



# CHRIST AND THE EPIPHANY

VOLUME 24

December 2020

## Upcoming Events

Every Sunday, 9:00 a.m.,  
Sunday Service via Zoom

Thursday, Dec 24, 4:00 p.m.,  
Christmas Eve Service via  
Zoom

Friday, Dec 25, Christmas  
Friday, Jan 1, New Year's Day

## Clergy Schedule

Dec 6, Fr. Andrew Osmun

Dec 13, Fr. Andrew Osmun

Dec 20, Fr. Bob Stocksdale

Dec 24, Fr. Andrew Osmun

Dec 27, Fr. Bob Stocksdale

## Zoom Services

We are holding worship  
services via Zoom on Sundays  
at 9:00 a.m.

To connect by computer click:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7639094733?pwd=WkR1ZHBNYTNIKWmJqM2NvTkRjZ09hdz09>

To join by phone call:  
929-436-2866  
Meeting ID = 763 909 4733  
Password = 39

The weekly bulletins are  
emailed out on Fridays and the  
Zoom room is usually opened  
up around 8:30 a.m. on  
Sunday. Intercessory prayers  
are also emailed weekly.

Past sermons are available on  
the YouTube channel "Christ  
and The Epiphany Church"  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCkGs9WC8ug7syl9n0kHkRaA>.

If you are not receiving the  
bulletin please email or call  
Diane in the office at  
[christandtheepiphany@gmail.com](mailto:christandtheepiphany@gmail.com)  
or 203-467-2310.

If you want or need any help  
getting connected on Zoom  
please reach out to Susan  
Shultz at 860-669-1104 or  
[sbshultz@gmail.com](mailto:sbshultz@gmail.com).

## Event Announcements

In light of the rise in COVID-19  
cases statewide, the Vestry has  
decided to postpone any  
indoor hybrid services. Sunday  
services will continue to be  
held via Zoom.

The Christmas Eve service will  
be held via Zoom at 4:00 p.m.  
on Thursday December 24.  
After the service, from 5:00  
p.m. to 6:30 p.m., Fr. Andrew  
will be at the church and will  
distribute wrapped Communion  
wafers from the driveway to  
anyone who drives through.  
For home delivery please reach  
out to Susan Shultz.

We will have a few large  
poinsettias from the altar that  
we would like to be "adopted"  
after the Christmas service.  
Please let Diane in the office  
know if you are interested.

If you are interested in grave  
pillows or Christmas wreaths  
Wendy has graciously offered  
to put some together. She can

be reached via email at  
[wendy.p.bellmore@snet.net](mailto:wendy.p.bellmore@snet.net).

The Annual Meeting will be  
held Sunday, Jan 24, 2021 via  
Zoom at 10:00 a.m.

## Thrift Store Update

We are looking to use the  
Thrift Store to sell some items  
that we normally would have  
sold at the Christmas Fair.

For example, Audrey has  
dropped off a number of  
homemade Christmas  
ornaments which have been  
set out. Other hand craft items  
will be greatly appreciated.

Additionally we are hoping to  
sell small amounts of baked  
goods throughout December.  
(We sold all four of Audrey's  
pumpkin breads in one day!)  
To avoid having too many  
items at a time, we ask that  
you reach out to Susan Shultz  
to pick a specific week.

Both hand crafts and baked  
goods can be dropped off at  
the Thrift Store (Tuesday 9:00  
a.m. - 11:00 a.m. and Saturday  
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.) Or  
someone can come by and pick  
them up from your house.

To schedule a pick up or sign  
up for a "baked goods week"  
please email Susan Shultz at  
[sbshultz@gmail.com](mailto:sbshultz@gmail.com) or call  
860-669-1104.

## Christmas Ponderings

Barbara Parsons

Another Christmas holiday is quickly approaching; but one like no other. As with our Thanksgiving holiday that just passed, difficult decisions have to be made for our safety in our celebration. But one thing is changeless. The never-ending, unconditional, love and presence of God.

I heard a teaching recently by Rick Warren called "When our plan doesn't match God's plan". I hope some of his thoughts bring comfort in these trying times.

- \* Choose faith over fear.
  - \* Don't panic, pray.
  - \* Always trust God is in control.
  - \* Be patient - this is not the end of the story.
  - \* Look for lessons to be learned.
  - \* Look for things to be grateful for.
  - \* Let's remember, as Christians, the true meaning of Christmas and the mystery of our faith.
  - \* Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.
  - \* Come into our hearts anew, Lord Jesus
- AMEN

## November Vestry Summary

**Next Meeting** - The next Vestry meeting will be Sunday, December 20th via Zoom after the 9:00 a.m. service.

**Worship** - "Hybrid" services have been postponed. Fr. Andrew Osmun has offered to lead Thanksgiving Evening Prayer and Christmas Communion with wafer distribution in the parking lot afterwards. Fr. Bob Stocksdale will be unavailable in 2021 so we will likely only have priests two weeks each month.

**Building & Grounds** - Self-help groups have posted no smoking signs on church property and are limiting their number of attendees per room. Wendy is working with the Food Pantry on logistics for distributing food during the winter months.

**Treasurer Report** - The 2019 audit has been sent to ECCT and we are now back in good standing with the Diocese. The 2021 draft budget will be reviewed at the December Vestry meeting.

**Vestry Membership** - We are still looking to finalize Senior Warden and Clerk positions for 2021 as well as one open Vestry member "at-large" position. If you are interested in serving please see Barbara Parsons at 203-640-1368 or [mannybarb1@gmail.com](mailto:mannybarb1@gmail.com).



December 1 - Conor Reynolds  
December 15 - Gail Beck  
December 16 - Astrid Swanson  
December 20 - Susan Shultz  
December 25 - Joan Shaffner

## Gift Baskets

Check out our gift baskets on ebay!

<https://www.ebay.com/usr/dwvillano?trksid=p2047675.l2559>

There are baskets for crafters, pets, movies, spa, winter warm-ups, jewelry, games, picnics and more are coming!



## Encouraging Words

Charlie Langlan

### Assurance

Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus. *1 Timothy 3:13*

### Blessings

Blessed us the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. *Jeremiah 17:7*

### Prayer

Jesus said: "Everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened."

*Matthew 7:8*

During this global pandemic and crazy experience, we need to remember that the Lord is always there to guide us and to lead us in the direction of positivity and safety. I wish everyone a safe, happy, and warm Christmas season! May the Lord be with us all!

## A Christmas Like No Other

Tony Lamberti

A few days ago I found a wonderful black and white movie on a vintage VHS tape. This buried treasure was "Come to the Stable" starring Loretta Young and Celeste Holmes. The story is about the true meaning of Christmas.

What is that? In today's society it is often about the meaningless number of toys and electronics that most of us buy and struggle to pay for just to please our children and grandchildren. When next

Christmas comes around we are still paying for those so called "Must Have Toys" sitting in a toy box or under a bed gathering dust.

Gathering family and friends around the table (virtually) in this time of pain and suffering is critical for the mental health of so many of us. Just a simple plate of homemade cookies or a thoughtful and meaningful gift of "KINDNESS" is just what we all need.

In my eyes that is the meaning of Christmas. Celebrating the birth of Christ. Keeping it simple and true to the faith is the true Christmas Message.

Here are a few recordings I recommend for this holiday season - Handel's Dublin Edition of the *Messiah*; Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*; a new release of *Harmonia Mundi* with Renee Jacobs, and lastly a recording of the *Propers and Gregorian Chants*.

Sit back and enjoy all the glorious wonders of the Christmas Season with your family and friends!



December 26 - Janice & Ron Blevins

## Pastor's Proverb

A Bible in the hand is worth two on the bookshelf.

## Intercessory Prayers

Andrew, Barbara R., Brandon, Barbuschak Family, Carol Ude, Carol C., Clearwater Family, David, David C., David & Edward, Devin K., Diane, Diane Link, Dot Tate, Ed, Eileen F., Eleanor N., Faith, Father Eddie, Fran Zella, Frank P., Frank, Fred H., Gale, Geneva, Goodfellow Family, Greg T., Holly and Family, Ian, J.D., Jack K., Jen and Tyler W., Dr. Jeremiah Martin, Jessica and her Baby Olive Estelle, Jim C. Jim R. and Family, Joe Riccitelli, John A., John M., John U., Joseph, Judy DeFeo, Julia, June W., Karen Dattilo & Family, Kathrine Burdick, Katrina R., Ken, Kristina Langlan, Leah S., Lisa, Lisa H., Lois, Lucas Sundwall, Mark Conti, Madeline, Marjorie Cowles, Marty, Matt, Matt R., Melissa D., Michael, Michelle C., Mitzi Parisi, Patty R., Rachael, Ray C., Richard Mead, Ron C., Shawne G., Sallie Alexander, Stan, Turiano Family, Wendy, Zach Schatz

To submit names for the Intercessory Prayers list please call or email the church office. Names will be kept on the list for three months unless longer time is requested.

## Next issue

The deadline for the January issue is **December 22**.

Contributions for the newsletter can be emailed to newsletter.christandtheepiphany@gmail.com. For an update to the Intercessory Prayers, Birthday or Anniversary lists, please call the church office at 203-467-2310.

# O Little Town of Bethlehem

Barbara Coulombe

This beloved Christmas carol is from the pen of one of America’s outstanding preachers of the past century, Phillips Brooks. “O Little Town of Bethlehem” was written in 1868, several years after Brooks had returned from a trip to the Holy Land. The experience of spending Christmas Eve in Bethlehem and worshipping in the Church of the Nativity (thought to be the place of Christ’s birth), made an indelible impression upon the young preacher. Three years later, he was searching for a new carol for his children to sing in their Sunday School Christmas program. The vivid memory of his Holy Land visit inspired Brooks to write the text. He asked his organist, Lewis H. Redner, to compose a simple melody for children to sing. But Redner struggled to find the right tune. On the evening before the program, he suddenly awakened from his sleep and composed the present melody. Redner always insisted that the tune was a gift from heaven. The carol was an immediate favorite with the children, as it has been with children and adults around the world to the present time.

Phillips Brooks graduated from Harvard and the Episcopal Theological Seminary in VA and began a long distinguished career in the ministry. He was appointed Bishop of all Episcopal churches in MA shortly before his untimely death. Though a bachelor, Brooks was especially fond of children. His sudden death was greatly mourned by everyone who knew him. The story is told of a five-year-old girl who was upset because she hadn’t seen her preacher friend for several days. When told by her mother that Bishop Brooks had gone to heaven, the child exclaimed, “Oh, Mama, how happy the angels will be.”

## Treasurer Report

Susan Shultz

	OCT	(UNDER)/OVER BUDGET	YTD	(UNDER)/OVER YTD BUDGET
INCOME	\$7,534.04	\$1,386.54	\$68,830.20	(\$8,404.80)
EXPENSES	\$8,123.74	\$928.04	\$71,302.43	(\$11,476.41)
NET	(\$589.70)	(\$458.50)	(\$2,472.23)	(\$3,071.61)

Notes: Income was up due to some late pledges from last month coming in. Expenses were up due to some pandemic supply purchases.

## Worship Schedule (9:00 a.m. via Zoom)

	<u>December 6</u>	<u>December 13</u>	<u>December 20</u>	<u>December 24 (Christmas Eve)</u>	<u>December 27</u>
Lay Reader	n/a	George Coulombe	n/a	n/a	Barbara Parsons
Lector	Audrey Sundwall	Richard Mead	Ray Clearwater	Pat Walters	Carol Link-Ude
Voice of the People	Pat Walters	Barbara Coulombe	Wendy Bellmore	Diane Villano	Audrey Sundwall

## Parishioner Spotlight - Barbara Parsons

### What brought you to Christ and The Epiphany?

God led me to Christ and the Epiphany at a time when I was searching for a kind of faith different from my Roman Catholic upbringing. My first visit to C&E convinced me that this is where God wanted me to be. That was 45 years ago.

### Tell us about your family

My family consists of two daughters, Rene and Elise, and two grandchildren, Cody and Casey. Cody has lived with me since my husband Brad died five and a half years ago. He takes care of the "man's work" around the house. I am planning to sell my house next Spring. Everybody asks me where I'm going and I tell them "God only knows and He ain't telling" I know that when the time comes, there will be a plan. I've trusted God through many decisions throughout my life. He has always made the BIG ones clear as I know He will with this one. At this time, I do not have any pets. I had to put my precious calico, Kaluha to sleep in January which caused me much sadness. Aren't our pets a special part of our lives?



### What's your favorite pastime?

My favorite pastime during the Spring and Summer is working in my yard and especially my garden. It's very rewarding watching everything grow. I also like to hike, but only on flat ground - no hills! I also enjoy reading books by Max Lucado and Mitch Albom.

### In what ways do you serve your church family or community?

I'm serving as Senior Warden until the end of this year. I've worked in the Thrift Store since it first opened and I'm also on the Altar Guild.

### What was your occupation prior to retirement?

I've worked at a doctor's office in Branford for 26 years, in the Billing Department. I am finally retiring at the end of the year.

### Do you have any favorite psalms, Bible passages, or inspirational sources?

One of my favorite verses is Isaiah 49:15 "See! I will not forget you, I have carved you in the palm of my hand."

## Online *Messiah*

Susan Shultz

To get your seasonal *Messiah* experience, this year I am recommending the Oratorio Society of New York. Their performance will broadcast via livestream at [osny.org](http://osny.org) on Monday December 21, 8:00 p.m. It will also be available on the website after that until January 10<sup>th</sup>.

## Wise Words

Benjamin Franklin

Remember not only to say the right thing in the right place, but far more difficult still, to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment."





## Season of Racial Healing, Justice, and Reconciliation

*“All right, if that’s something you feel you really need to do.”*  
- the Rev. Canon Ed Rodman, to me, in 2008  
at Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge, MA.

In 2014, I was becoming more and more aware that the people whose names and faces I saw on television who had been subjected to violence at the hands of the police (Michael Brown in Ferguson Missouri, Dajerria Beckton in McKinney Texas, Eric Garner in New York City, Walter Scott in North Charleston, South Carolina, Freddie Gray in Baltimore and Tamir Rice - 12 years old, armed with a toy gun - in Cleveland, Ohio) were people who look like me.

This police brutality and murder were hurting my heart in a way I had never known before. My people - Black people - were being targeted and killed by the police. So when my wife Marie told me that there was going to be a Black Lives Matter March in December, and that some of the folks we knew at Union Theological Seminary were organizing a worship service before the march, I knew we had to go.

When we arrived at the chapel at Union for worship, we were given forms to fill out and at the bottom was the phone number of the person who would have our information. We were instructed to write that phone number on the inside of our arm in case we got arrested. That was the moment when things became real to me and I began to get frightened. Marie and I looked at each other, sighed, and grabbed each other’s hands.

When it was time to leave everyone started chanting, “THIS IS WHAT THEOLOGY LOOKS LIKE” as we walked to the subway station. That chant moved me to tears. From my time studying with the Rev. Canon Ed Rodman at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, MA, I knew that this was exactly what theology looks like - protest and non-violent direct action. I knew he would be proud of me, and I knew he would remind me to keep myself safe.

When our group met up with the other marchers on the route, I could see all the helicopters, police, and media. Once again, I felt fear. I held up my sign that read, “I can’t breathe.” This was the plea that Eric Garner repeated 11 times as police had him in a choke hold. I cried when I first chanted: I can’t breathe...one, I can’t breathe... two... all the way to “eleven.”

I walked that day like I had never walked before. I walked with passion and purpose. I walked with my White wife in a march to show the world Black lives matter, that my life matters. I felt connected to the 25,000 people who marched that day and connected to God in this movement for justice.

-- The Rev. April Alford-Harkey, deacon, serves at St. Thomas’, New Haven and works as a chaplain at St. Vincent’s Medical Center.

## **Christ and The Epiphany Church**

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Website: [christandtheepiphany.org](http://christandtheepiphany.org)

### **Worship Schedule**

Sunday 9:00 a.m. Online Zoom Worship

*(Check your email or ask us on facebook for the  
Zoom connection information details.)*