



Partnering with Christ to Renew Lives

December 2020 Newsletter

The Hope of Our Faith

Although none of them can should be forgotten, and all should be essential parts of our Christian faith, Hope may be the most important of the four themes of Advent: Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. Why do I choose Hope? It is because we have had a very tough year due to the pandemic and not being able to safely worship in person, seeing or experiencing the economic suffering and fear of losing a job, a difficult and divisive election, and experiencing health problems ourselves or with our loved ones. We are all exhausted by the restrictions of COVID-19. We are experiencing a sense of burn-out and restlessness. It seems the holiday season just isn't going to be what we are used to and that disappoints us. We are told that the winter

could be even worse as far as the spread of COVID-19 with more people being inside because of colder temperatures. We are tired of self-isolating. Humans are social creatures, and we want to gather with one another. It isn't natural for us to stay separated from our family and friends. All of this may affect your family's sense of hope for the future.

But there is HOPE. We have been suffering as Romans 5:3-5 says, but it also says that suffering produces endurance, and character, which lead to Godly hope. Godly hope opens us up to God's love. We just have to let that endurance build in us with God's help a little longer. We have to look forward to possibilities instead of looking back or looking at the down side of things. Hope is about believing and knowing that God never disappoints us or leaves us unfulfilled. That is part of the message of Advent.

The Israelites were captive in Egypt 430 years before Moses came and freed them filled with the power of God. They wandered 40 years in the wilderness before getting to the promised land and had to fight many battles along the way and yet they still hoped. The Israelites waited 70 years in exile in Babylon and yet, they still hoped to return to their homeland and hoped to rebuild their temple that had been destroyed, yet they still hoped and prayed for release. They waited 1,000 years from King David to the coming of Jesus and still they hoped. In 70 AD Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed and all the people were scattered, yet in 1948 Israel was established and they again had a country. The message of the Bible is clear. God does not leave his people or disappoint them even when times seem tough.

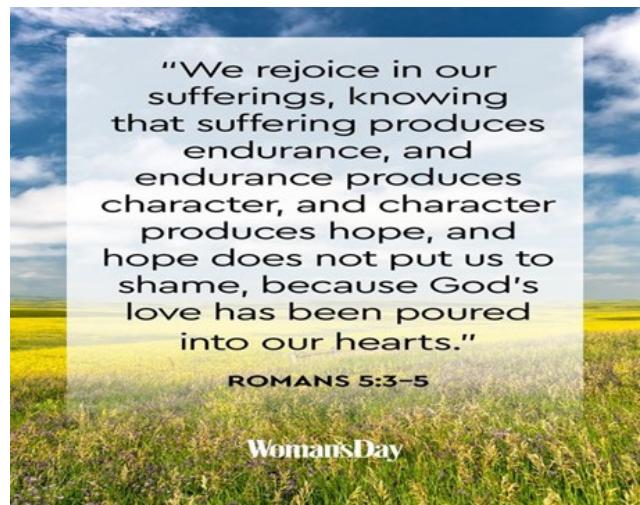
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Everything doesn't happen immediately or on our time. Sometimes we have to have faith in God and hope for the future. We've been waiting 10 months to return to worship and it could be a little longer, but not much. It certainly isn't 1,800 or 1,000 years, or 430 years. Our end is in sight. There is good reason for hope in the future.

I believe in Epiphany now more than ever as a church. I feel that Epiphany is entering into a time of great hope and possibility. We are hoping to soon be able to move to a new larger worship space in Collierville. That will likely allow us to worship again, though in a socially distanced manner. It will open us up to being able to focus our ministries primarily in one community. We'll be able to connect with city government better, and to get to know the people in social groups like Kiwanis and the Chamber of Commerce. Some can choose to be part of community activities on the courthouse square or elsewhere in Collierville. In short, we can meet new people who might wish to worship with us. This is a cause for great hope. So today, I ask you to be prayerful and hopeful about Epiphany's future.

Peace and prayers, *Pastor TroyAnn*



Congregational Meeting December 20, 2020

Pursuant to the Epiphany Lutheran Church bylaws, we will hold our Congregational Meeting on December 20, 2020 following the 10 am worship service. It is very important that you attend. We will be voting on the 2021 ministry plan, and will also be electing new council members. Please take the time to review, print and download the pertinent documents ([agenda](#) and [ballot](#)) prior to the meeting. Please [contact Phil Goetz](#) with any questions, and make plans to attend!

December and Advent Prayers

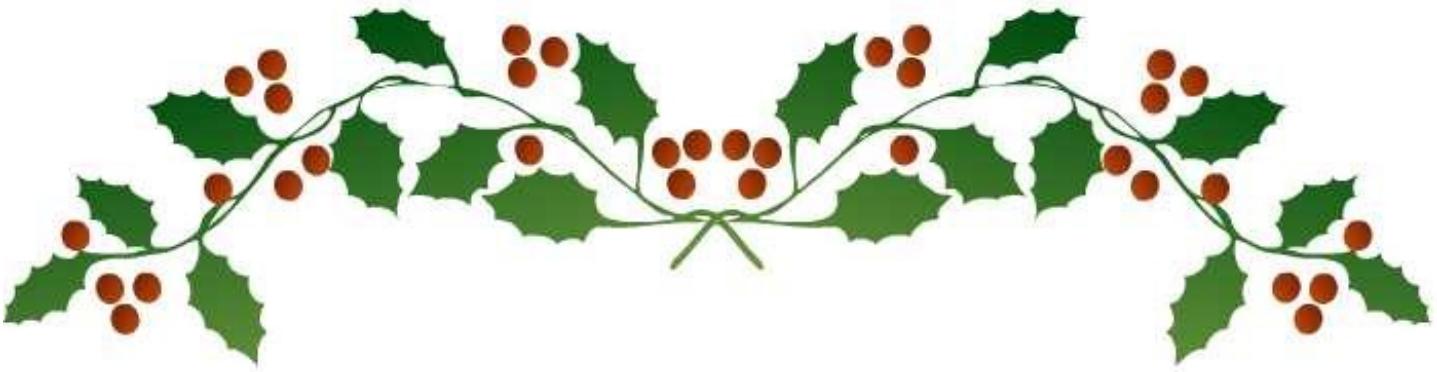
Every month, the ELCA provides its Prayer Ventures for member congregations. The link to the monthly prayers can always be found on our website on the [Christian Education page](#), along with an ELCA Daily Bible Reading and Luther Seminary's God Pause Daily Devotion.

[Here is the link for this month's prayers.](#)

These petitions are offered as guides to prayer for the global, social and outreach ministries of the ELCA, as well as for the needs and circumstances of our neighbors, communities and world.

In addition, Luther Seminary has put together a 2020 Advent Devotional titled "O Lord, How Shall I Meet You." [You may download a copy here.](#)





Advent and Christmas Worship Services

Midweek Advent Services Wednesdays at 7 pm (Readers needed!)

December 2, 2020 Midweek Advent Service - Love

Join Zoom Meeting - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87319096591>

Meeting ID: 873 1909 6591

Dial-In Number: +1 312 626 6799

December 9, 2020 Midweek Advent Service - Hope

Join Zoom Meeting - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85396582094>

Meeting ID: 853 9658 2094

Dial-In Number: +1 312 626 6799

December 16, 2020 Midweek Advent Service - Peace

Join Zoom Meeting - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84569319701>

Meeting ID: 845 6931 9701

Dial-In Number: +1 312 626 6799

Christmas Eve Worship Service December 24th at 6 pm (Worship assistants needed!)

Join Zoom Meeting - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88035851185>

Meeting ID: 880 3585 1185

Dial-In Number: +1 312 626 6799



Online Worship Services Continuing in December

At this time, we plan on continuing to conduct worship services via Zoom through December - please watch your e-mail for any changes in our schedule. Please join us for these "virtual" worship services and a time of fellowship with our Epiphany community on Sundays at 10 am. Check your weekly e-blast for the bulletin link and to download the prayers, readings and hymns for the week. [Download this document](#) for a complete set of Zoom instructions.



Sunday, December 6, 2020 - 2nd Sunday of Advent

[Join Zoom Meeting - https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84560098939](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84560098939)

Meeting ID: 845 6009 8939

Dial-In Number: +1 312 626 6799

Sunday, December 13, 2020 - Third Sunday of Advent

[Join Zoom Meeting - https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87404950925](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87404950925)

Meeting ID: 874 0495 0925

Dial-In Number: +1 312 626 6799

Sunday, December 20, 2020 - Fourth Sunday of Advent

[Join Zoom Meeting - https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85612343264](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85612343264)

Meeting ID: 856 1234 3264

Dial-In Number: +1 312 626 6799

Sunday, December 27, 2020 - First Sunday of Christmas

[Join Zoom Meeting - https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84824143365](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84824143365)

Meeting ID: 848 2414 3365

Dial-In Number: +1 312 66 6799

Sign up to serve for Sundays, Advent Midweek Services and Christmas Eve!

[Sign up here](#) to volunteer for upcoming worship services. If you need assistance, [e-mail Carol Webster](#) - she will be happy to help you sign up if you have any issues!

Epiphany's Core Values — Faithfulness, Inclusion, Love

Our Guiding Principles

We accept and appreciate your presence.

We serve everyone.

We grow personally through the word of God.

We are God's hands, feet, and voice to serve our community.

We rejoice and share in the love of God.

Our Purpose — to welcome all, sharing God's promises and love through our actions.

Epiphany Financial Update

The Epiphany Council wants to keep everyone informed about our financial situation. This month we will take a look at the numbers from October 2020. Epiphany applied for and received a SBA PPP loan of \$12,500 at the end of May. This money will be used for salaries and rent during the pandemic. The PPP loan is included in our revenue.

	October			2020 - Year to Date (Jan-Oct)		
	Actual	Budget	Difference	Actual	Budget	Difference
Revenue	8,337.90	10,985.84	-2,647.94	119,393.53	109,858.40	9,535.13
Expenses	10,095.41	12,566.11	2,470.70	119,669.67	127,661.10	7,991.43
Net	-1,757.51	-1,580.27	-177.24	-276.14	-17,802.70	17,526.56

The October numbers were more than the projected October budget deficit by \$177.24.

The YTD numbers are less than the projected 2020 budget deficit by \$17,526.56. (This number includes the SBA PPP loan of \$12,500.)

Even though we are not meeting in person, our expenses continue. As always, you may mail your check to Epiphany (see address below) or give via ACH bank draft ([click here for instructions](#)).

We also accept tithes and offerings as well as payments to special funds (Property Fund, Food Pantry Fund, Wildfire Disaster Fund) through PayPal. [Please visit our website](#) and click on the PayPal button at the top of the home page to donate. (You may have to refresh your website or delete cookies to use the button more than once.)

You may also mail checks to: Epiphany Lutheran Church. P.O. Box 1805, Collierville, TN 38027



Amazon Smile - Don't forget! Sign up for [Amazon Smile](#) - 0.5% of the price of all your eligible Amazon purchases go directly to Epiphany!

Kroger Community Rewards - [Click here to register](#) with Kroger's Community Rewards program. We are registered as Epiphany Lutheran Church, organization #39854. **In the 3rd Quarter 2020, 11 households generated \$41.79 in donations for Epiphany!**



December Outreach Project - Peace Lutheran Angel Tree



Peace Lutheran Church has provided us with the names of children in their congregation who need Angel Tree sponsors. Five of the angels have already been sponsored by a generous donor, but there are five more who need sponsors.

[Click here](#) to see the list, and if you choose to sponsor, please fill in your name on the list with the item you will be purchasing. **Donations must be turned in no later than December 10th.** If someone wishes to sponsor a child, but does not want to shop, they can provide the cash to Lois Ketcham and she will take care of shopping. (You could also

shop via Amazon Smile and have items shipped directly to Lois as long as they arrive by December 10th - if you shop via Amazon Smile and have indicated that Epiphany Lutheran is your chosen organization, a portion of the sale also goes to Epiphany! That's a win-win.)

Please just put the first and last name of the child on the gifts. Lois will be happy to pick them up from anyone when they are ready. [Please contact Lois Ketcham](#) with any questions.

Gals of Epiphany

**Stay tuned to hear about our next study -
more information coming soon!**



MOE (Men of Epiphany) Study & Fellowship On Hiatus

The MOE meetings are currently on hiatus. We hope everyone is staying healthy and sheltering in place at home as much as possible.

Happiest of Birthdays and God's Blessings!

Dianne Polly - December 10
Pastor TroyAnn - December 19
Andria Prouty - December 26

Have we missed **your** birthday?
[Please send the month/day to
Carol Webster](#)
(caroleiphanylutheran@gmail.com)
so you can be included!



Epiphany Community Garden Update

The garden is winding down for the year, but there is still work to be done! We still have greens to harvest, and need a few more work days to prepare the beds for winter so they will be fruitful and ready to go next spring! Workdays will continue to be Wednesdays and Saturdays from 8:30 am - 11:30 am - ***the LAST work day for the year is projected to be December 19th.*** [**Please contact Wendell Kruse**](#) with any questions!

November was a busy month! Thanks to the mild weather, we still had plenty of fresh produce to harvest , including turnip/mustard greens, turnip roots, peppers, okra, radishes and a nice amount of green tomatoes. We worked to remove any frost-damaged plants (tomatoes, okra, sweet peppers) and prepared those beds for a winter's rest. We shredded leaves to apply on the beds, removed the okra stalks, removed and stored the tomato cages, loosened and worked in compost in several beds, mowed Home Place, and spread cover crops for the winter (crimson red clover!). Thanks to all who helped deliver the produce to our local agencies!

*So far this year we have donated
more than 2,110 pounds - our best year ever!!!*



Thanks to everyone who attended our Harvest Celebration!

It was wonderful to spend time together safely for fun, music, fellowship and Holy Communion.

We appreciate everyone who turned in their pledge cards in November as well!



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December 2020 Calendar of Events

(Please check our calendar online for the most up-to-date information)

Wed 12/2	8:30 - 11:30 am - Home Place 7:00 pm - Via Zoom	Community Garden Workday Midweek Advent Service - Join here: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87319096591
Sat 12/5	8:30 - 11:30 am - Home Place	Community Garden Workday
Sun 12/6	10 am - Via Zoom	2nd Sunday of Advent - Online Worship Service Join here: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84560098939
Wed 12/9	8:30 - 11:30 am - Home Place 7:00 pm - Via Zoom	Community Garden Workday Midweek Advent Service - Join here: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85396582094
Sat 12/12	8:30 - 11:30 am - Home Place	Community Garden Workday
Sun 12/13	10 am - Via Zoom	3rd Sunday of Advent - Online Worship Service Join here: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83128199815
Wed 12/16	8:30 - 11:30 am - Home Place 7:00 pm - Via Zoom	Community Garden Workday Midweek Advent Service - Join here: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84569319701
Thurs 12/17	7 pm - Via Zoom	Church Council Meeting Join here: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85257430955
Sat 12/19	8:30 - 11:30 am - Home Place	Community Garden Workday
Sun 12/20	10 am - Via Zoom 11:30 am - Immediately following worship	4th Sunday of Advent - Online Worship Service Join here: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85612343264 Congregational Meeting (same Zoom link as above)
Wed 12/23	7 pm - Via Zoom	Social Ministries Committee Meeting
Thurs 12/24	6 pm - Via Zoom	Christmas Eve Worship Service Join here: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88035851185
Sun 12/27	10 am - Via Zoom	First Sunday of Christmas - Online Worship Service Join here: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84824143365



December 2020 Worship Servants

Each week while we are worshiping via Zoom, we need an assisting minister and lector to help out. We also need readers for our Midweek Advent Services and an assisting minister and lector for Christmas Eve worship service - please consider volunteering! If you have any questions about serving for Zoom worship, please contact [Vicki Scherf](#) or [Pastor TroyAnn](#).

[2021 SignUp is live now!](#)



Worship Servant SignUp Genius



[Sign up here](#) to volunteer for upcoming worship services in December. If you need assistance, [e-mail Carol Webster](#) - she will be happy to help you sign up if you have any issues! Want to know more about being a worship servant? [You can review the duties and guidelines here.](#)

Please [send your prayer requests to Carol Webster](#). You may also [submit a prayer request online here](#). Thank you!



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Epiphany Lutheran Church
Worship Location
Schaeffer Memorial Chapel
7887 Poplar Ave.
Germantown, TN 38138
Mailing Address
P.O. Box 1805
Collierville, TN 38027

Rev. TroyAnn Poulopoulos
Email
Website
Facebook
Twitter
Instagram
YouTube

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www.facebook.com/EpiphanyLutheran
www.twitter.com/epiphancville
<https://www.instagram.com/epiphanylutherancollierville>