



CHRIST AND THE EPIPHANY

VOLUME 30

January 2026

“Darkness and Light to You are Both Alike” An Epiphany Reflection

The metaphor of light and darkness is pervasive in Holy Scripture and Church tradition, but such imagery reaches its apogee now, on the Feast of the Epiphany. For those of us in the northern hemisphere, this is the day, in the lean light of January, when we often speak of Christ as brightness, as radiance, as the child bathed in starlight—attempting to articulate how an Incarnate God is not simply present among us, but revealed to us, just as the day is revealed by its dawning.



“Arise, shine; for your light has come,” declares Isaiah; it is an invitation to wake from sleep, to gather in the holy places, to pay homage to the one true Gift: God’s desire to know and be known by us. *“We observed his star at its rising,”* the wise men say, and it is a reminder that even the light of inconceivably distant galaxies has been caught up in the narrative of Divine Love made manifest, reaching across the vastness of space to find itself reflected in the eyes of an infant Lord.

Here we find our language’s best attempt at expressing the inexpressible, the experience of which we celebrate today.

Let us be like the wise men in Matthew’s Gospel who are strangers from another land, led through the night by wonder and hope, following the path to Christ fixed in the stars (which, of course, can only be seen in the dark). The Magi are not bound by the political machinations of Herod; they are not beholden to the present order of domination and exploitation. Instead, they are guided by dreams and visions, by the wisdom of hidden roads, by attentiveness to the signs around them. And in their journey they are led to the place of our collective longing: to gaze upon the hidden face of God and to know that it is indeed God gazing back, beyond metaphor, beyond language itself, as pure, Incarnate presence.

How might we, too, encounter God again, if we are courageous enough to think deeply about the language we use to approach Divine Mystery? How might we, too, be guided to travel “by another road,” a road upon which we acknowledge the limits of “light” and “dark” in our recent past and then push beyond them? What new ways might we dream of to depict and express the epiphany that

Worship Services

Every Sunday, 9:00 a.m.,
in-person and via Zoom

**Sunday, Jan 4th - Epiphany
Sunday**

*(Zoom connection information
at the end of newsletter.)*

Events

Annual Parish Meeting,
January 25, following the 9:00
a.m. worship service

God is, and always has been, reaching out from across eternity to abide with us, to heal us, to bring us back to ourselves?

For us, as Episcopalians, this is an instance where our liturgy, our theological process, and God’s mission converge to do a brave new thing. As with any worthwhile journey, this is not one that can be finished quickly, nor can it be done alone. We must listen to one another, and to the voices of others whose lives are quite different from our own. We must be willing to hold ourselves accountable for speaking eternal truth in new and varied ways, knowing that even our most beautiful language is but a foretaste of the beauty that will one day be revealed in its fullness. But until then, it is what we have to offer.

- Rev. Phil Hooper

Christmas Fair Thank You

Thank you to everyone for helping with the Christmas Fair. It was a great success and raised over \$8,200! Truly a wonderful day that wouldn't have been possible without everyone's generous help and participation. It is such a blessing to have so many of us together at these events along with all our "friends of C&E".

Annual Meeting

On January 25th, the parish will meet after the 9:00 a.m. service to conduct its annual business of electing officers and Vestry; reviewing the status of the parish in 2025 and our vision for 2026. This is a very important meeting and we hope that everyone will attend. (Zoom will also be available) Since we are such a small parish family, everyone's thoughts are important. Save the date!

December Vestry Mtg

Next Meeting - The next Vestry meeting will be Sunday, January 11th after the 9:00 a.m. service in the library and via Zoom.

Priest-in-Charge - Diane Levi-Verderame's funeral went well. Hal Levi is in Regency House in Wallingford.

Building & Grounds - A new AA group started meeting here on Tuesday and Wednesday nights (6-7pm). The daytime AA group will be here until at least March before they can get back into the library.

Around the Church

Diane Levi Verderame
funeral - Fr. Charles
& Rev. Moses Aderibole



Christmas Eve flute solo
Marcia Emma Barbiero



Ugly Sweater Sunday



The piano in the choir room is gone. A very nice young couple with a two year old son had it moved out. We didn't ask for money since they paid to move it. The father sent a text with a video of the little boy sitting at the piano. So nice that a young family will now be able to enjoy it.

The Food Pantry had their Christmas party in the Great Hall this year.

Thrift Store -The Thrift Store made over \$1,000 during the Fair.

Outreach - During the fair at Astrid S.' Religious Table a woman eyed a special Bible and walked away saying she couldn't afford it. It turns out this woman was mother to the 12 year old boy in Branford who was killed by a baseball bat by his father. After learning this, Astrid sent her daughter-in-law to find her and give her the Bible she liked. "But that's a \$35 Bible!". "It doesn't matter". We are here to serve people in every way we can especially when we see a need to be filled.

Nominating Committee - The 2026 slate is complete. Isadora Wilkenfeld will run for Clerk. Beverly Yurgiewicz will run for Carol Link-Ude's open Vestry at-large position. Anthony Reckart will run for ECCT Convention Delegate. Existing Vestry members will run for all other open positions.

General -Barbara Parsons announced 2026 will be her last year as Junior Warden. Carol Link-Ude is stepping down as chair of Fundraising.

In Memoriam: Diane Levi Verderame



Diane Levi-Verderame passed away suddenly at her home in Branford on November 27. Diane, or “Di” was the proud and loving mother to her three children, Victoria, Tommy, and Natalia Verderame; and their significant others and spouses, Vinnie Rosarbo, Jamesha Verderame, and Paul Matute.

She was born on July 3, 1960, to Hal Levi and the late Audrey Cavanaugh Levi. From an early age, her birthday became the symbol of her personality—she was a firework and the life of the party!

Oftentimes, Diane could be found at the center of the dance floor, pulling all sorts of things out of her bag of tricks—from whistles and boas to tambourines and hats. Wherever she went, a party was sure to follow, and she loved nothing more than bringing a laugh and a smile to her friends and loved ones, especially her three children.

Upon graduation from Branford High School in 1978, she had a successful career in retail. While running her own store on West Main Street in Branford, *Lady Di*, a lingerie store, she realized her true passion, which led to a 20-year career in the wedding and formal wear business. From there, she shifted into event planning before her eventual retirement.

In retirement, Diane fully devoted herself to the care-taking of her beloved father. They were a dynamic duo, and she took special pride in providing her Mr. Hal with many fun days and evenings, including planning special events on their back deck, always bringing in company and providing everyone who came with not just good food, but with a good laugh and a memory they would never forget.

In addition to her Father, her three children, and their partners, she is survived by her sister, Debra Kay Levi (Jay Medlyn), and her Uncle Edward (Rosalie) Cavanaugh. We will all miss her infectious laugh and sense of humor. Though Diane may no longer walk beside us, her spirit lives on in the memories and the legacy she leaves behind.



Jan 8 - Cynthia Rutt
Jan 25 - Judy Herzman
Jan 29 - Rev. Charles Kamano

Christmas Fair



Encouraging Words for Epiphany

Audrey Sundwall

Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of his rising.

-- *Isaiah 60:1-3*

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we have observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage."

-- *Matthew 2:1-2*

When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary, his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

-- *Matthew 2:10-11*

For it is the God who said, "Light will shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

-- *2 Corinthians 4:6*



Intercessory Prayers

Aiden & the Guida Family, Alexis, Amanda, Amy, Andrew, Barbuschak Family, Beth Flynn, Brandon, Carol Ude, Charlie & Kris Langlan, Chris, Chris T., David & Irene, Diana, Diane Link, Debbie, Debbie Potrepka, Donna Hodge & Family, Dot Logan, Ed, Elaine, Erick Villano, Family in Ukraine, Francesca, Gail & Marnie, Geneva O'Donnell, Hal Levi, Holly Chickos, Holly, Jan McDonald, Jim R. & Family, Joan Shaffner, John McPherson, John, Nate & Tyler McDonald, Judy C., Kathy, Kathy Guida, Kira, Korey Mollor, Kris, Larry L., Lauren, Levi-Verderame Family Lucas Sundwall, Matt R., Maureen McPherson, Mike, Mila, Minogue Family, Nicole C., Pat Walters, Paul Pera, Rachael, Regina Schwall, Richard Testa, Sallie Alexander, Sam W., Susan Diaz, Tricia Clearwater, Turiano Family

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.

More Christmas Fair





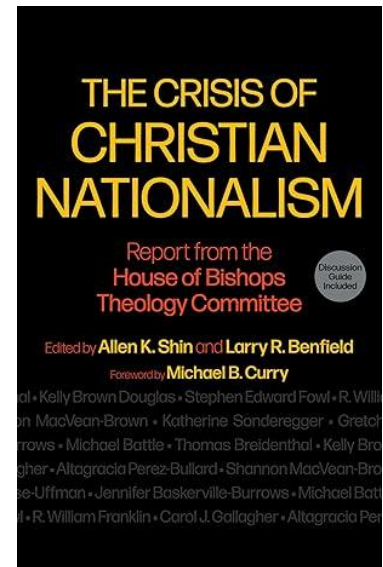
From the Bookshelf

Diane Villano

Spurred on by a conversation during one of the Wednesday Bishop's calls, I purchased a copy of *The Crisis of Christian Nationalism: Report from the House of Bishops Theology Committee*, published in 2024. The first half of this book is printed in English, the second half in Spanish and includes the report, case study, bibliography, and discussion guide.

From the publisher: An urgent call for awareness of the dangers of Christian nationalism, including the origins and implications. In 2022, Presiding Bishop Curry charged the House of Bishops Theology Committee to study Christian nationalism, an issue that has increasingly come to the forefront of conversations surrounding Christianity, democracy, and white supremacy. The committee's methodology in an Anglican framework of scripture, tradition, reason, and liturgy sheds light on the foundation of the movement and a path forward. They argue that it is sinful and violates the first and second of the Ten Commandments. Through careful examination of Christian nationalism, the Theology Committee warns members of the church not to fall into its trap, but instead to be a light to the world.

I found this book to be an illuminating introduction and the bibliography valuable for further research and reflection on this difficult subject. The authors make a compelling argument that the time to speak up against Christian nationalism is now. Additional information is available on the ECCT website: [Combating White Christian Nationalism | Episcopal Church in Connecticut](#) and on [episcopalchurch.org](#).



Epiphany



It might have been just someone else's story,
Some chosen people get a special king.
We leave them to their own peculiar glory,
We don't belong, it doesn't mean a thing.
But when these three arrive they bring us with them,
Gentiles like us, their wisdom might be ours;
A steady step that finds an inner rhythm,
A pilgrim's eye that sees beyond the stars.
They did not know his name but still they sought him,
They came from elsewhere but still they found;
In temples they found those who sold and bought him,
But in the filthy stable, hallowed ground.
Their courage gives our questing hearts a voice
To seek, to find, to worship, to rejoice.

--Malcolm Guite, Anglican Priest

Parishioner Spotlight - Isadora Wilkenfeld

Tell us about your immediate family and pets

I come from an interfaith background: my father's family is Jewish, and my mother's is Christian, so growing up my older brother and I got to celebrate some of the holidays from both traditions. I have two cats (although I also think of my mother's cat as partially mine, bringing the total up to three—all black and white tuxedos).

What brought you to Christ and The Epiphany?

I live fairly near and originally came because I was looking for an Episcopal church within walking distance. I'm glad to have kept coming back!

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

I currently work at Wesleyan University in the office of the university chaplains. I've been interested in promoting interfaith dialogue for many years, and getting to work in a very hands-on capacity serving multiple faith communities (primarily Jewish, Muslim, and Christian) is very rewarding.

What's your favorite pastime?

I enjoy reading (especially nonfiction: currently I'm reading a book about women in the church prior to the modern era) and watercolor painting, and love solving crosswords and other word puzzles.

What's one thing about you that no one at church knows?

For the past year, I've been attending Education for Ministry classes in West Hartford. I'm doing the new, one-year program (Wide Angle) and so far it has been a wonderful way to grow in my understanding of scripture and church history.

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

I've been meditating on this passage from Peter's second epistle recently:

“...You must make every effort to support your faith with excellence, and excellence with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with endurance, and endurance with godliness, and godliness with mutual affection, and mutual affection with love. For if these things are yours and are increasing among you, they keep you from being ineffective and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”



Statement from Episcopal and Lutheran Bishops in New England: Our Commitment to Peace and Justice in a Broken World

We join with Episcopal and Lutheran Bishops in New England to stand in support with those both in Providence, RI, and Sydney, Australia, who were affected by the sin of gun violence. We pray for those who have died, all those who loved them, and for all who are still in the grip of fear and uncertainty.

In the midst of an Advent full of joyful preparation, this past weekend delivered a stark reminder that our Lord Jesus Christ was and continues to be born into a broken world full of danger and sin. The Gaudete Sunday collect, called by some “Stir It Up” Sunday reads: “Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and forever.” May God's power, grace, and mercy be abundantly revealed in our world. We pray also that God will stir up our own resolve to deepen our commitment to peace and justice. May our way and the way of all the lands be Peace.

New Year, New Intentions

Jesse Osmun

To hell with Resolutions, let's make plans!

For years, out of habit I would write down three New Year's Resolutions with, honestly, mixed success at best in terms of getting any of those things on the list checked off. After a while, it's become clear that I am just not a resolutions person, at all. When it comes to my healing and recovery, I've come to revert to my planning mode that I used so often in my prior nonprofit experience. I set an



intention, make plans, and allow for the fact that some things might remain undone, or not done on my time frame, and that's actually OK. When we take this New Years Resolution stuff too seriously, we feel like failures when we don't hit each and every item.. check, check, check, oh CRAP.. I missed that one!

If I had a dollar for every time someone mentioned to me they “resolved” to change their drinking, or move away from bad influences, or decide to not get that job right next to the place they used to cop drugs I'd probably be rich right now. The truth is, the people who maintain their sobriety and their recovery tend to be the people who know how to make a good plan around people/places/things. When you plan, you use intentionality and think things through. When we were using or as my colleagues call it “Rippin and Runnin”, we never stopped long enough to think through consequences, look at our choices, and make an informed decision. Now that we seek to not go back to the insane chaos of all that, how are we going to do things differently? Intentions, in their raw form, are commitments that are guided by our principles and values. When we set an intention in recovery, we commit to doing things that align with our values of being healthy, not using, avoiding destructive behaviors, and honoring ourselves as changing, healing people.

I found a few beautiful intention setting prompts from Mindful.org:

- What do I want to create or nurture in my life right now?
- What quality do I need to embody (e.g., patience, courage)?
- What am I most passionate about?
- How do I want to feel today/this week?

You can certainly create your own questions, but these ones seemed simple and well formatted to jotting down some quick notes. I did something like this many years ago as part of an internship retreat and it was a powerful exercise. For me, I realize that I want to nurture my work in healing and addiction, I suck a bit a patience, I'm passionate about working in the field and supporting others, and I want to feel like I'm worthy and capable of working in the field today, and this week, despite how damn hard it can be sometimes. Intentions don't magically make your life suck less, but they do make life feel goal-oriented, manageable, and forward-moving.

So, what are YOUR intentions for your Recovery this year?

(Photo by Leon Contreras on Unsplash)

ECCT 2025-2026 Prayer Cycle



EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN CONNECTICUT
PARTICIPATING IN GOD'S MISSION

| | |
|------------|--|
| January 4 | <p>Parishes: Trinity, Brooklyn; St. Peter's, Cheshire; Holy Advent, Clinton Additionally: All immigrants, refugees & the ministries that serve them. Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Church of the Province of Central Africa</p> |
| January 11 | <p>Parishes: Trinity, Collinsville; St. James', Danbury; St. Luke's, Darien Additionally: The Journey of Discovery with Indigenous Peoples Ministry Network. For Prayer & Healing Ministry Networks Anglican Cycle of Prayer: Iglesia Anglicana de la Region Central de America</p> |
| January 18 | <p>Parishes: St. Gabriel's, East Berlin; St. Stephen's, East Haddam; All Saint's, East Hartford Additionally: Parish volunteers & parish historians. For the Ecumenical Ministry Network Anglican Cycle of Prayer: Province de L'Eglise Anglicane Du Congo</p> |
| January 25 | <p>Parishes: <i>Christ & the Epiphany, East Haven</i>; Christ Church, Easton; Holy Trinity, Enfield Additionally: Arts Ministry Network & all who help others to encounter the holy through creative expressions Anglican Cycle of Prayer: Iglesia Anglicana de Chile</p> |

Treasurer Report

Susan Shultz

| | NOV | (UNDER)/OVER BUDGET | YTD | (UNDER)/OVER YTD BUDGET |
|----------|---------------|------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|
| INCOME | \$ 8,662.56 | \$ 811.23 | \$ 112,664.72 | \$ 8,100.09 |
| EXPENSES | \$ 9,684.82 | \$ 2,114.34 | \$ 120,665.29 | \$ 511.81 |
| NET | (\$ 1,022.26) | (\$ 1,303.11) | (\$ 8,000.57) | \$ 7,588.28 |

Notes: November was a rough month with us ending over \$1,300 in the red even with almost \$1,000 over budget income (the Thrift Store brought in more than double their budget!). Some admin expenses were timing (audit billed late). So in reality we ended the month pretty much on track and have still (at the moment) cut our projected \$13,500 deficit in half.

Next Issue The deadline for the February issue is January 20th. Submissions can be sent 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 or email christandtheepiphany@gmail.com.

SAFE CHURCH TRAINING SCHEDULE (JAN)

Safe Church Certification is a requirement of The Episcopal Church for all persons serving in these roles/areas: Acolyte, Altar Guild, Bible Study, Communications, Crucifer, Fund Raising, Hospitality, Lay Reader, Music, Officiant, Pastoral Visitor, Property Management, Technology, Thrift Store, Treasurer, Usher, Warden, or Worship Committee. Comprehensive trainings take about five hours to complete and are done once. Recertification training is done every three years after the comprehensive training is completed.

January 8, 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. - Recertification via Zoom

January 12, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. - Comprehensive via Zoom

January 17, 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. - Recertification via Zoom

January 22, 2:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. - Comprehensive via Zoom

January 25, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. - Comprehensive via Zoom

Register online at www.episcopalct.org

Worship Schedule 9:00 a.m. (unless otherwise noted)

| | January 4 | January 11 | January 18 | January 25 |
|------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| Service | Eucharist | Eucharist | Morning Prayer | Eucharist |
| Presider/ Officiant | Rev. Jean Baptiste Rock | Rev. Charles Kamano | Brad Conant | Rev. Charles Kamano |
| Crucifer | Kristina Langlan | George Coulombe | | Kristina Langlan |
| Acolyte | George Coulombe | Kristina Langlan | | Audrey Sundwall |
| Lay Reader | Anthony Reckart | Barbara Parsons | Kristina Langlan | Wendy Bellmore |
| Usher | Barbara Parsons | Diane Villano | Audrey Sundwall | George Coulombe |
| Zoom Tech | Diane Villano | Susan Shultz | Susan Shultz | Susan Shultz |
| Lead Counter | George Coulombe | Astrid Swanson | George Coulombe | Susan Shultz |
| Asst Counter | Audrey Sundwall | Melanie Miller | Barbara Coulombe | Judy Herzman |

Clergy, Vestry and Staff

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Priest-in-charge | Rev. Charles L. Kamano |
| Senior Warden | Diane Villano (& Safe Church) |
| Junior Warden | Barbara Parsons (& Outreach) |
| Treasurer | Susan Shultz (& Technology) |
| Clerk | Kristina Langlan |
| Vestry Member | Ray Clearwater |
| Vestry Member | Carol Link-Ude (& Altar Guild) |
| Vestry Member | Astrid Swanson |
| Vestry Member | Pat Walters |
| Vestry Member | Brad Conant |
| Music Director | Barbara Coulombe |
| Parish Administrator | Diane Rowley |
| | |
| Communications Chair | Audrey Sundwall |
| Feast & Festivities Chair | (open) |

To connect by computer, enter: <https://tinyurl.com/3kbvnb4>, or click on the link on our webpage:
www.ChristandTheEpiphany.org

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

Weekly bulletins are emailed out on Fridays. Zoom is opened around 8:45 a.m. on Sunday.

If you are not receiving the email bulletin, please contact Diane Rowley in the office at 203-467-2310 or christandtheepiphany@gmail.com. If you want or need any help getting connected on Zoom please reach out any time to Susan Shultz at 203-589-1142 or sbshultz@gmail.com.

Christ and The Epiphany Church

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East Haven, CT 06512

Phone: 203-467-2310

Email: christandtheepiphany@gmail.com

Website: www.christandtheepiphany.org

Worship Schedule

Sunday 9:00 a.m. In-Person & Online Zoom Worship