

THE CHURCH OF THE EPIPHANY

THE STAR

December 1, 2011



THE VIEW FROM MY WINDOW...

WHO WE ARE:

The Church of the Epiphany is one of 181 parishes of the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia, which is one of 110 dioceses in The Episcopal Church (USA), one of 44 member churches in the worldwide Anglican Communion.

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Tis the season to be...what? Frazzled, broke, overwhelmed, sad. What a shame that our time of remembering Christ's birth has become a long to-do list instead of a prayerful celebration! We have heard over and over again that the "reason for the season" is remembering Christ's birth. I'd like to present you with another possibility, another reason for the season. It's not only about remembering, it's about looking forward to another coming of the Christ, when he returns in glory to serve as judge and king. Instead of focusing on the birthday of Jesus and the gifts and the food and such, we might focus on preparing us and our world to welcome the Christ when he comes again. We talked about this when we celebrated the Feast of Christ the King on November 20th. This is Jesus' great promise, that he will return for a final time. At that time he will separate those who did his bidding and those who did not, and those who did will be granted eternal life.

I know this is not as much fun as stories of Scrooge and the Nutcracker, or even of little drummer boys and shepherds, but it is more powerful, and is truly the reason why Jesus came to earth two thousand years ago. It wasn't about American Express gift cards. It wasn't about fruitcakes. It wasn't about the train set under the tree. It was about a very special gift from our Creator, a gift who could help us see that ineffable Creator through him and who would redeem us from our sins. And having been given that gift – the only gift that really counts – we heard from him what we were expected to do. Simple things, expressions of those two sentences: love God, love your neighbor as yourself. Take the gift you have been given – Jesus Christ – and do what Jesus told you to do. Why? Because that great gift, the Christ, will return and say "what did you do with what I gave you?" And the best answer will be, "I passed it along by doing what you told me." Then the second coming will not be something to fear, but something to celebrate, as we celebrate the first coming of Jesus.

Merry Christmas. Pass it along, not just in words and Christmas cards, but by your life and your work in this season and beyond.

May you and yours have a beautiful, meaningful Advent and Christmas!

Mary+

Vestry Highlights

Your vestry met on November 8th. We noted that the deficit had increased to approximately \$17K, but this was well within what we had expected and there are funds already budgeted to cover the shortfall. The vestry approved the outside financial review by Mitchell Wiggins, which will be completed before the end of the year. Pledge cards are still coming in, but we have not yet reached the level of last year's pledging. Buildings and Grounds reported that they rented an auger and have dug a dozen holes in the memorial garden. Jeanne Riddick and Frosine Corbett were elected to the Memorial Garden committee. We prepared for the Congregational Meeting and discussed the upcoming Vestry retreat in January. The meeting was concluded at 8:15 with prayer. The next Vestry Meeting is December 13th at 6:30 in the Parish Hall. All are welcome to attend.

Congregational Meeting a Great Success!

Everyone enjoyed a delicious covered dish lunch after our service on November 13th (thanks to Joyce Whitlock as always, for serving as our Hostess, and for all who brought goodies). As we finished up our meal, we had our Annual Congregational Meeting. Mary+ spoke of the accomplishments of the past year and the challenges and opportunities ahead. Marty Shepard brought everyone up to date on our finances, and we discussed the work of the outside CPA firm that is doing our financial review. Gray also talked about the Vestry's work in the past year and the surprisingly long list of things we are involved in, many of which we hadn't done before. We then elected three new Vestry members: Ann Henderson (one of our faithful 8:15 service attenders who currently serves as our Register), Aggie Gallagher, a member of the ShrineMont Committee who has long been active in the parish, and Christine Couturier, whose children Caroline and Lucas are such wonderful acolytes. We are grateful to our outgoing Vestry members, Ann Schaefer, Jean Riddick, Nancy Sonne, and Ron Fitts. As we reminded folks, we are in the process of reducing the size of our Vestry from 12 persons to 9, thus we have replaced four people with three in the past two elections. Next year's election will bring us to a 9-person vestry, a good size for a parish of our numbers. Gray wrapped up the meeting by announcing that the Vestry had voted in favor of calling Mary+ to be our Rector. This means that her time at Epiphany will not be time-limited as it was as Priest-in-Charge. Once the Bishop concurs (and we have no reason to doubt that he will), a new Letter of Agreement will be signed and we will determine when we will have a celebration for this change in status. If you were not able to attend the Annual Meeting but would like a copy of the reports made, including Committee reports, you may pick one up in the office.

December Parish Calendar

Monthly Planner

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																		
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<p>25</p> <p>10:00 AM H.E.</p> <p>Christmas Day</p> <p>ONLY 1 SERVICE TODAY</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Office Closed</p>	<p>27</p> <p>7:00 PM Sit N Stitch gathering</p> <p>Men's Bible Class cancelled</p>	<p>28</p> <p>wedding rehearsal</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Wedding</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p>New Years Eve</p>																																																																																		

Blue Christmas Service:

Are the holidays a difficult time for you? Are you struggling with grief, stress, depression, or loneliness? Are the festivities of the season making things even tougher? You are not alone.

For many people the Christmas season is a time of added pressure, of added sorrow rather than joy -- and the usual celebrations serve only as a painful reminder of the struggle. But this can also be a time to offer our struggles to God and to remember that God's light shines even in the darkest night.

Therefore, you are invited to a service of prayer, readings, music, and candle lighting to mark the season and to share in the comfort of community. It will be on Tuesday, December 20th at 6:30 pm. Everyone is welcome, regardless of church affiliation.

Christmas Schedule of Worship:

There will be two services of Holy Eucharist on Saturday, December 24th, Christmas Eve: the 4 pm one will be particularly child-friendly. The 10:30 pm will be a festal (and a little bit more formal) service. Although we normally do not have services on Christmas Day, this year, it falls on a Sunday, the Lord's Day. Thus we will have a service on Sunday the 25th, just ONE service, at 10 a.m. That should give you time to come and celebrate after the children have opened presents and before the feast begins!

St. Giles' Gate

will meet December 3 and 17, exploring the themes of Advent and the Holy Family. If you know of a child who might benefit from this Saturday class for kids with special needs, please speak to Mary+ or Cynthia Miller

Confirmation Preparation

Some of our young people will be readying themselves for confirmation, their adult profession of faith and reconfirmation of their baptismal vows, on Friday and Saturday December 16th and 17th. They will have a retreat weekend here at church, filled with prayer, learning, food, and joy. Please pray for all who are participating!

Pledge Cards: It's not too late to turn in a pledge card for the year 2012. Please do get those cards in so we can finalize our budget for the coming year.

SENIOR HIGH YOUTH GROUP NEWS

We had a very busy and productive November. We worked on a presentation for the church about our mission trip to Tazewell and then presented it to a wonderful and supportive group of parishioners at church on Saturday, November 19th. We even served a free spaghetti dinner with the presentation. Thank you to all who came out and supported us.

We also put together cookie mix in a jar on November 27th. The money raised from these will to used towards next summer's mission trip.

Sr. Youth December schedule:

Dec. 4th, 11th & 18th — Sell cookie mix in a jar after the service

Dec. 28th & 29th — Tazewell mission trip reunion at Gayton
Kirk Presbyterian (please watch facebook for information)

Dec. 30th 6:00 PM — at the Holden's home

Cookie Mix in a Jar is coming Back!!

Once again the Sr. High Youth group will be selling cookie mix in a jar for \$8.00 each. The monies raised will be used to defray the cost of the mission trip in the summer of 2012. The sale begins on December 4th after church and runs every Sunday until we sell out—so be sure to get yours early!

Thank you in advance for all your support!!

Tis the Season.....

As we begin to think about the annual season of holiday gift giving to family and friends, let us remember the less fortunate in our community. In the hallway just outside the narthex, there are several opportunities for us to give something back to members of our society who don't always have the luxury of affording the season due to hard times. The Lamb's Basket seems to always need more and more food items these days and some of the needy would love to have something as frivolous as socks, mittens, gloves, or knit hats during the colder weather.

While you are out shopping for that new sweater you have had your eye on (but have ten sweaters in the closet you don't wear) or that toy your child we probably play with for only a day or two (since the kids receive so many gifts), think about how you could make a difference to someone you don't even know. A box of cereal, pasta or dessert mix will not cost you much. Canned meats, soups, or vegetables won't cost that much either. But if everyone brought in only 2-3 items, we could make a big difference in a family's life at this time of the year. The same goes for the socks, gloves and hats. If we purchased an extra pair of any of those items while we shop for family gifts, we could easily fill up our empty tree two or three times over.

Most of us are blessed with a warm home to live in with our families, have a decent paying job and a refrigerator full of food. Think about how you would feel (or have felt) if you were not sure where your next meal would come from or how you were going to keep warm this winter. Even though the economy is not where we would like it to be, we could still make a big difference. Jesus said, "whatsoever you do to the least of my brothers, you do unto me."

I wish you a merry Christmas and a prosperous new year!

Gray Corbett, Senior Warden

Lamb's Basket

The need for help with food continues to be great for those with limited resources, so your donations of nonperishable food items is particularly needed right now. In honor of the birth of the Christ Child, you might consider donating diapers, baby wipes, and infant formula, since Lamb's Basket also gives out these items.

Congratulations!

Christine Couturier, Aggie Gallagher, and Ann Henderson who were elected to the vestry and will begin their three year term in January 2012.

The Diocese of Virginia

November 23, 2011

W. Gray Corbett, Jr.
Senior Warden
The Church of the Epiphany
8000 Hermitage Rd.
Henrico, VA 23228

Dear Mr. Corbett:

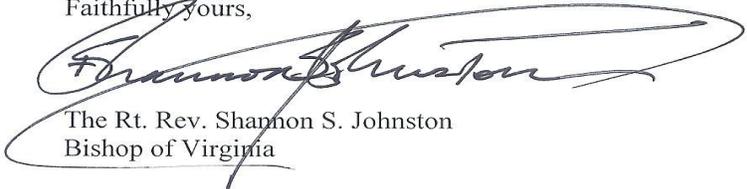
Thank you for your letter of November 15 informing me that the Vestry of The Church of the Epiphany, Richmond unanimously wishes to call to the Rev. Mary Brennan Thorpe as your new Rector. I wholeheartedly concur with this call and am pleased to extend my approval.

I am delighted to hear that the ministries at Epiphany are working well and offer my prayers and encouragement for the “dream” ministries upon which you feel you can now set your sights. I am confident that the combination of Mary’s leadership and the good and faithful efforts of the congregation will enable all of the ministries at Epiphany to bear witness to the Gospel.

Thank you for sending the Letter of Agreement you propose. I understand that Lindsay Ryland has adjustments to make and so I will look forward to the final draft.

With prayers of thanksgiving for your fine ministry, I remain

Faithfully yours,



The Rt. Rev. Shannon S. Johnston
Bishop of Virginia

SSJ:arw

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The Mayo Memorial Church House



110 West Franklin Street ■ Richmond, Virginia 23220-5095
(800) DIOCESE ■ (804) 643 8451 ■ Facsimile (804) 644 6928
www.thediocese.net

Women's Bible Study & Prayer Group

The Women's Bible Study and Prayer Group will meet December 5 and 12, 6:45—8:00 PM in the parlor. Any women is welcome to join us as frequently or infrequently as she wishes. No preparation is required for each lesson and the conversation is always insightful, imaginative, and fun. The group will not meet December 19 and 26, but will reconvene on January 2. We hope you'll consider being a part of this warm and supportive group of women who together are seeking to hear God's voice speaking to us!

Book Club

In our Monday book group, we are reading Kate Braestrup's "*Marriage and Other Acts of Charity*". We meet at 11 am each Monday, and we talk about the book and all sorts of other interesting topics. Join us and join the fun!

ADULT FORUM

We meet Sundays at 9:30 AM in the Parlor.

For Adult Forum, we will spend a couple of weeks in December feeding your inner science geek. Have you ever wondered what ancient astronomers thought of that star that figures so prominently in our story of Christ's birth? How do we know when the blessed baby was born? Using the latest tools of modern science, we can now understand what may have happened up in the heavens, and we may even be able to refine our understanding of the date of Christ's birth. Join us in the parlor on December 4 and 18 (no Adult Forum because of preparations for the pageant on the 11th) at 9:30 am, and let's figure things out together in "StarDate 1 A.D.: What Astronomers Know." We'll take a break from Adult Forum on December 25th and January 1st, and resume on January 8th.

Men's Bible Study

We will meet twice a month, on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month. This will be December 13th & Dec. 27th, at noon, in the parish hall. Bring a bag lunch and your Bible, and let's get to work!

Worship Leaders for December

10:30 Ushers: Chuck Strabley, Kim Ruder, Lee Poates

Counters: Wayne & Lucy Whitlock

December 4 — Advent 2				December 24 —Christmas Eve	
Altar Guild:	Betty Fore, Marietta Spring			Altar Guild:	Jean Riddick, Charlotte Lovelace
8:15—Holy Eucharist		December 18: Advent 4		4:00 PM—Holy Eucharist	
Usher:	Herb Williams			Usher:	
Reader:	Ann Schaefer			Readers: Randy Holden	
Chalice:	Ann Schaefer	Altar Guild: Dottie Strabley, Lucy Whitlock, Connie Neal		Prayers:	
10:30—Holy Eucharist				Chalice:	
Lessons:	Jeri Townley, Cynthia Miller			Acolytes: Megan Tignor, Zach Nixon, Bailey Nixon, Melissa Durrer	
Prayers:	Cynthia Miller			10:30 PM —Holy Eucharist	
Chalice:	Cynthia Miller, Ann Schaefer	8:15—Holy Eucharist		Lessons: Sarah Fore, Ann Schaefer	
Acolyte:	Stark Gallagher, Alex White, Catherine Cadavid, Madison White	Usher: Chris Tignor		Prayers: Sandy Ruder	
Greeters:	Tad Blackburn, Ann Schaefer	Reader: Ann Schaefer		Chalice: Sarah Fore, Ann Schaefer	
Nursery:	Joy Baynes, Peggy Wilson	Chalice: Ann Schaefer		Acolytes: All Acolytes	
		10:30—Holy Eucharist		Greeters: Gray Corbett, Ron Fitts	
		Lessons: Sarah Fore, Cheri Blackwell		December 25—Christmas Day	
December 11 —Advent 3				Altar Guild: Jean Riddick, Charlotte Lovelace	
Altar Guild:	Joyce Melton, Karen Holden, Carol York	Prayers:		10:00—Holy Eucharist	
8:15—Holy Eucharist		Chalice: Sarah Fore, Paul Dolci		Lessons: Cynthia Miller, David Tuck	
Usher:	George Baynes	Acolytes: Stephanie Holden, Caroline Couturier, Lucas Couturier,		Prayers: Cynthia Miller	
Reader:	Ann Schaefer	Greeters: Patty White Nancy Sonne		Chalice: Cynthia Miller, Herb Williams	
Chalice:	Ann Schaefer	Nursery: Ann Poates Caroline Couturier		Acolytes:	
10:30—Children’s Pageant with Holy Eucharist				Greeters: Sandy Ruder, Kathy Jimerson	
Lessons:				Nursery: Carol Campus, Mary Kenyi	
Prayers:					
Chalice:					
Acolytes:	Megan Tignor, Camille Wood,				
Greeters:	Carole Noe, Brian White				
Nursery:	Karen & Stephanie Holden				

Fellowship Activities

Want to go to Brunch?

We have changed the date: Sunday, December 4th, after the 10:30 service

the 'lunch brunch group' will be going to **Famous Dave's Bar-B-Que**, 7009 W Broad Street. If you are interested please contact **Jean Riddick, 264-0935**

Save the date: On Friday, January 13th, at 6:30 pm, we will have our Epiphany All-Parishioner Birthday Celebration. This great potluck event will be a chance for everyone to share their special day all together. All ages are welcome, and we promise not to ask what year you were born!

Congratulations to Patrick Lineberry

He will be receiving his masters in Engineering & Management Technology from Colorado School of the Mines, December 16. The family will be moving December 17 to Elizabeth City, NC.

Chapter 5 News

Chapter 5 will have its annual Christmas part on Sunday, December 11 at 6:00 pm at Denise Russell's home, 10609 Smith Point Way, Glen Allen, 23060. Please check e-mail and our Facebook page for more information.

The prayers & sympathy of the congregation are extended to the family & friends of Ed Williams who died on Saturday, November 5th. A Memorial Service was held on Wednesday, November 9th at 11:00 AM. May his soul and the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace.

Thank You, Thank You!

On behalf of ISH, I would like to thank everyone at Epiphany that helped with the Thanksgiving Food Boxes. Of all the cars and vans that I helped unload, the 23 boxes that Epiphany sent were the most I saw from any church. Unfortunately, we ran out of boxes for the people that had been promised a box. The donations were way down from previous years. The families that did not receive a box of food will receive a gift card so that they can buy a 'Thanksgiving meal'.

Thank you again for your generosity and continued support.

Mike Young

Freeland Mason is still receiving wall calendars for prison chaplains. Please leave them in the church office.

Can Challenge:

We are in need of big cans that we spray=paint to use as "vases" for our Sunday flowers to be brought to shut-ins after the service. These are large coffee cans or juice cans. If you have some (and you may have bought a couple of cans of either coffee or juice for your holiday meals), please bring them to the church. Whoever brings the most cans by December 17th will get a home-baked holiday goodie from Mary+. Put them in the box in the office labeled "Can Challenge."

the Whitlock family

would like to thank the members of the parish for all their prayers, cards, calls, food and generous concern during the illness & death of Pete Whitlock. The comforting words & concern from our church family is greatly appreciated during this difficult time. God Bless each & everyone of you!

Days of Blessing in December

Happy Birthday

Dec. 1 Sandy Ruder
Cora Ann Whitlock

Dec. 3 Ava Whittlesey

Dec. 6 Hunter Mitchell

Dec. 7 Betty Fore

Dec. 8 Rachel Young

Dec. 10 Chris Tignor
Grace Gabriella Schulte

Dec. 12 Tim Shephard
Scovia Eluzai
Vivien Mitchell

Dec. 16 Kella Kiden Soro

Dec. 18 Sarah Jenkins

Dec. 19 Diana Stone
Linda Whitlock

Dec. 23 Hope Marie Schulte

Dec. 24 Pat Dunn

Dec. 25 Nancy Sonne

Dec. 28 Christine Williams

Dec. 30 Hana Elionai
Noel Elionai

Happy Anniversary

Dec. 6 Marty & Vivien Mitchell

Dec. 9 Ron & Paula Fitts

Dec. 19 Randy & Nancy Tucker

Dec. 27 Ray & Charlotte Lovelace
Cory & Jessica Isemann

Dec. 30 Chris & Sandy Tignor
Gray & Frosine Corbett

Standing in the Need of Prayer

Those who are ill or have special needs:

In Our Parish Family: Carol Burley, Dave Van Valkenburg, Carl Burley, Charles McMurdo, Harry Wood, Ray Hampton, Jean Craver, Peggy Adleman, Sarah Jenkins, Dottie Strabley, Marian Noe

Those in Care Facilities or Homebound especially:

Bea & Francis Byrd, Elizabeth Davis, Roseanne Stockwell, Ruth Williams and Juliet Wynne

Those Serving in the Armed Forces especially:

Matt Guyer, David Hoffert, Daniel Keefe, Patrick Lineberry, Caitlin Mitchell, Bryan Murphy, Michael Stone, Billy Tucker, Matthew Smith, Ryan Casey, and Chris Tuck

Prayers for those expected a child: Patrick & Deb Lineberry

Prayers for family & friends:

Kathryn Cook—friend of Connie Neal, Denise Hornberger & John Renner — dear friends of Dot Hudson & Carol York, Eric Schardt & Steve Bazemore—friends of Scott Blackwell, Katie Phillips—friend of Kristin Carver, Gloria Jones—mother of Kim White, Rebecca Miller—friend of Marietta Spring, Leah & Terri—friends of Aggie Gallagher, Dorothy Hoffecker— aunt of Diana Stone, Donna Dumas—friend of Sarah Jenkins, the extended Kenyi family in Sudan, Leslie Wildman—friend of the Holden's, Jeremy Smith—sister-in-law's son-in-law of Herb Williams & Melba Shumaker, Jay—husband of Jill Mitchell, Rona Fisher—friend of Jessica Ruder, Lisa Binmoeller—friend of Diane Major, Mary Stockdell—daughter-in-law of Susan Josenhans, Rose Woodell, friend of Kathy & Bob Jimerson, the Apel family—friends of the Nixon family.

Prayers for the departed: Ed Williams

Thank you to Chapter 5...

A note from Susie Wasiluk...

Just wanted to mention how much my family and friends enjoyed the deserts from the Chapter 5 bake sale. The 2 pies were delicious, but the pumpkin cranberry bread and dalmation cookies were a hit with everyone I shared them with—which was quite a few people. The oatmeal cranberry cookies didn't get shared (didn't have that many), but the idea was I think some friends will use cranberries instead of raisins next time they bake oatmeal cookies. Anyway I wanted to let you know how much I (we) appreciated the bake sale and if you would share that in the newsletter it might make all those fine ladies who baked feel good! I understand they sold everything.

Children's Christmas Pageant

The Christmas pageant will be on Sunday, December 11 during the 10:30 AM service. We will be having rehearsal Sunday, December 4th during Sunday School in the parish hall and then will do another run through in the church immediately after the service during coffee hour time.

Also, we will be having our traditional 'Soup & Bread' luncheon after the pageant on December 11. If you can bring a pot of soup or bread get in touch with Beth Lassiter, 756-1540

Just the Facts:
Leadership and Contact Information at
Church of the Epiphany

Office address: 8000 Hermitage Rd, Richmond, VA 23228 Phone: 804-266-2503 inquiry@epiphanyepiscopal.com

The Rev. Mary Brennan Thorpe, Priest-in-Charge Cell phone: 804-221-3421 mary@epiphanyepiscopal.com

Lucy Whitlock, Office Administrator lucy.whitlock@epiphanyepiscopal.com

Vestry

Gray Corbett, Senior Warden Ron Fitts, Junior Warden

Marty Shephard, Treasurer

Ann Henderson, Register

Tad Blackburn (2012)	Gray Corbett (2012)
Ron Fitts (2011)	Kathy Jimerson (2012)
Carole Noe (2013)	Jean Riddick (2011)
Sandy Ruder (2013)	Ann Schaeffer (2011)
Nancy Sonne (2011)	Brian White (2013)
Patty White (2012)	

Office Hours :

Lucy is in the office Monday through Thursday from 9 am to 2 pm. Mary is usually in the office Monday through Thursday, unless she is out visiting parishioners or attending meetings. She can always be reached on her cell phone (221-3421).

May the light of God's blessing, like the Epiphany star, always guide you on the path toward Him.