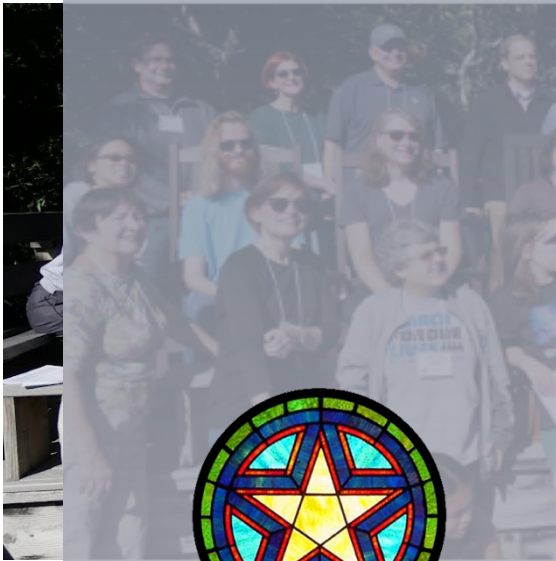


ANNUAL REPORT 2024



THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE EPIPHANY
2089 Ponce de Leon Ave., NE, Atlanta, GA 30307 | epiphany.org | 404.373.8338

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING AGENDA

Sunday, January 28, 2024

Opening Prayer

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Appointment of the Secretary

Election of Vestry Members

Introductions of Vestry and Staff

Senior Warden's Report

Financial Report

Stewardship Report

Rector's Report

Benediction



RECTOR

The Rev. Amy Dills-Wright

The year 2023 was a year of celebration at Epiphany. We celebrated our feast day in January with a beautiful and meaningful pageant and feast day feast. In March, we celebrated the installation of your rector and the good work we have done together for the last four years as we looked together towards the future. In May, we celebrated our church's 125th Anniversary. We honored our history and those who have gone before who have carried us to this place in our church's life as we carry on the work of being God's people today.

In June, the Rev. Carmie McDonald joined our staff and quickly began building relationships within our family ministry and working with our community engagement ministries in deeper reflection on who we are called to be, building new partnerships and nurturing existing ones, further developing our work of creation care and racial justice.

Our existing staff, Shea McNutt, Julie Ryder, Susie Boyko, and Emily Elder continued the exceptional work that they are known for and I remain ever grateful that I get to work with such a dedicated and talented staff.

The work of this parish is much bigger than any staff could manage and so we also offer our gratitude for all those who serve in volunteer roles here in the parish. You keep this place running and vibrant and able to risk new things for the kingdom of God.

I'm particularly grateful for our vestry members who continue to ensure that the temporal matters of the church are well managed, doing their work with a prayerful and discerning spirit. I have been blessed to work with some amazing senior wardens in my time here and Bert Bender served this church well in his tenure this past year. I'm grateful for his wisdom, humor, support, and good counsel. Our junior warden, Lisa Daily, has done really good work helping us focus on our core values and our parish priorities that we identified in the Congregational Assessment in 2022. You can read more about that later in the annual report. We are fortunate to have amazing lay leadership here at Epiphany.

Our stewardship theme was just right for this anniversary year: Many Voices, One Story. I'm grateful for the work of Pam Tipton and the Stewardship Team for making it a celebration of who we are and who we can be together. And you responded with incredible generosity. We not only met our goal but we exceeded it, which allows us to invest more in staff, in community engagement, and in the care of our building and grounds.

As we look to this new year, I'm excited to see what new things God is doing in our midst. As our contemplative and formation opportunities grow, so too does our work outside the walls of the church. Think of it as the inward journey feeding the outward journey. The more we nurture our inner life in God, the more called we feel to get outside ourselves and serve with others. I'm heartened by all the ways I see that happening here.

Of course it's happening here. Because we are people of Epiphany, people who are called to shine our light in this place and out in our community. It comes from God's light within us and I'm grateful to be shining my light with you in this place.





ASSOCIATE PRIEST FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & FAMILY MINISTRY

The Rev. Carmie McDonald

What a gift it has been to travel with you, the people of Epiphany, for the past seven months. I am grateful for the warm welcome you have extended to me and my family as we continue to settle in to this special place.

As this community celebrated the Feast of the Epiphany earlier this month, I spent some time reflecting on the story of the magi and the significance of their following the star together. I was struck by the many parallels between their collective journey and ours, and I give thanks for the ways that God has led us through the terrain of this last year.



Like the magi studying the heavens, we have gathered for formation programs that have opened our eyes to the new things God is doing in the world around us. I am grateful for the partners who have helped shape and present the rich and robust learning opportunities of this last year. Together we celebrated our God-given creativity during the Season of Creation and welcomed scholars from Georgia Interfaith Power & Light and the Candler Foundry. Emily Elder, along with a dedicated team of volunteer teachers, provided opportunities for children and youth to participate in programs that invite wonder and inspire community building.



As traveling companions, we have encouraged one another to continue following the star. It has been a gift to gather with the leaders of our longstanding Community Engagement ministries and to witness the support you all offer one another as you seek to serve Christ in all people through our Art Ministry, Refugee Ministry, Decatur-area Emergency Assistance Ministry (DEAM), Decatur Cooperative Ministry (DCM), Emmaus House, our Haiti Partnership and the feeding ministries at the Gateway Shelter and Holy Comforter.

By dreaming in community, we have experienced God's Epiphany that is opening new paths through the familiar terrain of our daily lives and leading us home by another way. This year has seen an expansion of our Racial Justice and Earth Guild ministries that invite us to open ourselves to the transforming power of God's presence and to willingly change our courses of action in response.



As we give thanks for the gifts of the past year, we look forward to the many possibilities a new year brings. Just as the magi set out to follow the light that came into the world, I have witnessed you leaving behind the comfort of the familiar to follow Christ into new places. I am grateful for your witness and for God's continual presence with us as we travel the road together.

THE EPIPHANY STAFF

Clergy



The Rev. Amy Dills-Wright
Rector



The Rev. Carmie McDonald
Associate Priest for Community
Engagement & Family Ministry

Staff



July Ryder
Organist & Choirmaster



Emily Elder
Dir. of Children & Youth
Ministries



Shea McNutt
Parish Administrator

Assisting Priests



The Rev. Bobbie Patterson



The Rev. Carolyn Peacock



The Rev. Barbara Ryder

SENIOR WARDEN

Bert Bender

What to write in this Senior Warden report? Trained in the law, I went to Canon 33 of our Diocese, which directs Vestry to deliver “*a full, accurate and faithful statement of the temporal condition of the Parish.*” Well, our temporal condition is really great. But more is needed, so motivated by music, out of nowhere came the lyric “*You’ll know it’s true / that you are blessed and lucky / It’s true that you / Are touched by something / That will grow and bloom in you*” ([*These Are Days*](#), Natalie Merchant, 1992). That’s it.

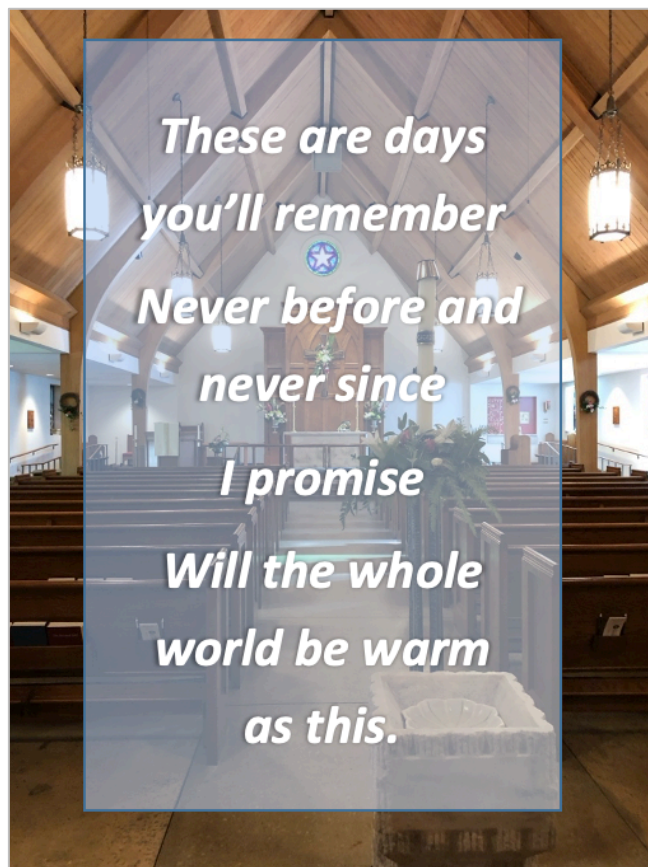
So many have done so much to nurture this Parish community and the many communities within the Parish and—by extension—the many communities we encounter as groups and individuals as we engage with the wider community. I will start with gratitude for Junior Warden Lisa Daily who in addition to her liaison role with Pastoral Care (David Draper and many) pursued our “Parish Priorities” in our ministry areas, pushing forward work done by Immediate Past Senior Warden Erin Braden and others. Grateful too for Liefy Smith and her joy in welcoming new members in many ways, and for Peter Dodge who (with Chair Paul Hinson) has provided us with excellent Adult Formation offerings.

Grateful for Kaylie Gibbs who worked with Pam Tipton and her Stewardship Team(!) plus the Endowment Board (led by Jessica Boatwright); for chorister Paige Howell and her support of Youth Formation (with the wonderful work of Emily Elder and our teachers/leaders) and of her Mom; for April Maa working with Technology and Worship & Liturgy (we will get the new words right, promise!); for chorister Susan Ashmore and Sally Walker engaging with the many spokes of our Community Engagement wheel; for Andrea Strahan adding to our Finance team to take us to the future (and Phillip Anderson as Chair, Randy Shearin as Treasurer, Susie Boyko as Bookkeeper); for Judy Jarady and the entire Parish Life team (led by Polly Nodine); for Matthew May for taking on (with great help from John Yntema and Bill Graves) the Herculean (Sisyphean?) tasks of our

Buildings and Grounds; and for our Clerk, Sherry Wallace, who keeps us straight.

Speaking of keeping us straight, also grateful for Parish Administrator Shea McNutt, best in the Diocese; likewise Julie Ryder, leading our phenomenal music programs. Grateful for the arrival and immersion of Associate Priest Carmie McDonald into our community. And I am (we are) most grateful for the caring, inspiring, joy-filled, cooperative yet decisive leadership of our Rector Amy Dills-Wright. *These are days you’ll remember / Never before and never since / I promise / Will the whole world be warm as this.* This community is doing great things and poised for so much more.

Read on ...



VESTRY CANDIDATES



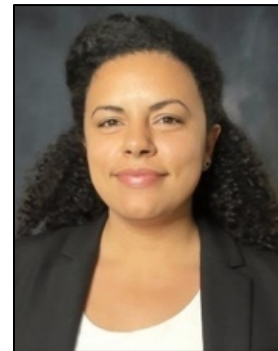
Carol Bartlett



Paul Bonner



Cristin Davis



Jordan Moody

RETURNING VESTRY MEMBERS



Judy Jarady



Matthew May



Andrea Strahan



Sally Walker



Susan Ashmore



Kaylie Gibbs



Paige Howell



April Maa

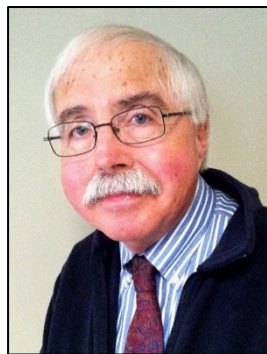
RETIRING VESTRY MEMBERS



Bert Bender



Lisa Daily



Peter Dodge



Liefy Smith

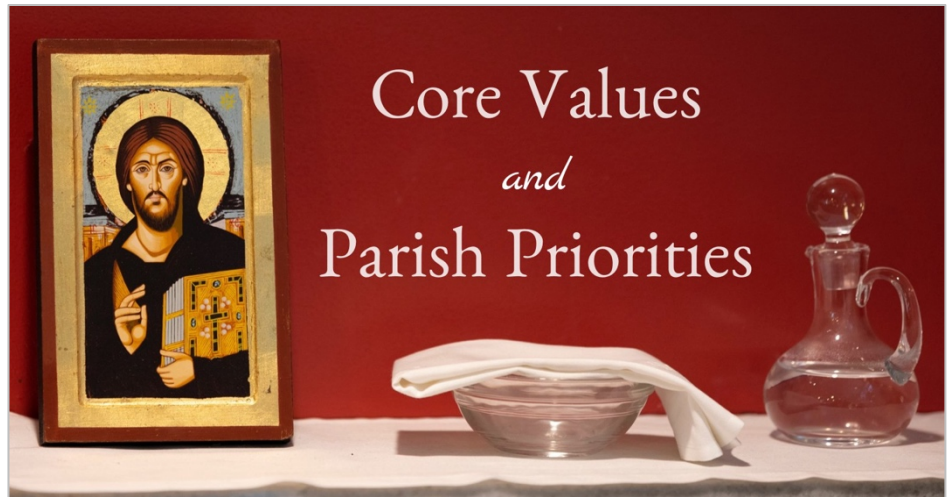
PARISH PRIORITIES

Lisa Daily, Junior Warden

In 2023, Epiphany enthusiastically embraced its work to explore who we are, how we have changed, what is important to us and how to live into what we identify as important. Parish discussions were held to analyze the results of our Congregational Assessment and consider core values and priorities. Once core values and parish priorities were developed, over the summer, Epiphany Committees clergy and staff met to discuss how our existing activities met our Mission, Core Values, and Parish Priorities and whether and how new activities could be supported. In 2024, the Vestry agreed to continue to emphasize in its work Epiphany Core Values and Parish Priorities.

Parish Priorities

1. Make necessary changes to attract families with children and youth to our church.
2. Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church.
3. Work toward environmental, racial, gender, LGBTQ+ and economic justice and equity.
4. Develop ministries that work toward healing those broken by life circumstances and those living on the margins of society.
5. Create more opportunities for people to form meaningful relationships (for example, small groups, nurtured friendships, shared meals, etc.).



Parish Core Values

Faith in God. Our belief in a loving God is foundational to our faith. Faith brings us together for worship and sends us out in the world. We recognize everyone's faith journey as unique—wherever you are on your journey, there is a place for you here.

Love in Action. We are called to engage with the wider community through the life and teachings of Jesus. Together, we work toward environmental, racial, gender, LGBTQ+ and economic justice and equity.

Transformative Relationships. Through God's grace, we seek to embody God's love in our care for each other.

Intentional Welcome. We are an inclusive community that strives to seek and serve Christ in all people. We believe God loves you—no exceptions.

Mission Statement

The Episcopal Church of the Epiphany is an inclusive community called to seek and follow Jesus Christ. We welcome all people in the Eucharistic fellowship of Christ's Body. We receive strength and encouragement at the common table to carry out Christ's work of reconciliation in our broken world. Nourished by worship and witness, learning and teaching, fellowship and service, we strive to live out the Gospel's radical values with gladness of heart.

WORSHIP

April Maa, Vestry Liaison

Acolytes

This last year has been busy for the acolytes. We added two new torches which everyone LOVES! They don't wobble!!! In October we had training for prospective acolytes and continued training for current acolytes. As a result of that training, the Acolyte Corps is now TWENTY strong. Adults are also welcome to serve as acolytes. Please contact Linda Ryder-Wolf if you would like to serve.



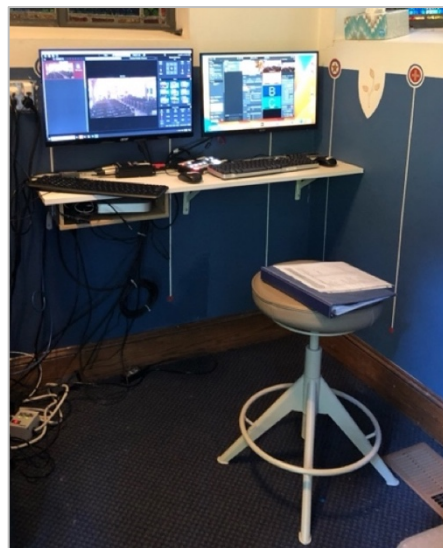
Altar Guild

The Altar Guild serves our parish in an indispensable, behind-the-scenes ministry by preparing the altar and sanctuary for all Sunday services as well as weddings, funerals and other special services. We recognized Ruth Olsen's 30-plus years of service and purchased candle holders for the small altar in her honor. We work in teams in this quiet, contemplative ministry and we are in need of additional members, so please contact co-chairs Kathleen Rinehart or Annie Strahan if you are interested in exploring or joining this guild.



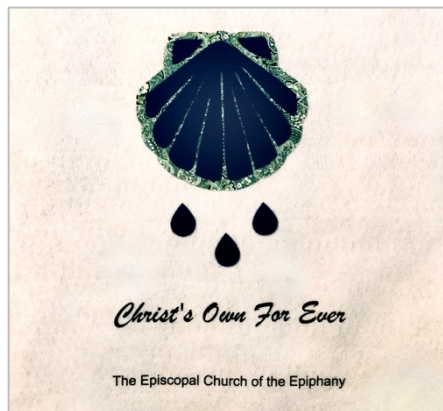
AV Guild

Worship had a busy and productive 2023 at Epiphany. To connect parishioners and visitors with Epiphany, the AV Guild moved into the former Oratory space and had the technology built out to support live streaming and zoom for all Epiphany services. Newly developed checklists and guides for our AV Guild volunteers were created to allow for more a more seamless end user experience. Please contact April Maa if you are interested in joining the AV Guild and work behind the scenes to connect Epiphany to others online.



Baptismal Banners

The making and gifting of individual Baptismal Banners is a ministry of the church. When a baptism is scheduled with Clergy/Staff a message is sent to the Baptismal Committee with the full name and date of birth of the baby/youth/adult. The members of the committee determine if there are color or symbols preferred by the family. The banners are then assembled with felt, ribbon and a wooden dowel. The most common symbol used on the banner is the butterfly with a cross for its body (a symbol of rebirth and resurrection) and lately a shell with drops of water has been added (a symbol of resurrection and rebirth). The banners are displayed during the church service. After the ceremony, the banner is given to the family as a remembrance of this special time. If you would like to assist in helping make these banner, please contact Barbara Belcore.



Eucharistic Ministers & Lay Readers

We welcomed four new people as Eucharistic Ministers (EM) this year, but we still need to recruit some more! The Lay Readers also welcomed the youth to read on the 1st Sunday of the month. It is a delight to see our youth participating in worship. Thanks to all the members of the parish who give of their time to serve as EMs and Readers. And thanks also to our parish administrator, Shea McNutt, for handling the scheduling. We welcome any parishioners interested in joining this ministry. Contact Martha Rummel if interested.

Flower Guild

The Flower Guild had a year to remember in 2023. In addition to Sunday arrangements, there were several major celebrations which also called for adorning the church: The Rector's Installation in March, the 125th Anniversary Celebration in May, and in July, the Rector's wedding. It was a wonderful year for us to highlight our guild and display our talents for the parish.

With help from an Endowment Grant and a design plan from Leify Smith, we were able to redo our work space entirely. We were very blessed to have several of our Epiphany craftsmen to help with not only the heavy lifting but also the finer details of this project; Bill Graves, John Yntema, Matthew May and Paul Bonner. We are still working to complete the project but are hopeful it will be completed, with a celebration will follow.



Our funds come from your donations for the flowers in memory or celebration of loved ones on Sundays and also Easter and Christmas. You can sign up online for a particular Sunday and there is also a space to let us know what flowers you would like in the arrangements.

More hands are always welcome, so if you are interested in working with us to highlight the beauty of our church, contact Polly Nodine.

Ushers

The Ushers were once again doing what we do best: greeting our wonderful Epiphany parishioners, handing out bulletins, collecting the offering and directing parishioners to the communion table.

2023 saw the retirement of Usher Co-Chair John Keys. John served as an Usher at Epiphany for 47 years! We are grateful for John's service to the Ushers and to the Church of the Epiphany.



We welcomed three new members, and four new members started serving in 2024, but we would love to have more people join our team! If you have any interest in joining us as an usher, please contact Jarrod Moody. Ushers are individuals, couples, or families.

Vergers

The verger group is a team of seven that assists the clergy with the organization and details of Sunday morning services, funerals and special occasions in the church. Richard Messner retired at the end of the year, after serving for 20 years. Many thanks to him and all the committed group for all they do to carry out their responsibilities and ensure our services run smoothly. If anyone has an interest in being part of the verger group, please contact Susan Messner.

MUSIC & LITURGY

Julie Ryder, Organist & Choirmaster

Music at Church of the Epiphany continues to flourish with choirs, ensembles, and supporters that enrich our worship life each week. Our 1997 Bedient organ received its 25 year “check-up” which included the addition of tuning slides and the replacement of leather and other parts that wear-out over time. In addition to voices, handbells, organ, and piano in worship, we also enjoyed guest musicians from our parish and beyond including Tracey Laird, Riley Davis, Judith Cox, Catherine Allain, and a stunning string quartet on Christmas Eve.

Epiphany Choir

Members of the Epiphany Choir provided beautiful and meaningful music during our 2023 Sunday liturgies, feasts and holy days. We began the year with another wonderful Feast of the Epiphany service and pageant, Then we were so happy to celebrate the installation of Amy Dills-Moore as our new Rector three days before a busy Holy Week that included Palm Sunday, Tenebrae, Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday. The Hildegard Ensemble (an ensemble of treble voices from the Epiphany Choir) sang for the Easter Vigil. After Easter, another special occasion for music was the celebration of Epiphany’s 125th anniversary. Throughout the summer, many members of the choir continued to sing on Sundays as part of the Epiphany Summer Choir, joined by others in our midst. We were honored to sing for the marriage of Amy Dills and Brian Wright in July and we celebrated the life of former choir member Maggi Ewing in August. The Feast of All Souls Evensong service featured beautiful canticle settings and the chanting of all the names of the dearly departed that members and friends contributed. Advent Lessons & Carols and Christmas Eve with strings and organ rounded out a very fulfilling year of singing.



Children’s and Youth Choirs

The Junior Choir and Beginning Choristers sang for the rector installation service, Palm Sunday, and Youth Sunday in the spring and resumed rehearsals in September in order to prepare for Advent and Christmas Eve singing. Fifteen children and their family members gather on Tuesdays for practice and a community service project coordinated by Emily Elder. A Family Eucharist, in which the children lead most of the liturgy, is now being held monthly and choristers often sing briefly during these services.

Epiphany Ringers

The Epiphany Ringers had a great year of ringing that included the rector installation service, Easter, Epiphany’s 125th anniversary, Advent Lessons & Carols, and Christmas Eve.



The Bach/Biber Project

Violinist Judith Cox and organist Julie Ryder began the Bach/Biber Project in October, a series of six presentations over the course of three years. During this three-year journey, we are exploring the profoundly spiritual music of two well-known composers, Johann Sebastian Bach and Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber, whose gifts continue to resonate across the centuries. These offerings consist of performances of Bach’s solo violin works, Biber’s Rosary Sonatas (based around the Joyful, Sorrowful, and Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary), readings, poetry and meditation. The next presentation will take place on Sunday, February 11 at 5:00 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP

Liefy Smith, Vestry Liaison and Chair

In our call to continue to sustain **Invite | Welcome | Connect** in our parish, our committee goal of maintaining the established areas of focus continued in 2023.

Membership's Greeter program increased the total number of adult greeters to seven and this year we added two child greeters who are scheduled with another adult greeter. We greeted new faces almost every Sunday. In addition to the welcome, we gifted newcomers with welcome bags, we offered name tags, showed them the nursery if needed, and offered a brochure "Introduction to the Episcopal Church" if we discover they are from another tradition.

The Membership Committee followed up with each new pew card with a friendly email simultaneously with visitor contact by clergy or staff.

We hosted two well attended Newcomer Gatherings in the Spring and Fall. (17 invitations were sent for the Fall event and 11 attended).

The Connection program is a part of Membership/ Newcomers. There are seven parishioners who served as "Connectors" and help newcomers meet more parishioners and find their place in our parish. Our goal is to work on growing the Connection program going forward in 2024.

When newcomers become official members by transferring their membership or initiating an annual pledge, committee members acknowledged that by delivering a "New Member" gift bag with welcome letters and an Epiphany coffee mug.

New Member stories were added to the Bulletin Board in the Crossing Hall by our parish administrator, Shea McNutt.

Epiphany had many visitors in 2023. Of them, 31 have returned and become more involved. Seven of them then made it official and transferred their membership to officially be on our roles.

We welcome parishioners to become involved in the Membership Ministry. For more information, please contact Liefy Smith.

Membership Committee: Marion Curry, Tom Democko, Paul Hinson, Page Love Smith (who will be co-chair in 2024), Susan Messner, Liefy Smith, and Annie Strahan.

Connectors: Kaylie Gibbs, Paul Hinson, Laura Keys, Susan Moody, Annie Strahan, Pam Tipton, Sherry Wallace

Greeter Guild: Marion Curry, Tom Democko, Paul Hinson, Page Love Smith, Susan Messner, Sharon O'Flaherty, Liefy Smith, Suzanne Yoder, Annie Strahan, and child greeters: Jonas Tobin and Eloise Wierwille.

Membership By Numbers

Active Members	483	Baptisms	8
Others Active	326	Confirmations	7
Total	803	Receptions	2
		Marriage	1
Households	356	Deaths	3
Children	110	Transfers In	11
		Transfers Out	8

ADULT FORMATION

Peter Dodge, Vestry Liaison & Paul Hinson, Chair

The Adult Formation Committee meets intermittently and serve in an advisory capacity to the clergy who largely lead and direct adult formation and respond/encourage individual interests among members who might want to teach or lead formation. Over the course of the year, Paul Hinson, and our clergy also reached out to several long-term members to research what resources among our parishioners the Adult Formation program might be overlooking with regard to talents and interests.

In addition to continuing to support individual interests in faith formation and lay leadership of classes, several new initiatives were identified. These were (1) drawing upon on-line educational resources made available and accessible through the Diocese of Atlanta; (2) identifying and inviting presentations by guest speakers from the Foundry program of the Candler School of Theology at Emory University; and (3) doing some programming using representatives of our parish's community partners.

Sunday Formation series began with Love one Another: Jesus, St. Francis & Earth Care (Carol Bartlett and Marion Curry), Contemplative Prayer and the Joyful Season of Lent: An Afternoon for Reflection and Soul-Nurture (an afternoon retreat organized by Ann Fowler and featuring author Carl McColman), Reimagining Lent (The Rev. Bobbi Patterson) and Second Sunday Contemplative Practice (ongoing presented monthly with leadership from Amy, Bobbi Patterson and others).

After our usual summer recess, additional presentations were offered beginning in the Fall, including: *Season Of Creation* (poetry, drawings, and music led by volunteer guest practitioner/instructors), *Expedient Ethics* (Dr. Nicole Symmonds, Columbia Theological Seminary), *Bioethics Of Food* (Rabbi Dr. Jacob Craine, Emory University), *Reducing Human Impact On The Earth* (Dr. Dabney Dixon, Georgia State University), *Why Studying The Bible Matters* (Dr. Elizabeth Arnold, Emory University/Candler Foundry), *Autumn Gospels: Women in the Second Half of Life* (Lalor Cadley), *Advent Mary* (Lalor Cadley), *Rediscovering Mary Magdalene* (The Rev. Amy Dills-Wright, continuing).

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

Emily Elder, Dir. of Children & Youth Ministries

In 2023 Epiphany's Children's Ministry focused on building community and curiosity about faith through consistent formation offerings and special, one-time events. In the spring and the fall, a combination of staff and wonderful volunteers made it possible to offer Children's Chapel every Sunday, and two Sunday morning formation classes each week: Godly Play (for 3 years to 2nd grade) and "Surveyors of Scripture" (for 3rd through 5th graders). We also continued children's choirs, service projects, and monthly Family Eucharist services, all of which helped build relationships among our youngest Epiphany members and their families. Other special events included the Epiphany pageant, our annual Easter Egg Hunt, occasional potlucks for young families, and a new acolyte training in October.

Also notable was the return of Vacation Bible School (VBS) in June of 2023. Epiphany collaborated with St. Bart's and Holy Trinity to put on a week-long VBS for 19 children. It included songs, Bible stories, games, services projects, and arts & crafts time. It was a wonderful experience that strengthened our community here at Epiphany, as well as our sense of being connected to other Episcopal churches in the diocese.



If you would like to serve with the Children's Ministry at Epiphany, please reach out to Emily Elder.

YOUTH MINISTRIES

Emily Elder, Director of Children & Youth Ministries

Epiphany's Youth Ministry started 2023 with a confirmation retreat, which kicked off an eight-week confirmation curriculum for eight of our youth, with six eventually deciding to be confirmed at the Cathedral in March. At the same time, we continued to host Youth Group, our weekly Sunday evening gathering where youth come to build relationships and explore their faith. Some other notable youth groups from the spring include a progressive dinner, soap-making, and a car wash.



During the summer of 2023, we enjoyed participating in an Interfaith Youth Table Tennis Tournament, a Lake Day hosted by some generous Epiphany parishioners, and, of course, our annual youth pilgrimage. This year's pilgrimage focused on rest, and we journeyed to the Tallapoosa River in Alabama. We played, swam, prayed the daily office, discussed sabbath, and marveled at God's creation.

In the fall, we continued to meet weekly for youth group, discussing relevant topics such as social media, bullying, mental health, and racial and LGBTQ+ justice through a theological lens. We continued to partner with Holy Trinity Parish and their youth at least once a month.

If you would like to serve with the Youth Ministry at Epiphany, please reach out to Emily Elder.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Susan Ashmore, Vestry Liaison

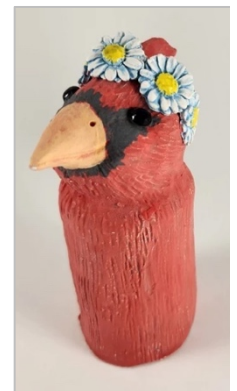
The Community Engagement activities for 2023 at Epiphany have been meaningful for those being served and for those who serve. Here is an overview of the activities of the various ministries for 2023:

Art Ministry

The Art Ministry is a quiet but profitable activity at Epiphany 20 years strong and a vital part of Community Engagement. We invite local artists to exhibit their work for a month's time. Artists create—and by their work, add a happy vitality to our parishioners' experience. Epiphany benefits by earning 25% of all sales used for various purposes.

In early 2023 epiphanite Maggi Ewing exhibited and sold her delicate watercolors. We lost Maggi as a long-time parishioner this year and will miss her inspired work! Our popular milliner, Angela Kang, re-visited us to sell her unique fascinators. The Lexicon of Human Dignity and Sustainability boards were exhibited in the Spring and early Fall. Kathy Conkell, a creator of jewelry and hand-made purses exhibited in April. Karen Fincannon brought her whimsical figures and ceramic art in October and finally, Emily Yellow exhibited her bohemian bags and totes in late November -December.

The proceeds from the art sales in 2023 provided two new lamps for room 202. The Art Ministry is also working on new reception chairs for the office. This will be funded by our current balance of \$3000+/- . We would like to thank the Parish for the generous support in purchasing the wonderful art objects! If you would like to join our ministry or nominate an artist for an exhibit, please contact Liefy Smith or the new Art Ministry co- Chair, Page Love Smith.

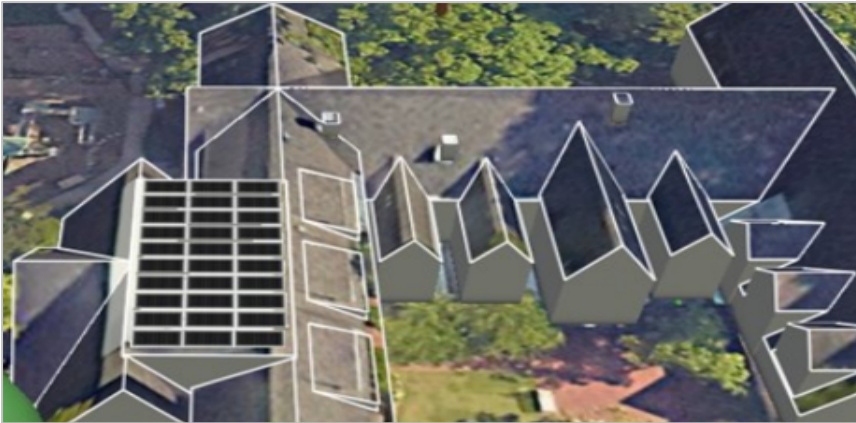


Decatur-area Emergency Assistance Ministry (DEAM)

Epiphany joins with other faith communities in contributing financial and volunteer support and food donations to help DEAM provide short-term assistance in Decatur and surrounding areas. In 2023 DEAM distributed nearly 125,000 pounds of food to 717 households and individuals, including many unhoused, during 5,865 separate pantry visits and provided over \$140,000 to help with utility bills and prescriptions. The need continues to be great. To help with this ministry contact Doug Runion.

Earth Guild

The Earth Guild, working with Building and Grounds, held four work days on the property, maintained the composter, adding compost to the blueberry bushes and other plants. We are thinking about plantings in the Meadow. There is planning work for a solar installation on the roof. We sponsored an Adult Formation Class. We are thinking ahead and doing research when the need for a new water heater arises. And we took a couple of hikes, enjoying each other's company and the beautiful outdoors. To help with this ministry contact Carol Bartlett.



Haiti Partnership

In 2023, Amy encouraged us to reengage with Reverend Kesner Ajax, the retired Episcopal priest who has been our long-term partner in Haiti. He leads a scout troop, boys and girls, of over 300 and this year Epiphany provided financial support to the troop. Because of the political situation in Haiti, many members of his troop and their families now find themselves without enough food. Several times during 2023, Epiphany provided funds to the scout troop, Groupe La Renaissance Scout Anglican d'Haiti, so that scouts had a hot meal during their weekly meetings.

This year, Epiphany also supported a project whereby the Scout troop purchases motorcycles that are entrusted to Scout parents. The motorcycles are used by parents as taxis, thus generating income for the family. Each week parents pay a portion of the cost of their motorcycles to the Scout troop. At the end of 12 months the parents own the motorcycles. The cost of each motorcycle is \$1,000. To date, 4 families have participated in the program and now own their motorcycles. Currently several families are on a waiting list for motorcycles. As the motorcycle project grows, more children will be fed and more parents will be helped with school expenses. To help with this ministry, please contact Kim Finnegan.

Feeding Ministry

The Feeding Ministry prepares and delivers a meal to Gateway's Evolution Center on the second Friday of each month. The menu is pasta with meat sauce, salad, bread, ice tea and dessert. This meal is prepared from scratch with high quality ingredients which accounts for the many compliments we receive.

- We prepared and served 12 meals during 2023, serving 80-100 men each visit.
- In December we delivered 100 Christmas gift bags along with the meal. Each bag included a Christmas card with a hand written note, socks, a winter knit cap, a deck of playing cards, lip balm and other toiletries.
- Epiphany volunteers each month average around 14 for the different tasks—shopping, prepping food, cooking and serving.

To help with this ministry, please contact Anne Kerner or Sally Walker.

Holy Comforter

Holy Comforter dinner ministry on Wednesday nights was revived after a COVID hiatus. We cooked and served dinner to about 35 people on October 18 of last year. It was great to be back and to see familiar faces and meet new people. We prepared much more food than was needed. However, there was a woman who feeds homeless people who was very grateful to receive our excess. It was divided up and frozen for future use. Our plan is to take dinner once a quarter. The first date for this year is March 13. Sign Up Genius is used for picking dates. There is an option to take Sunday lunch which we may want to consider, perhaps in the summer. To help with this ministry contact Jeanette Hanson.

Racial Justice Group

At the October Community Engagement Fair ERJG table, ten people signed up for information as the group reformed. November and December meetings discussed 2024 direction and possible activities. Planning focused on racism education, faith formation for anti-racist personal and communal change, and action seeking solidarity with BIPOC people toward a more just and equitable world through relationships and partnerships. To help with this ministry, please contact Suzanne Yoder.

Refugee Ministry

A small but dedicated team continues to work closely with the Ebrahim Khil family from Afghanistan. We have been privileged to walk with them through medical and health insurance issues, school transitions, benefits snafus, and many more life situations. The family felt increasingly unsafe in the apartment they had originally been assigned by the resettlement agency, but last July we were able to find a reduced-rate apartment for them in the City of Decatur. The three children are acclimating to Decatur schools and their parents are thrilled to feel they are part of a safe and caring community. The next big need is a better paying job for the father who is working to improve his English. We welcome your participation and any job ideas or leads! To help with this ministry, please contact Ellyn Bryan and Erin Braden.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

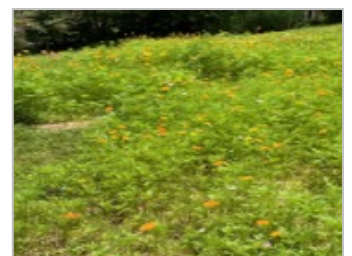
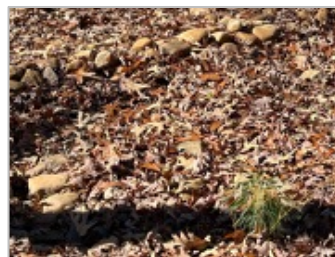
Matthew May, Vestry Liaison

Our grounds never seem to lack opportunities for volunteers to have projects. We did a lot of “boring” stuff from HVAC, plumbing, roofing, water damage, and sewage, to taking out the garbage and recycling every week and replacing light bulbs and air filters.

However, a lot of new exciting projects happened this year as well: a renovated courtyard and new fence, a Gaga Ball court for the youth on par with the one they use at Camp Mikell, better erosion control with 2 tons of rock, and new wildflowers (before and after), a renovated Flower Guild room, and a completed phase one evaluation of what solar power at Epiphany might look like.

Thanks to those who help contribute to our building and grounds in so many ways.

Our quarterly work days continue to be a shining example of our community getting together to do the little things and a great way for many of us to give back a little to maintain the space and leave our mark at Epiphany. Mark your calendars and come join us March 23.



Memorial Garden Guild

The Memorial Garden Guild continued its routine tasks during 2023, i.e., maintenance of the Garden and funeral assistance, as needed. Sadly, we assisted in the interment of several parishioners or former parishioners during 2023.

The Guild enjoyed the continued participation of the Buildings & Grounds committee and volunteer parishioners during this year. New members are always welcome.

Special thanks are in order to Sabra Hanson. Sabra was a member of the group that redesigned the Memorial Garden some years ago, and was instrumental in the selection, planting, and maintenance of the plants. She has continued this important work, and can be seen, almost any time, putting in new plants and nurturing the old. Many thanks for this vital, but often unrecognized, work!

PASTORAL CARE

David Draper, Committee Chair

The primary task of the Pastoral Care Committee is to work with and support the pastoral ministry of the clergy by reaching out to parishioners with cards, prayers, visits, and other appropriate assistance. Members of the 2023 Pastoral Care Committee included Chair David Draper, Vestry Liaison Lisa Daily, Cecilia Democko, Tom Democko, Jarrod Moody, Susan Moody, Nancy Thompson, and Sherry Wallace.

Grief Group

The Grief Group met monthly throughout the year. We now have 16 people attending, as well as the two facilitators. Participants' losses include spouses, children, parents, siblings, and close friends. Four participants live in states other than Georgia. We held our second Longest Night Service, in person and streamed, on December 21. Participants in the service included 12 members of the Grief Group as well as other members and friends of the parish and at least one community member.

Community of Hope/Circle of Care

Barbara Belcore, Jessica Burns, Lisa Daily, David Draper, Ann Fowler, Laura Gary, Lisa Gray, Paul Hinson, Chris Miller, and Annie Strahan are trained lay chaplains who gather monthly to learn, pray, and reflect on spiritual responses to pastoral situations. Jessica, David, Laura, Ann, and Lisa Daily form the leadership team.

2023 Highlights:

- Conducted 189 pastoral visits, 52 Eucharistic visits, 117 pastoral phone calls, 33 pastoral conversations at church/new member encounters; served 20 times at the healing rail; wrote 198 pastoral cards, texts, and emails; had 7 community outreach pastoral talks; provided 15 rides to church or healthcare facilities for people in need.
- Hosted *Contemplative Prayer and the Joyful Season of Lent*, an afternoon for reflection with Carl McColman.
- Learned pastoral visit debriefing techniques from the Rev. Carmie McDonald and the Rev. Raymond Walker III.
- Hosted dinner after the All Souls' service.
- Along with the pastoral care committee and the grief group, assisted in The Longest Night service for people who experienced sadness or loss during the holiday season.



PARISH LIFE

Polly Nodine, Committee Chair

Parish Life had a very busy year starting with the Epiphany Feast, hosting a Tex-Mex potluck after the pageant. In February, we helped the Youth with the Pancake supper by decorating the tables and bringing King Cake. Then in March, we had the honor of hosting a dinner for the Installation of our Rector. It was a wonderful time to share in the joy of the parish.

Next up was the Agápe Supper which again Joel Fowler and crew cooked the marvelous fish for the event. This is a favorite event of our year and the Parish Hall was full. For the Easter season, we provided drinks and eats for the Easter Vigil and that was followed by the Easter Breakfast after the early service.

May was a time for celebrating our 125th anniversary and we hosted a Parish Picnic, serving tenderloin and other offerings with the parish providing the sides. It was a time to highlight our parish's history and many stories were shared at this event.

We started the Summer Breakfast series by hosting a reception to welcome our new Associate Rector. We were delighted to be a part of this event.

And we were honored to help with Amy's wedding in July and hosted a reception after the ceremony with a Southern theme of cheese straws and mints. However, the wedding cake provided by the couple, was the star of the day.

"Welcome Back" was in August which was a time to kick off the church's calendar year. Parish Life was on hand to offer a fried chicken luncheon after the service. Our next event was Oktoberfest—a time for brats and good cheer held in our courtyard on a Saturday evening. Parish Life then helped with the Ministry Fair, always a good opportunity to glean new recruits!

Our Christmas events started with the display a selection of our nativities collection. In December, we also hosted a reception after the Lessons and Carols service.

Throughout the year, Parish Life also sponsored Chez Epiphany, which are cooking classes open to the parish and others and this was presented by our chef extraordinaire, Joel Fowler. We are lucky to have such cooking prowess in our parish.

Our Vestry Liaison, Judy Jarady, was a big help to us throughout the year and we welcomed one new member to the crew. We are always in need of more hands so please consider joining this committee for a way to serve and glorify our parish. Let Polly Nodine know of your which to join.



PARISH GROUPS

Men's Breakfast Group

The Men's Breakfast Group meets for a short worship service at 7:00 a.m. each Tuesday in the nave. The usual service is morning prayer, which the men take turns leading. Holy Eucharist is celebrated on 1st Tuesdays. Following the service, we have a simple breakfast which the men take turns bringing. Along with eating, they have a wide-ranging supportive conversation. They talk about religion (of course), but also football, baseball, politics, the environment, current events, what's going on in their lives, the taste of the Danish that we are eating, and anything else you can think of and things you can't think of. If you are interested in joining the group, contact John Yntema.

Episcopal Young Adults

Epiphany Young Adults (ages approximately 20 to approximately 40) met almost every month in 2023. Activities have usually included a pot luck dinner and games and conversation in the parish hall followed by compline in the nave. Attendance has been between four and then. In 2024, we plan to participate more in parish life and service activities such as the feeding ministry, helping with cleanups in parks, landscaping on the church grounds, and other opportunities.



Epiphany Book Group

The Epiphany Book group meets 2nd Mondays except July and August. We meet in person or on Zoom, depending on the month. Our meeting in December is a multi-task meeting—we all bring appetizers and desserts; enjoy each others company; and choose all the books for the following year. We try to do a good mix of fiction and non-fiction and also try to include a “classic.” For 2024 (we have defined “classic” to mean published about 70+ years ago. Contact Linda Ryder-Wolf if you would like to join.

Church Women (ECW)

The ECW holds many events for the parish and for the community throughout the year. Contact Robin Hairston if you would like to be a part of this amazing group of women.

For our parish, the ECW:

- Sent cards every month to parishioners unable to attend Epiphany services.
- Hosted a spring lunch for the women of Epiphany.
- Stuffed Easter eggs for the annual Easter Egg Hunt.
- Provided the punch for Amy's wedding.
- Hosted the reception after the funeral service for Maggi Ewing, a longtime member of ECW.

For communities—both local and abroad we:

- Held a non-food item pantry drive twice a year in order to collect personal items for the Emmaus House pantry that are not covered by food stamps. In March, we collected diapers and adult underwear; in October, we collected laundry detergent and bar soap.
- Donated a \$1,000 to a Ukrainian relief fund.
- Held our Annual Bake Sale in December with homemade baked goods and handmade crafts added. The money we make from this sale helps to fund our outreach projects.
- Hosted our annual Holiday lunch for the Emmaus House Seniors. Ann and Joel Fowler gave a presentation on the birth of Jesus that was enjoyed by all. Julie Ryder entertained all with Christmas music during lunch. A small gift was given to each senior and most took home the food leftovers.

STEWARDSHIP

Pam Tipton, Chair

We are Many Voices, One Story. Living out this story through our worship, ministries and service requires annual funding—and when the spirit calls, we respond!

The Parish has once again shown its commitment to our mission and values. **Our Stewardship goal of \$640,000 was exceeded by \$14,370!** While there are always unanticipated expenses that arise, your commitment to our parish enables our many ministries and importantly, a fair wage increase for our amazing, devoted staff. Thank you!

In our 125th Anniversary year, our Stewardship campaign focused on our theme of **Many Voices, One Story**. Your Stewardship Ministry team-initiated planning by starting with our intentions—words we wanted you to experience during the campaign—words like: genuine, authentic, joyful, approachable, spiritual, warm, uplifting, sustainable, heartfelt.

During worship on kick-off Sunday, we highlighted the thirty-eight (yes 38!) ministries that are alive and well at Epiphany with a ‘pop-up’ skit. We celebrated the many forms of worship, outreach and care ministries at our campaign kick-off ministry fair, complete with treats and games. Throughout the campaign, we heard inspiring stories from parishioners Laura Keys, Ann Fowler, Callie Finnegan and Henry Van Ness, Cliff Edge, and Carol Bartlett. A festive celebration called many to a common table and clearly inspired us to fulfil our budgetary goal.

May God richly bless your voice, your hands, your heart, your mind, and your gifts as part of our **one story**.



FINANCES

Phillip Anderson, Chair

Good news on Epiphany’s financial front. Preliminary figures for 2023 show that we ended the year with a surplus of \$81,582 based on Total Revenues of \$753,803 and Total Expenses of \$672,221. We had ended 2022 with a deficit of <\$9,891> and had projected a deficit of <\$5911> for 2023. 77% of our 2023 surplus is due to more than expected revenue received and 23% is due to expenses being less than expected. This is the best outcome in recent years and a wonderful reflection of our Parish members’ generosity.

The Finance Committee will be making recommendations to Vestry as to how the surplus should be treated, in light of 1) ongoing inflationary pressures affecting all our expenses, 2) known upcoming expenses, 3) trying to build reserves for short term unexpected expenses and long-term knowable expenses, and 4) maintaining a reasonable cash position (which in recent years had fallen to uncomfortable levels).

We meet monthly to review reports, monitor income and expenses, and make budgetary and financial recommendations for Vestry consideration. We are ably assisted by Susie Boyko, our bookkeeper. Richard Messner, after many years of service, retired from the committee.

In 2023, Epiphany commissioned a full financial audit for the year 2022, as required by the Diocese for Parishes with our income level. This audit found no significant deficiencies in our financial records and practices. Epiphany’s only outstanding debt is a mortgage of \$127,000 with the Diocese at a very favorable interest rate. This reflects a significant reduction in our total mortgage debt which was \$495,000 as recently as 2018. Bert Bender has been working diligently on Epiphany’s 2024 Budget, an endeavor that’s part art, part science, part alchemy, and part doggedness.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITY

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2022 Actual
Revenues			
Contributions—Pledge	\$604,478	640,793	\$537,118
Contributions—Non-Pledge	30,000	64,320	35,446
Other Income	37,500	33,416	38,843
Restricted Funds Released	0	174	0
Capital Campaign Funds Released	15,099	15,100	13,812
Total Revenues	\$687,077	\$753,803	\$625,219
Expenses			
Staff & General			
Clergy Salary & Benefits	\$220,656	\$185,116	\$195,129
Clergy Discretionary	6,400	8,344	3,747
Lay Staff Salary & Benefits	\$255,792	\$277,187	\$204,094
Lay Staff Other	400	455	566
Office & Administration	\$43,175	\$146,019	\$47,955
Total Staff & General	\$496,423	\$467,121	\$451,491
Diocesan Pledge	\$62,888	\$62,888	\$56,220
Mortgage Payments	15,099	15,100	13,812
Buildings & Grounds	79,878	92,816	75,252
Adult Education	1,000	512	941
Children & Youth	11,800	10,127	9,891
Music & Liturgy	3,500	3,646	3,894
Outreach	14,950	14,233	13,025
Parish Life	7,150	5,540	10,073
Stewardship	300	238	511
Total Expenses	\$692,988	\$672,221	635,110
Surplus or <Deficit>	\$<5,911>	\$ 81,582	\$<9,891>

ENDOWMENT

Kaylie Gibbs, Vestry Liaison and Jessica Boatright, Committee Chair

The Epiphany Endowment Fund was established in 2000 with the hopes of providing a more secure future for the parish. The purpose of the Fund is to enhance the mission of the church apart from the general operation of the parish. It has been established so that the principal is not touched, but a percentage from earnings can be distributed for particular purposes.

The Endowment Fund may distribute grants for the following areas:

- A. Capital improvements, debt reduction, or the building program of the Church of the Epiphany, Inc.
- B. Scholarships or grants to members of the Church of the Epiphany, Inc. for the purpose of attending college, seminary, nursing or medical school; for church-related camping or leadership conferences; or such other training which enables members of this congregation to grow in Christian faith and service to God's people.
- C. Outreach into the community including, but not limited to, grants to Episcopal

colleges and seminaries, social service agencies, institutions and agencies to which this parish relates, and to special programs designed for those persons in our area who are in spiritual and/or economic need.

- D. Projects of the Episcopal Church at home and overseas.

The Endowment Board, comprised of Jessica Boatright (chair), Julia Dodge, Jeanette Hanson, Craig McDonald, and Doug Runnion, met twice in the spring to discuss six requests for grants, totaling \$10,756. The committee reviewed the applications and discussed available funding, \$10,173 for the 2023 grant cycle, and distributed the following grants for a total of \$9,461.00.

Flower Guild room renovation	\$4,450
Meadow transformation	\$1,311
Youth urban plunge	\$700
Parish Retreat scholarships for children	\$2,000
Team Libertad	\$1,000
Total Distribution	\$9,461

The Magi Foundation

The Endowment Board hopes to bring attention to the importance of considering the Church in one's future financial planning and, through such awareness, to build Epiphany's Endowment Fund from planned gifts. The Magi Foundation was created in 2002 and its purpose is to thank, recognize, and honor individuals who have made provisions for the Church in their will or by other means of planned gift, such as a life insurance policy or charitable remainder trust, as well as educating parishioners about methods and possibilities for planned giving and the ease and convenience of certain opportunities.

Our plan is that each year in September we will highlight the work of the Endowment Fund, hosting, in alternating years, the Final Affairs Fair and a Wine and Cheese event for members of the Magi Foundation at the home of our Rector. On September 10, 2023, we held the Final Affairs Fair: Older but Wiser, that brought in over 40 attendants. Topics covered included wills & estate planning, funeral planning, ethical wills, home health care, green burial, organ donation, and more. It was a fun and informative event that provided answers to many questions we all have as we grow older...and wiser.



Those of you who have notified us that you have made provisions for the Church's Endowment Fund in your planned giving are members of the Magi Foundation. If you have listed us in your planned giving but have not let us know, we would love to include you in our listing of donors and in our biennial event for Magi Foundation members. The enrollment form can be found at epiphany.org/endowment-fund.

Your gift to the Epiphany Endowment Fund enables us to ensure the strength, continuation, and the potential expansion of our ministries. It is the ultimate demonstration of our stewardship commitment. Your planning now allows you to leave a legacy that enables the ministries of this church to continue into the future.

Magi Foundation Members

Adams, Oz *	Healy, Ruth*	Robish, Greg
Bender, Bert	Hogue, Carol	Robish, Vanessa
Bolton, Phil	Hogue, Lynn	Runnion, Doug
Bolton, Vicki*	Holloway, Elizabeth*	Ryder, Julie
Cartledge, Sam*	Johnson, Doug*	Sill, Nancie*
Cunningham, Alice*	Jones, Claiborne	Page Love Smith
Cushing, Sara	Kerner, Anne	Smith, Karyn
Daily, Lisa	Lawrence, Terri	Swenson, Dale
Democko, Cecilia	Lee, Kay	Swenson, Karen
Democko, Tom	Levine, Robin	Thompson, Nancy
Draper, David	Lloyd, Brenda	Timberlake, Margo
Ford, Mary Betty*	Maclachlan, Bruce	Walton, Betty*
Graves, Bill	Maclachlan, Gretchen	Weaver, Bill*
Graves, Pat	McNutt, L. Shea	Wollison, Sarah Jane*
Hall, Pam	Rabb, Jim	
Hamilton, John	Redfern, Neva*	<i>*deceased</i>

The Harvey Fund

The Catherine D. Harvey Legacy Fund was created to assist with meeting the basic needs of individuals and families and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential for self-sufficiency. Members of the Harvey Fund Board recommended the disbursements listed below which were approved by the ECW members and the Vestry.

Global Village Project	\$4,000
Renaissance Scout Troop, Les Cayes, Haiti	\$4,000
Emmaus House	\$4,000
Refugee Women's Network, Inc.	\$3,000
Gateway Center	\$2,000
Total 2023 Distribution	\$17,000