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## Do Not Fear What They Fear



We live in a fearful, anxious time. One of the things that always seems to come with that are efforts to make sense of it all. That's a good thing. Knowing "what's going on" helps us make decisions and act in ways that help ourselves and each-other weather the storm.

That said, we must be wise in who we listen to and what we believe. There is a passage in Isaiah chapter 8 that seems to speak directly to the moment we are in. When Isaiah writes, it is a fearful time in Jerusalem. There are enemies outside the city, and unrest inside. People are wondering who is in charge, and what is going on. Many assume it's a plot by shadowy figures to take control of the city.

Sound familiar?

In the middle of this situation, the Lord spoke to Isaiah. *"For the Lord spoke thus to me with his strong hand upon me, and warned me not to walk in the way of this people, saying: 'Do not call conspiracy all that this people calls conspiracy, and do not fear what they fear, nor be in dread. But the Lord of hosts, him you shall honor as holy. Let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.'" (Isaiah 8.11-13).*

Friends, we have a choice in fearful times. We can attempt to make sense of things ourselves. And there are a lot of people that would like to "help us" by presenting their theory on what is going on. Frankly and gently, the vast majority of those theories are wrong and some of them will actually do us harm. The earth really is round. Bill Gates is not trying to take over the world via a tiny microchip planted in a future COVID-19 vaccine. The UN is not controlled by lizard people from space (yes, that's a real theory that's out there).

Instead of listening to these attempts and others to "explain it all," by appealing to secret knowledge and shadowy forces, God calls us in Isaiah 8 to acknowledge that there are many things we don't know and can't control, but that He is in control. *"But the Lord of hosts, him you shall honor as holy. Let him be your fear, and let him be your dread."*

In short, what if instead of fearing conspiracies, we fear God? That is, what if we looked to him,

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instead of YouTube, or Facebook, or our favorite website to tell us what is going on? What if we trusted Him to show us our place in it, and what to do next?

Friends, God's hand is strong. He is not a conspiracy theory. He is a fact, and His hand is over us and over this time. Let's trust Him first and most – and keep everything else in perspective.

God bless,



## Spotting a Conspiracy Theory

We live in a time when it is hard to know who to trust. How do we sift out real information from things that are false? Here are some things we can look for:

1. **Secret knowledge required:** Conspiracy theories often promise “inside” details about otherwise public events. They claim to show us what is “really” going on.
2. **Anonymous Sources:** Many conspiracy theories rely on anonymous sources. If no-one is willing to publicly stand behind what is being said, be careful.
3. **New Interpretations:** Among Christians, conspiracy theories often claim to unearth previously unknown secrets in the Bible. Or to put it another way, they include a claim that they have found a truth in the Bible that everyone else has missed for almost 2,000 years.
4. **Making complex events simple:** The great attraction of conspiracy theories is that they take complex, or even random events, and build them into a system we can understand. That said, there are many things in life that are complex instead of black and white.
5. **Assuming evil intent:** Conspiracy theories almost always assume that a shadowy group is attempting to secretly harm others in some way. Instead of allowing people to have convictions that differ from our own, it assumes people are acting for evil purposes against us, and they know it.
6. **Persecution of truth-teller:** In conspiracy theories, those that know the truth are almost always a persecuted and suppressed minority. Any attempts to question or challenge what the theory says are understood as an attack.

This said, events in the real world can have these traits as well. Some things are kept secret. There are evil people in the world. Whistleblowers do get suppressed from time to time. No one point above necessarily rules out something being true, but the more an idea aligns with these traits, the more careful we need to be before we give it our trust.

## Knowing God



If you have been around the evangelical wing of Christianity, you would likely have heard of J.I. Packer and may have heard that he passed away last week, July 22. Although his most widely known book, Knowing God, was already 10 years old by the time I attended college, his work was popular among my Intervarsity peers and the book shaped my life. Inspired by this reading more than 30 years ago, I remember the decision I made to order my life around knowing God. This quote stands out:

***“What makes life worthwhile is having a big enough objective, something which catches our imagination and lays hold of our allegiance, and this the Christian has in a way that no other person***

***has. For what higher, more exalted, and more compelling goal can there be than to know God?”***

And one thing I have learned from my pursuit of knowing God is how **very different** God is. When we set our expectations that God would act in a certain way because that is how other people act, we can come up surprised that God isn't like that at all. It bears reminding one another that God does not act like your typical leader of today. I ran across this from Beth Moore, which I edited.

God cannot be pressured.  
 God cannot be lobbied.  
 God cannot be bought.  
 Nor can God be sold.  
 God cannot be pushed out.  
 God cannot be dragged in.  
 God cannot be voted for or against.  
 Nor can God be canceled.  
 God is no one's team mascot.  
 But when God is sought,  
 He can be found.

Beth Moore has reminded us, as J.I. Packer had reminded us that God is transcendent. God's ability to transcend all of our everyday pettiness and our everyday worries puts God in a category all by Himself. Perhaps when we think about the “otherness” of God though, God can seem remote and unrelatable. We could worry that there is no overlap between our world and God's world. That's when we are brought up short and realize that God can still be found because God wants to be known. God wants us to seek. God wants our dedication to this pursuit, and I know that I am not alone in saying, “Knowing God is worth it!”

*Pamela +*

## Thank You, Epiphany Family

To our Epiphany Family:

I was raised in a family where manners were taught and highly prized. Words, phrases and actions such as please, thank you, you're welcome and deference to elders were not only expected but required. As it is now more than two months since Joanie's brief illness and subsequent "change of address", I admit to unease in not communicating earlier to you, our Church family, our deepest appreciation and thanks for the prayers and outpouring of Christian love, care, support and concern you have shown us during this most difficult time. My conscience is somewhat assuaged by recalling Joanie say on occasion when she felt tardy in such communication how glad she was that the "etiquette police" didn't enforce a "statute of limitation" on expression of appreciation.

It's been said that it's a dangerous practice to try and list all who you want to especially thank as you might forget someone. That being the case, I'll take my chances and apologize in advance if I've missed someone – forgive me! To those who helped with the celebration of Joanie's life; Peter; Merle and Margaret; Jimmy, Wyndy and Brad who lent their musical talent to support our feeble efforts; and Bob and Ralph who made the Livestream possible, our deepest appreciation and gratitude; to Jan and the prayer team for your constant and unceasing intercession for her and the family and to all who have sent cards, letters, called and made donations to Samaritans Purse - THANK YOU!

Many years ago as I headed off to Viet Nam, Joanie's father, who was a great man of God, shared with me several verses of God's assurance and encouragement. Over the past weeks, God has led me back multiple times to one of those verses. The circumstances and timing of God's refocusing me on the passage reaffirm that in the life of His children there are no accidents. While our loss is deep and profound, we are comforted by God's love, mercy and grace. Her presence is and always will be with us and as we process the years of memories we'll smile at some, laugh at others and weep at many but will always know that our Creator and Redeemer commands and promises us to:

“Fear not, for I am with you,  
Be not dismayed, for I am your God,  
I will strengthen you, I will help you,  
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”

In His Grace,

Jon, Steve, Stephanie, Dave and Jan

## Socially Distanced Sunday Fun



Mtr. Pamela Meeks is calling together families with children in first through sixth grade on Sunday evenings for fun and a chance to continue our Sunday School curriculum during this time. The group gathers outside in the trees on the south side of the church each Sunday at 6:30pm and finishes at 7:45. While kids learn and play games together, parents have a chance to socialize with each other in the parking lot. To learn more, contact Mtr. Pamela at [pmeeks@epiphanyanglican.net](mailto:pmeeks@epiphanyanglican.net).

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## Women's Ministry

Name
Address
Phone Number
Email Address

The Women's Ministry team is updating its contact information. If your contact information has changed or we do not have a current e-mail and cell number please e-mail your updated information to [reception@epiphanyanglican.net](mailto:reception@epiphanyanglican.net). Thank you!

## 2020-2021 Budget In Place

By Dennis McNeely, chair of the Finance Committee

The Church of the Epiphany budget for fiscal year 2021 has been reviewed by the finance committee and approved by the Vestry. The budget process can be tedious and is rarely given the “fun” descriptor, but this past year has been a lesson in God’s faithfulness to us and the budget reflects our optimism. There is more detailed information about the budget on this page, but the short version is that we are in a very good place as a church even as we go through this challenging season of ministry due to COVID 19.

This is possible for two reasons. First, it is possible because of the generosity of Epiphany as a church. So many people here give sacrificially to support ministry and mission. The biblical standard of giving is called a tithe (10 percent) of our income. Many at Epiphany do exactly that, and it enables us to do much as a church that is often difficult for congregations our size to support. Thank you!

Secondly, it’s possible because we continue to see a great stewardship benefit from our move to 3863 Centerview Drive. Our current lease calls for a slight increase in rent and in the condo fees but along with that we get a free rent month in November. Additionally, as per the lease, we receive part of our security deposit back as a credit. The combination of these two benefits makes our building costs very manageable. In this coming fiscal year, we are planning to maintain our giving to missions at \$32,000. This brings our total mission and outreach giving to 9.1 percent of our entire budget. We are also able to offer staff a two and a half percent salary increase, and continue to rebuild our operating reserves which now stand at a little over \$180k.

It is true, we are in a difficult season. Still, God continues to bless Epiphany through your tithes and gifts. We are so grateful for your continued support of the church during this time of virtual worship and smaller in-person services. We will be holding our customary stewardship campaign in the fall to encourage us all to prayerfully commit to give.



2020 - 2021 Budget		
Budget Category	Amount	Description
Worship	\$13,045	Altar Guild, music, live video, supplies
Outreach	\$78,700	Missions, community ministry, sports camp, diocesan support, benevolence
Discipleship and Congregational Care	\$13,740	Curriculum, retreats, hospitality, marriage ministry
Facility	\$267,967	Lease, maintenance, utilities, cleaning, supplies
Personnel	\$454,340	Salaries, benefits, professional expenses for staff including a 2.5 percent pay increase.
Church Operations	\$19,606	Office supplies, communications, website, copying
Contingency	\$5,000	Emergencies
Insurance and Legal	\$8,702	Insurance, legal and bank fees
Total	\$861,100	Compared to a revised budget for \$852,278 for the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year

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## Epiphany Blankets for Babies



Baby blankets from Epiphany's knitting ministry, Tabitha's Threads, are ready to be distributed at the CareNet Pregnancy Center in Manassas. Pictured is Lisa Baehr, a CareNet staff member and Epiphany's Junior Warden.

## Missions Update: Andy Fetzer

*Here is a recent report from Andy Fetzer, our home-grown missionary, detailing recent events in his spiritual vineyard in Southwestern Virginia:*

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Dear Friends,

In this season, all our lives and jobs are feeling disrupted. But I'm keenly aware, especially in the past few weeks, that this disruption falls in a heavier way on some of our Young Life family. The daily news is bringing forward stories of racism, discrimination, and violence against marginalized people. As leaders in the community, we want to call attention to what we have seen in the world.

First, we lament it. Recent events haven't slowed down the Lord, but it also hasn't slowed down the enemy and the ripple effect of sin.

Second, I want those in our Young Life community who are feeling tired, overlooked, and marginalized to know that we see you. The scenes and signs of racial injustice are hurtful and troubling.

Third, I pray for Young Life in the Roanoke Valley, that we would look different from the world, because we are Kingdom citizens. If I were to sum up all the miracles of Jesus with one word, I'd use "RESTORATION." Jesus restores sight, health, self-worth, purpose, and life itself. May we each be people who catalyze that restorative work in kids' lives and in the culture we live in. I'm so thankful for all you do to help to move us forward in a challenging time. Your support and involvement allow Young Life leaders to be the hands and feet of Jesus to kids throughout our area (six feet apart, of course). I'd love to know how to pray for any of you or field any questions you might have, so feel free to reach out to us anytime.

In Christ,

Andy Fetzer and Landon Dermott



*Continued*

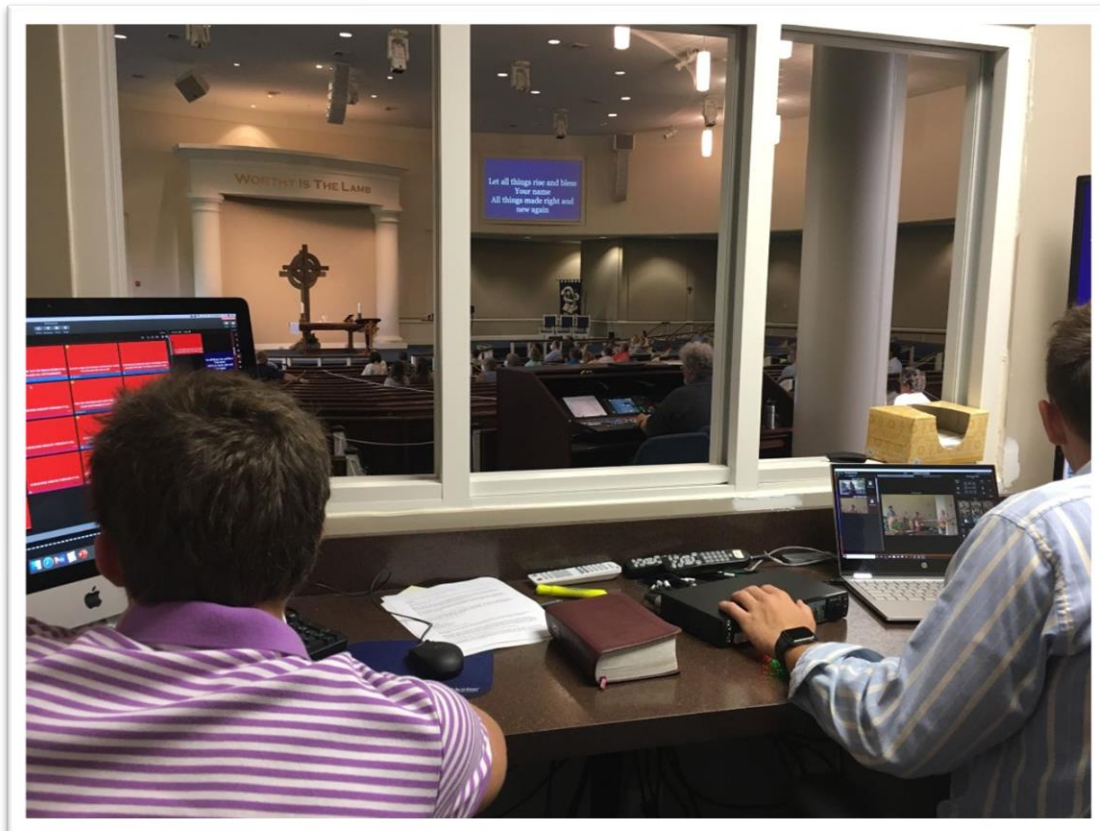


The very first YoungLife camp was with about 6 kids catching armadillos in the Texas hill country in 1940 or so...  
Look what happened. 😊  
We really were made for this.

### A Summer For The History Books!

Above quote is a Facebook post from current YL staff (former Roanoke area director, Mike Ashburn).

A friend of mine looked at me yesterday as we helped run a day camp at Young Life's Rockbridge Alum Springs for 40 middle school students and said we will look back on this and be amazed at what we saw. This was the first group they have had all summer (normally almost 2,000 students from all over the east coast would have been through camp by now, and 500 more would be there). Not much looks the same in the world of Young Life right now (and really the world in general). We may have never seen this coming, but sharing the gospel this summer isn't stopped by a pandemic! One day we will look back on this time, and I know that we will see that the Lord was powerful and in control, and that we were faithful to what he called us to in the Roanoke Valley-sharing the good news of Jesus. Pray for us as we plan alternative plans that fit within the guidelines of local and state restrictions.



One of our Cave Spring High School Campaigners (with his mask on) helping run the slides at Church of the Holy Spirit from the sound booth! What a cool sight to see high schoolers connected into a local church and serving.



# August



- 1 Elijah Nadarajah
- 2 Fred Apelquist
- 3 Matt Miller
- John Newton
- 7 Jocelyn Derrick
- 8 Sheila Crawford
- 9 Dennis McNeely
- Tom Noble
- Jim Roberts
- 11 Krystal Apelquist
- Severn Rash
- Erin Schultz
- 13 Lisa Ellis
- Kate Oliphant
- 16 Katherine Hanger
- Bryan Saddler
- 17 Josh Croft
- 18 Lorena Croft
- Ellen Harrison
- 19 Lucas Long
- 21 David Rhoads
- 24 Rose Rwegayura
- 25 Amie Boncher
- Jan Welch
- 29 Dave Bassert
- Mark Oliphant
- 30 Christina Cummings
- 31 Renee Tassone

- 4 Nicolas Long
- 8 Brianna Ellis
- 9 Gordon Coffee
- 10 Ryan McKenica
- 11 Angela Bender
- 12 Linda Bassert
- 13 Cameron Bender
- Natalie Harrison
- 14 Gabrielle Tucker
- 15 Mark Monroe
- 16 Kelly Ellis
- TJ Fredrick
- 20 Sherry Will
- 22 Lee Baumgartner
- Corey Baumgartner
- Andrea Frank
- 24 Cecilia Frank
- Erin Seroka
- Daniel Turner
- 27 Jane Derrick
- Judy Hall
- Patricia Roberts
- Bob Schulenberg
- Eric Schultz
- 28 Tracy Plummer
- Christopher Rauh
- 29 David Croft
- 30 Bill Cool

# Happy Anniversary



## August

- 1 Care & Jim Murphy
- 4 Sally & Bill Hoover
- 9 Fay & Frank Cochran
- 19 Ann & Charlie Westerman
- 20 Leslie & Bruce Johnson
- Carole & Keith Menzel
- 21 Kay & Matt Miller
- 25 Barbara & Alex Peake
- 26 Diane & David Reed
- 31 Linda & Dave Bassert

## September

- 8 Janice & Jim Wolfe
- Jan & Dave Welch
- 10 Bessie & Bill Cool
- 15 Cindy & John Newton
- 17 Cyndie & Jim Humenik
- 23 Sherry & Tom Will



Here 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.

## Resources

### Epiphany Staff

The Rev. Peter Frank, Rector	<a href="mailto:pfrank@epiphanyanglican.net">pfrank@epiphanyanglican.net</a>
The Rev. Pamela Meeks, Associate Rector	<a href="mailto:pmeeks@epiphanyanglican.net">pmeeks@epiphanyanglican.net</a>
The Rev. David Welch, Parish Deacon	<a href="mailto:dwelch@epiphanyanglican.net">dwelch@epiphanyanglican.net</a>
The Rev. Sally Hoover, Parish Deacon	<a href="mailto:shoover@epiphanyanglican.net">shoover@epiphanyanglican.net</a>
Jimmy Crawford, Music Director	<a href="mailto:jcrawford@epiphanyanglican.net">jcrawford@epiphanyanglican.net</a>
Janice Monaghan, Financial Director	<a href="mailto:jmonaghan@epiphanyanglican.net">jmonaghan@epiphanyanglican.net</a>

#### 2020 Vestry

Lisa Baehr  
 Jim Boggs  
 Amie Boncher  
 Kelly Derrick  
 Bill Hoover  
 Sally McNeely  
 Carole Menzel  
 Pat Meyer  
 Mark Oliphant  
 Margaret Stromberg

#### Vestry Officers

Senior Warden ..... Mark Oliphant  
 Junior Warden ..... Lisa Baehr  
 Registrar ..... Amie Boncher  
 Finance Committee Chairman ..... Dennis McNeely  
 Treasurer ..... Tom Miller  
 Assistant Treasurer ..... Charlie Monroe  
 Chancellor ..... David Reed

### 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).

### Publishing Information

The ***Epiphany STAR*** is published bi-monthly on even numbered months 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](mailto:star@epiphanyanglican.net)  
[candle@epiphanyanglican.net](mailto:candle@epiphanyanglican.net)  
[jcrawford@epiphanyanglican.net](mailto:jcrawford@epiphanyanglican.net) (for weekly bulletin)

**Deadlines: STAR: 21st of the month • Bulletin: Monday, 8 AM • Candle: Wednesday, 8 AM**



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 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**

August		
5, 12, 19, 26	12:00 PM	Midday Eucharist In-Person. (Sign up link below.)
2, 9, 16, 23, 30	8:30 AM	In-Person Worship Sign up link below.
2, 9, 16, 23, 30	10:15 AM	Holy Eucharist (Livestream)
September		
2, 9, 16, 23, 30	12:00 PM	Midday Eucharist In-Person. (Sign up link below.)
6, 13, 20, 27	8:30 AM	In-Person Worship (sign with link below.)
6, 13, 20, 27	10:15 AM	Holy Eucharist (Livestream)

Look for us **online:**

Church of the Epiphany: <https://epiphanyanglican.net/>

Church Calendar: <https://epiphanyanglican.net/events/>

This link shows current services as well as those events which have been canceled or suspended.

**Sign up for In-Person Worship Services**

**August Calendar now available**

<https://doodle.com/poll/mggskadk9b5z64a7>

*Due to current circumstances, many of the normal activities have either moved online or have been postponed. Check with your Ministry Organizer for details relevant to your specific activity. See the weekly Candle for the most current information.*