

## Lighting the Candles



I grew up without knowing much about the church year. But every December, my family kept Advent, the season of waiting for Jesus before Christmas.

Each night, we would gather around the dining room table, light the candles on our clay Advent wreath, read a passage from the Bible and a short devotional. As one of three brothers, we had an elaborate system for fairly apportioning the things to do, with the best job being blowing the candles out, of course.

I can still feel, for lack of a better way to put it, the deep darkness of those nights – there is nothing like living in the middle of the Minnesota woods in December to make darkness real. Then, in late November or early December, there would be the little light, the small flame of the match and the steadier glow of the candles. The glow slowly increasing each night as Christmas approached, and we made our way around the wreath.



I don't remember much about what we read. That may be just because it blends in with all the times over the years I have heard Isaiah, Amos, Micah and Zachariah pointing to the coming Messiah, or Matthew's and Luke's description of Jesus' birth. I do remember darkness to light. I remember, can feel even, darkness to light every Advent.

Over Thanksgiving, my parents were with us, and it was special to have them join me, Andrea and the girls in lighting the first candle of Advent on our Advent wreath (photo). Though it's not quite so combative, my girls share

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the “jobs” of lighting the candle and reading scripture, and spar a little about whose turn it is to do what, just like my brothers and I did.

What will they remember from these Advent nights? Well, I don't know. This year, we're reading a devotional from N.T. Wright, and the words are on the large side. I'm just impressed they are trying to follow along. But what I hope gets in their bones this year, next year and every year after is that feeling, deep knowledge even, that Jesus coming into the world means light. It means darkness fleeing away. It is sunrise after a long night.

What do you feel in your bones this Advent? Just darkness? If so, you are not crazy, there is plenty of darkness in the world. Yet, Advent is an invitation to see just a little light, slowly growing, steadily overpowering the shadows. It is an invitation to know that the little light is there, and it is growing, and one day, maybe sooner than we think, it will burst into all its magnificent brightness.

Remember that.

*“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (John 8.12).*

God Bless,



## Stewardship Update

On Stewardship Sunday, Nov. 27, 47 Epiphany families and individuals offered a pledge of financial support for 2023. Stewardship at Epiphany is between those who pledge and God, so the church does not know, or track who has pledged what amount. That said, participation in the Stewardship campaign, at the total amount pledged, does inform our budget decisions in real ways.

There is still plenty of time to make a pledge for 2023. To do so, pick up a pledge card or stewardship packet on the table in the entry way, fill out the pledge card, and place it in the offering plate on any Sunday. Pledge cards can also be mailed to the church office.

We are very grateful for your support, and encouraged that both the number of pledges made, and the average amount pledged is higher than it has been the last couple of years. Thank you so much for your commitment to giving as part of your Christian discipleship.

*“But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able thus to offer willingly? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you.” (1 Chronicles 29.14)*

## Quiet Day



We have scheduled a Quiet Day in December, one of our busiest months of the year! While I could not tell you who came up with the idea, I remember jumping at it because I thought it fits the season quite well. This is Advent, after all. While it is true that we have extra activities to attend to, ceasing from work for several hours on a Saturday is time well spent. Don Postema said, “When we cease from work, we show ourselves to be labor’s master. We can say that I rule my work, my work doesn’t rule me.” It’s a good idea to reflect on who our master is and to be reminded to act that way with our decisions. When Jesus tells the disciples in Mark 6, to “come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest,” I sense he is saying it to us as well. And he speaks with the authority as the Lord to one of his followers.

While it might be close to a command, I hear a deeply personal invitation more than a command. The disciples might have felt that this is exactly what they needed, that they wanted to retreat from the world for a bit to reflect and think about what ministry means for them. We know that they were looking for even the simple opportunity to sit and eat. But Jesus knows that their needs are even deeper than just food, and Jesus is not offering a vacation. Getting away from one hectic pattern to be replaced by entertainment or distraction is not exactly the kind of soul restoration that I think Jesus wants for us, his disciples.



Notice that Jesus says, “Come WITH me,” just so we know that he is not sending them off for a nap. Absolutely, if we need a nap, we should get it, but once we are done with bodily rest, what Jesus seeks is communion. He wants to know us more deeply and to be known more deeply. Sometimes he speaks to us in dreams, but more often, it is in the quiet of a soul that is at rest. If your home is anything like mine, that is sometimes hard to achieve in a busy household full of distractions. While it is easy to lounge on the couch to read my novel or watch a favorite tv show, it is decidedly more difficult to put away all the distractions and focus. Stepping away may mean putting our cell phones on silent mode and in another room. It may mean ignoring the clamoring in our minds to do more or to solve a thorny problem. But the invitation to go with Jesus somewhere, although not literally spoken to us, is figuratively directed right at our distracted and distressed souls.

Whether or not on Epiphany’s scheduled Quiet Day is something your calendar will allow, I would encourage you to take a chunk of time, even out of one of the busiest of months. Sit and tell Jesus out loud what is truly going on inside your heart and your mind. Find the quietness somewhere maybe even in the very midst of everyone else’s frantic rush. And do this because you have heard the invitation and it was just too compelling to let it slip away.

*Pamela +*



## Bishop John Visiting January 7-8

### Organ Blessing and Special Choral Evensong Jan. 7

Bishop John Guernsey will make his last pastoral visit to Epiphany before his retirement in February on January 7-8.

We will thank Bishop John for his ministry, and have him bless our new organ during a special choral Evensong at 7pm on January 7. All are invited to this special time of music and worship.

Bishop John will preach and welcome those wishing to be formally received into the Anglican Church on Sunday, January 8. He is also happy to bless those who wish to reaffirm their faith in Christ. If you would like to be received, or reaffirm your faith, please email Fr. Peter ([pfrank@epiphanyanglican.net](mailto:pfrank@epiphanyanglican.net)).



Bishop John and Meg Guernsey accept a standing ovation honoring them for their service at the conclusion of this year's diocesan synod on Nov. 19.



## Generational Representation

Murray and Ginger Black with their daughter (and Epiphany's senior warden) Lisa Baehr at this year's diocesan synod in Woodbridge. Lisa and Ginger were part of Epiphany's delegation, while Murray attended as an alternate delegate for Epiphany.



## Christmas Eve and Christmas Day at Epiphany

Epiphany will be celebrating Jesus' birth this Christmas season with special worship services and activities.

**Christmas Eve** services at Epiphany this year will be at 5 and 9pm. The 9pm service is a traditional candlelight service. The mask-only worship area in the fellowship hall will be available for both services.

**Christmas Day Sunday:** This year we are offering a simple **Lessons and Carols** service on Christmas Sunday Morning. It will be at 11am. This traditional service of music and scripture reading is a great way make sure your Christmas Day celebrations are grounded in the Gospel. "Let's come together to remember and joyfully celebrate the miracle of God's presence with us in his son Jesus Christ" said the Rev. Peter Frank, Epiphany's rector.

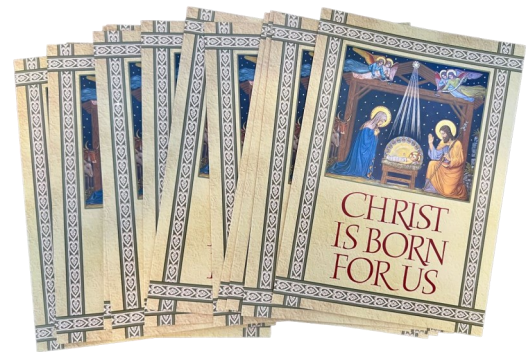
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### Invite your Friends & Neighbors to Worship this Christmas

As we emerge from the long COVID winter, the Vestry has been discussing ways we can re-energize our commitment to encountering God. A significant part of that discussion has centered on how we can reach out to those round us to share the good news of God's love, joy, peace and life in Christ.

To this end we've committed to a program to personally invite family, friends, neighbors and co-workers to worship with us during Advent/Christmas. We'll be sharing details of the program with you over the coming days. In the interim, please pray for the success of this program and also think about who you can invite.

We will be providing Christmas cards with service information as well as some ideas for writing a personal note to friends and neighbors to invite them to worship at Epiphany this Christmas.



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### Epiphany is Going Caroling on Dec. 10

The holidays are fast approaching and we would like to spread some Christmas cheer this season. Geoffrey Seroka will be organizing a caroling outing on December 10th. We will meet at the church at 4:30. Depending on the number of singers, we will divide into groups of 6-8 and visit locations such as Arbor Terrace and neighborhoods of members who haven't been able to attend lately.

If you would like to sign up or recommend your neighborhood as a stopping point, email Geoffrey at [Sirocka08@gmail.com](mailto:Sirocka08@gmail.com). No professional training required, but if you do know your part feel free to list it so we can balance the groups well.

# Pumpkin Party



Epiphany families and friends were able to gather again this year to carve pumpkins and have a meal together before All Hallows Eve (Halloween). This event had been interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. It was good to be able to relaunch it this fall.



Mtr. Pamela shows how to use kitchen power tools to clean out a pumpkin!



About 40 kids and adults came out for the evening.



Joanna prefers the old-fashioned way.



Good food always makes it more fun.



## Next Holy Land Pilgrimage Oct. 30-Nov. 9 2023

Traveling to the Holy Land and walking where Jesus walked is a life-changing and faith building experience. Epiphany will be going on pilgrimage October 30 - November 9 in 2023. While our trip is still more than a year off, details are beginning to come together.

During our ten-day trip, we will be spending time in Galilee, the mountains of Judea, the Negev, Samaria, and of course the Old City of Jerusalem. When we are in Jerusalem, we will be staying at the Christ Church guest house. Christ church is Jerusalem's Anglican church and also the oldest protestant church in the city. It is also just inside the Jaffa Gate of the Old City, just a few minutes-walk from the Church of the Holy Sepulcher (Jesus' tomb) and Golgotha, the Western Wall, the Via Dola Rosa and countless other amazing locations.

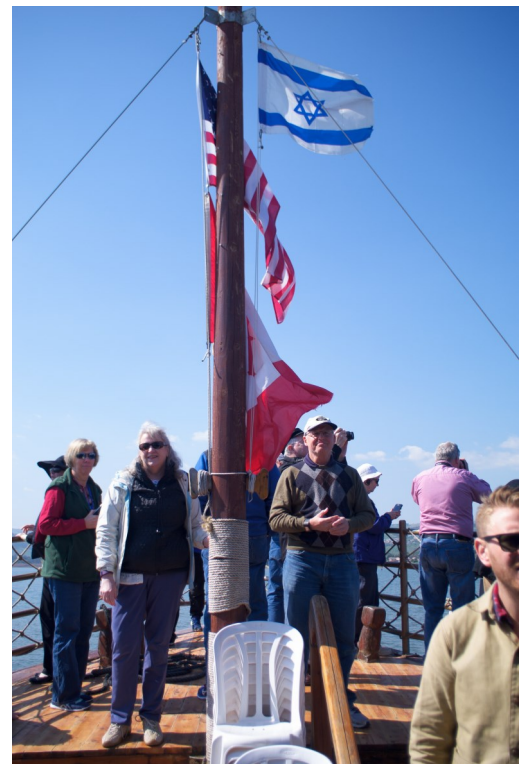
While inflation and increased travel costs are a reality, the trip is reasonably priced, at \$2,804 assuming 20 travelers. To this, we will need to add the cost of plane tickets (which we will get as a group).

If you would like to be on Epiphany's information list for this pilgrimage, send Fr. Peter an email ([pfrank@epiphanyanglican.net](mailto:pfrank@epiphanyanglican.net)).



*Going to the Western Wall (or as it is sometimes called, the Wailing Wall) where Jews have prayed since the destruction of the Temple by the Romans in AD 70 is an amazing experience.*

*Sailing on the Sea of Galilee.*



## Missions Update:

*Epiphany has recently begun supporting, SHADE. Here is an introduction to that ministry*



**S H A D E**

As announced at Epiphany's annual meeting, we recently commenced support for Shade. The organization operates a school for vulnerable children in Tanzania and hosts seminars to educate citizens in that part of the world about albinism. Approximately one in 1400 Tanzanian children is born with albinism, a significantly higher rate than in the United States and Europe.

Children born with albinism in Tanzania face both violence and discrimination. People practicing witchcraft engage in or encourage the maiming and murder of people with albinism for their body parts, ostensibly to bring luck and wealth. Many children with albinism have been moved to government-run centers to protect them from these threats.

Shade seeks to provide a Christian-based alternative to those government centers. The primary and secondary schools Shade opened in Tanzania teach core secular subjects as well as Bible, art, music, and sports. School enrollment is not limited to children with albinism, as Shade also educates children with other vulnerabilities and local children born into poverty.

Shade was founded by a local Anglican minister. The organization's statement of faith aligns with the Nicene Creed. An Epiphany member serves on Shade's board.



Click logo to visit our website or type:

<https://www.shadetz.org/about-us/>



## Something Different on Christmas Sunday

This year, Christmas falls on a Sunday. We will be gathering for a simple “Lessons and Carols” service at 11am at Epiphany. This gives everyone time to get up, dig into the presents and get something to eat before church.

Lessons and Carols combines well known Christmas hymns with scripture reading and prayer. Coming together to hear the Bible read and sing our praises seems like a good way to worship as we celebrate Christmas.

If you are available to participate in this service by reading a Bible passage, please send Fr. Peter an email ([pfrank@epiphanyanglican.net](mailto:pfrank@epiphanyanglican.net)).



### At Epiphany we emphasize:

**Encountering God through beautiful worship and believing prayer**

**Building a multigenerational congregation that loves children and families.**

**Equipping every member to publicly proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ.**

### Intercessory Prayer Letter

Requests can now be submitted by email at a secure site,

[prayer-request@epiphanyanglican.net](mailto:prayer-request@epiphanyanglican.net)

or written and left in the prayer request box in the Fellowship Area.

All prayer requests are collected after the Sunday morning services and prepared for Monday morning distribution. For more information or questions, contact Faith Fisler by email at [mizfiz34@gmail.com](mailto:mizfiz34@gmail.com).



- 2 Janice Monaghan
- 3 Chris Johnson  
Dan Johnson
- 5 Maria Murphy
- 13 John Murphy
- 19 Michael Ellis
- 22 Andy Baehr
- 23 Jan Coffee
- 28 Annabelle Easton
- 31 Ran Cottingham

- Alexander Easton
- Bradley Gough
- James Gough
- Adaeze Okwuchukwu
- Daniel Torabi
- 2 Maria Luisa Torabi
- 3 Amy Johnson
- 4 Teagan Merrill
- 6 Linda Boggs
- 10 Frances Miller
- 11 James Boggs  
Care Murphy
- 16 Daniel Baehr
- 17 Ryan Ellis  
Pamela Meeks
- 19 Ellie Dial  
Joanna Torabi
- 22 Sandy Stoddard
- 23 Christopher Frost
- 24 Nolan Hanger
- 26 James Todd
- 28 Wyndy Fredrick
- 29 Tim Bixler



# Happy Anniversary



## December

- 2 Lisa & Andy Baehr
- 14 Krystal & Fred Apelquist
- 27 Rebecca & Tim Bixler
- 29 Margaret & Frank Donivan  
Melanie & Walter Kobos

## January

- 2 Jan & Gordon Coffee
- 3 Barbara & Mark Oliphant
- 4 Andrea & Peter Frank
- 20 Linda & James Boggs
- 24 Debbie & Ted Hanger





## Resources

Epiphany Staff	Email
The Rev. Peter Frank, Rector	pfrank@epiphanyanglican.net
The Rev. Pamela Meeks, Associate Rector	pmeeks@epiphanyanglican.net
The Rev. Sally Hoover, Parish Deacon	shoover@epiphanyanglican.net
Jimmy Crawford, Music Director	jcrawford@epiphanyanglican.net
Petrina Teoh, Office Administrator	pteoh@epiphanyanglican.net

### Vestry Members

Lisa Baehr  
 Jim Boggs  
 Jon Crane  
 Christina Cummings  
 Sally Eckard  
 Ted Hanger  
 Bill Hoover  
 Leslie Johnson  
 Joyce Schmalz  
 Geoffrey Seroka

### Vestry Officers/Committee Chairs for 2022

Senior Warden ..... Lisa Baehr  
 Junior Warden.....Geoffrey Seroka  
 Registrar..... Christina Cummings  
 Home Group Ministry Coordinator.....Leslie Johnson  
 Vestry Liaison to Mission Committee.....Jim Boggs  
 Chairman of the Benevolence Committee ..... Ted Hanger  
 Vestry Liaison to Finance Committee.....Jon Crane  
 Finance Committee Chairman .....Tom Miller\*  
 Treasurer.....Charlie Monroe\*  
 Chancellor .....David Reed\*

\*Non-vestry members

### Publishing Information

The **Epiphany STAR** is published bi-monthly and contains articles and information about what God has and is doing in us and through us as the Epiphany Family. It is intended to encourage each of us in our ministry and discipleship by relating how God is working in the midst of us.

The **Epiphany Candle** is published weekly by email, highlighting what is coming in the days ahead at Epiphany and other information that the staff and vestry feel is important to emphasize.

Articles and Subscription requests: **star@epiphanyanglican.net**  
**candle@epiphanyanglican.net**

jcrawford@epiphanyanglican.net (for weekly bulletin)

**Deadlines: STAR: 21st of the January, March, May, July, September & November.**

**Bulletin: Monday, 8 AM • Candle: Wednesday, 8 AM**



3863 Centerview Drive, Suite 100  
 Chantilly, Virginia 20151  
 Main Number: 703.481.8601  
 Prayer Line: 703.389.7292

Visit our website at [www.epiphanyanglican.net](http://www.epiphanyanglican.net)

*Encountering God, Building a multigenerational congregation, Equipping every member.*

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS**

**DECEMBER**

13	7:00 PM	Vestry Meeting
7, 14, 21	12:00 PM	Simple Eucharist
4, 11, 18	8:00 AM	Holy Eucharist In-Person
4, 11, 18	10:15 AM	Holy Eucharist - Livestream & In-Person
11	1:15 PM & 2:00 PM	Worship at Arbor Terrace
24	5:00 PM	Family Christmas Eve Service
24	9:00 PM	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
25	11:00 AM	Lessons & Carols
25	1:15 PM & 2:00 PM	Worship at Arbor Terrace

**JANUARY 2023**

10	7:00 PM	Vestry Meeting
4, 11, 18, 25	12:00 PM	Simple Eucharist
1, 8, 15, 22, 29	8:00 AM	Holy Eucharist In-Person
1, 8, 15, 22, 29	10:15 AM	Holy Eucharist - Livestream & In-Person
7	7:00 PM	Evensong
8	8:00 Am & 10:15 AM	Bishop John Guernsey Visit
8	1:15 PM & 2:00 PM	Worship at Arbor Terrace
8, 22	6:00 PM	Youth Connections
22	1:15 PM & 2:00 PM	Worship at Arbor Terrace