7650 or email her at cherylhamm1906@gmail.com.

Thank you for your continued support of this much needed assistance to provide to those who are in need!

Community Service Ministry, cont'd

Kairos Prison Ministry Update – by Rob McClintock



A heartfelt “thank you” is gratefully offered to all of the generous folks in Epiphany and beyond that baked homemade cookies for our recent Kairos Weekend, November 6-9, at the Greenville Correctional Center, near Jarratt, Virginia. I took 109 dozen cookies down to our event at which we had about 1,900 dozen cookies distributed.

We had 20 Kairos volunteers from various Christian denominations, including three clergy, participate in introducing a “short course” in Christian principles to a vetted group of 29 resident inmates. We divided the group into Family Tables (named Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter and Paul) to discuss the various talks, create posters to highlight key points of the talks. This small group focus is where the magic happens and the men become much more open and willing to share their stories and comments.

A major highlight was the first evening’s “cookie run” in which each inmate in the cellblock was personally given a bag of one dozen homemade cookies. We hand it to them through the slot in the door and are able to say a few words to each inmate, such as “Here are Kairos Cookies. God loves you, etc.” This is where we can truly say that “each cookie is a prayer.”

The weekend culminated with each participant receiving a Bible, signed by the volunteers, a cross, and singing of Amazing Grace.

We experience an emotional roller coaster during the course of the weekend, but we can see signs that the Holy Spirit is active at Greenville. Bottom line: our goal is to establish a church within this institution and every institution where Kairos enters.

If you would like to learn more about Kairos or perhaps become a volunteer yourself, or consider just attending the next Closing Ceremony on May 3, please contact Rob at robmcclintock@comcast.net or 804-840-9006.

Plastic Collection

Epiphany along with Sleepy Hollow Garden Club have done it again. We have kept 1000 plus pounds of plastic out of our landfills! Working with TREX, a Virginia company that makes plastic wood like material we have collected the required 1000 pounds to receive a TREX bench. This latest bench will be given to the nursery school. TREX gives us one year to collect the required pounds of plastic and as usual, we have done it in record time.

The collection boxes are in Price Hall, along with a few do’s and don’ts. Please make sure that the plastic is clean and dry. The program only allows certain types of plastics so make sure what you are putting in the bins is a #4 plastic. Some items that cannot be recycled here are candy bags, frozen vegetable bags, some fresh fruit and vegetable bags, dog food bags, and six pack rings. For a complete list of “things that can be recycled” and “things that can’t be used go to nettrext.com for a complete list.

We will be continuing this project and are always looking for a few families that would be willing to help with the collection.

Contact: Stephanie Horachek stephanie.horacek@gmail.com or
Chris Crouch cacrouch303@icloud.com



Epiphany Lutheran Nursery School News

November seemed to fly right by us like a Thanksgiving turkey! All of our classes were proud to help the Epiphany Community Service team with their Thanksgiving food boxes by making Thanksgiving cards to go in each box. We made over 120 cards to warm the hearts of our neighbors this year! We also helped to collect food for a local food pantry this month. These activities fit right in with our November ELNS theme of thankfulness. We learned that one way to show we are thankful is to share our blessings. Of course, we also talked turkey a good bit this month with fall and thanksgiving themed math and literacy activities, art, sensory experiences, and much more.

We are pleased and thankful to announce that ELNS has added an Assistant Program Director to our staff.



Kelly Scruggs has accepted this new role and will begin her new responsibilities on December 1st. Ms. Scruggs has been on staff at ELNS since the fall of 2018. She holds her Bachelors Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies for Early and Elementary Education from VCU and has served as both an assistant and lead teacher here at ELNS as well as the lead for our after school programs. In her new role as the Assistant Program Director, Ms. Scruggs will take over the supervision of all after school programming, lead the staff in preparation and planning for summer camp, and assist our Program Director, Melinda Martin, in overseeing the daily operations of ELNS.

With December upon us, we have already started our Christmas holiday preparations! We are all busy little elves in our classrooms this month as we work on gifts for our families, decorate our rooms with lots of

festive art, learn the nativity story, make cards, and enjoy lots of holiday stories and music. We will have a holiday spirit week in December and we are all busy learning our songs and motions with our music teacher, Mr. Stevens, in preparation for our holiday performance. We are also decorating Christmas trees on the wall outside of Price Hall for the members of Epiphany to enjoy and to show our parents the way to our Christmas performance on December 19th.

We hope you and your family can find ways to celebrate the joy of this holiday season too. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the ELNS family to yours!



Priority Registration for 2026-2027 begins on Monday, December 8th

All Epiphany Lutheran Church members enjoy priority registration if they choose to send their child to Epiphany Lutheran Nursery School. Priority registration begins on Dec. 8th and continues until Jan. 7th when registration opens to the public. If you are interested in learning more about ELNS or taking a tour, please contact Melinda Martin at elnsdirector@gmail.com. More information is also available on our web site at www.epiphanylutherannurseryschool.com.

Members in Our Prayers

During illness or recuperation ~

For those serving in the Armed Forces ~

For the families and friends of those who died ~

Rest eternal grant them, O Lord; and let light perpetual shine upon them ~



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 Worship Times

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

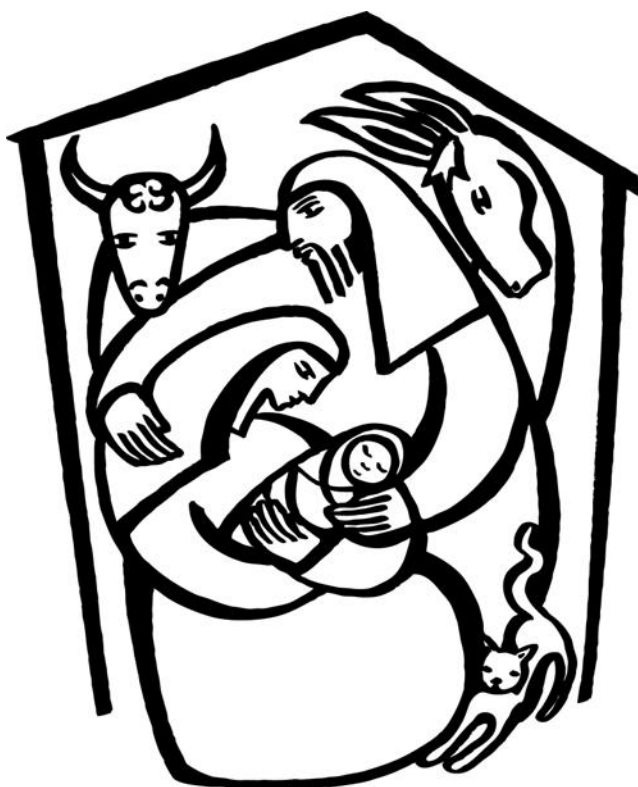
Online Summer Worship Times on YouTube

September 7-May 17
11:00 am



www.facebook.com/EpiphanyLutheranRVA

Instagram: epiphanyelca



May the Love of God
fill you with peace
as we celebrate
the coming of Christ

*Harmon Henders
Linda Martin
Phillip Martin Kim Bayler
Turner TOSGH B. Lian
Rob Hamlin Sarah Lang*