



# Discerning Hearts

Newsletter of The Episcopal Community

“We are marked as Christ’s own for ever.”

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## Epiphany Hope

Mother Susan Forshey



I lived for many years in the Seattle-area, and January seemed shrouded in shadows—fog, clouds, endless gray days, and rain. Advent seemed especially appropriate to observe as the light receded and I would go to work in the morning and come home in the dark (yes, the sun rose at 8am and set by 4:30pm). The beauty of the changing leaves and the crisp smell of pine sap and toasty fireplace smoke had marked the months leading up to Christmas.

After Christmas day, after the twinkle lights and tinsel was boxed up until the next year, January seemed a let-down. The Light of the World had moved into the neighborhood: why did it seem darker than before?

Then something happened at the end of January. A warmer sun touched the bare trees lining the streets. Within days, the trees bloomed in tiny pink and white blossoms—not a full-fledged version of spring—yet still magnificent for all the grey that had gone before. Birds sang, people laughed and chatted on the sidewalks.

Within a week, the blossoms faded, the sun retreated, but my hope was renewed. Spring was coming.

For me, *Epiphany*, celebrated on January 6<sup>th</sup>, is the liturgical version of those tiny blossoms of hope.

*Epiphany*, a “divine revealing or manifestation,” celebrates the revealing of Christ to the world and the start of Jesus’ ministry. The coming of the Magi showed that he is a King for all people, Jews and Gentiles. His baptism by John starts of his public ministry, revealed by John as the “Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.” Finally, his first public miracle at a wedding feast, turning water into wine, launches his ministry to the people (one marked by joy and celebration).

Just like those tiny blossoms in January were only a beginning taste of Spring, Epiphany is full of promise. It points ahead to the full Spring of the Resurrection and the final Restoration of all things (also a wedding feast).

If you are looking for ways to practice living in the hope of Epiphany, here are two I’ve found meaningful. The first is the Epiphany house blessing. I chalk the outside lintel of my front door with 20+C+M+B+24, praying for God to bless all who enter, and then visit friends and do it to their doors (with permission!). The formula represents the year (2024) with the letter CMB, standing for both *Christus Mansionem Benedicat* (Latin for *Christ bless this house*), and the traditional names of the Magi: Casper, Melchior, and Balthasar. In medieval times, people would go caroling and chalk their neighbors’ doors. This communal celebration fills me with hope—when we celebrate together, sing

together, bless each others’ homes, somehow sunlight breaks through the shadows of life. Even now thousands of young people in Germany are preparing to go house to house, chalking doors and singing in a modern expression of this ancient practice.

A second practice is to keep up my Christmas decorations, especially the Nativity, for forty days. It is especially appropriate this year, the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first nativity scene, created by St. Francis in Greccio. Epiphany begins the season of Epiphanytide, ending with the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple, or Candlemas, on February 2. Displaying the nativity with the Magi is a visual reminder of Christ’s revealing to the world. It forces me to ponder what it means for Christ to be revealed in me, my home, and my life, even in the long dark of waiting for Christ’s return.

So much in our lives and world cries out for restoration, Epiphany illuminates Christ’s presence and love even in the most shadowed of places, and invites me to bear witness to how I see him in the ordinariness of life. How might you be blossoms and sunlight for those around you, pointing to the coming Spring?

*About Mother Susan: Tea-drinker, cafe-window seat-sitter, theologian-stargazer, contemplative-educator, photo-taking-poet, monastic-minded charismatic, anglo-catholic Episcopalian, earth-loving artist, and follower of Jesus Christ.*

*I am the Associate Professor of Discipleship and Christian Formation, and Director of the MA in Christian Leadership, at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, joining the faculty in 2014; and a priest, serving as Associate Rector at St. John’s Episcopal Church, Dubuque.*

*Drawn by a love of monastic history and contemplative prayer, I received a Master of Divinity at St John’s University, Collegeville, a Benedictine abbey, and a PhD in Theological Studies, focusing on Practical Theology and Spirituality, from Boston University (2015). My dissertation, *Prayer in Theological Education for Ministry: Toward a Contemplative Practical Theological Pedagogy*, explores the role of prayer in theological education, closely reading the theologies of Karl Barth, Marjorie Suchocki, and Eugene Peterson for how theology and prayer inter-relate.*

*A spiritual director, my experience also includes twenty-five years in Adult Christian education, intentional Christian community, retreat facilitation, and liturgical leadership in congregational contexts. I have served on the pastoral staff of four churches in three denominations: Presbyterian USA, United Methodist, and Episcopal.*

*I have a deep interest in the influence of social technology on the contemplative life. My research includes the practice of lectio divina, internet technology’s influence on the life of prayer, cognitive approaches to habit formation, liturgical catechesis, Celtic spirituality, the medieval mystics, Creation spirituality, and the contemplative dimensions of education.*

*My wise cat, Minerva, daily reminds me to get off the smartphone and enjoy the beauty of non-screen life.*

You can find her at: [The Contemplative Cottage - Attending Deeply to Life](#)



## Art from Wood left by Hurricane

Condensed from an article originally published in the Panama City News Herald - Tony Simmons

After a physical injury many years ago, Donna Jangula used painting as a means of calming and recovery. She had been drawn to creating artwork all her life, even during her 24 years working as a career professional in the U.S. Navy.

So it's no leap to understand why she was inspired to use debris from Hurricane Michael as a tool for recovery — especially taking into account that the storm left her displaced.



"I am living in Santa Rosa (Beach) while my house in Callaway is being rebuilt," she said recently.

And while she waited, she began employing wood

retrieved from ruined homes and businesses as a canvas for her work — sometimes whimsical as a mermaid, and sometimes as simple and quiet as terns on a shoreline.

After her retirement from the Civil Service, Jangula started following her passion of creating and promoting art. (She added that her other passions are boating and her family.)



A Miami native, she studied oil painting under the late Pearl Ropke. She has since taken years of training, attending workshops and private tutoring, including those led by local artist Heather Clements, whom she calls her "favorite teacher," at CityArts Cooperative.



A longtime resident of the Gulf Coast, Jangula was a director at CityArts in Panama City for seven years. Her work is now displayed at Art & Soul, 5399 E. County 30A, Santa Rosa Beach

(visit [ArtAndSoul30A.com](http://ArtAndSoul30A.com) for more information about the boutique).



## Compline Schedule

07 Jan – BB Vaughn & Carol Putnam  
14 Jan – Lorna MacDonald  
21 Jan – Cynthia Sand  
28 Jan – Chris Butterworth

The community offers compline over Zoom each Sunday Evening at 5PM CST. Please join us! If you would like to lead compline, please contact Please contact Becky Taylor at [beekatay@me.com](mailto:beekatay@me.com)



## January Birthdays

Mary "BB" Vaughn



## Event Calendar 2024

Meetings are on Zoom unless otherwise noted.

- **Book Study – Sundays, 5:00 PM CST**
- **Sunday evening Compline**, weekly at 6:00 PM Central
- **Friday Morning Prayer**, weekly at 9:00 AM Central
- **2024**
- January 4 - Prayer Circle for Chris Butterworth
- January 11 - Executive Committee (Google Meet)
- January 25 - Circle of Leadership
- June 23-28 - GC81 Louisville, KY



Information is available at: [Attendee Resources GC81 – The General Convention of The Episcopal Church](#)



## Circle of Leadership Elections

### Calendar

January 15, 2024, the Nominations Committee reports to membership a slate of the nominees they are recommending for the four open positions on the Circle of Leadership (Date set by Bylaws). The Bylaws do not allow write-in nominations or nominations from the floor.

February 1 Ballots will be mailed if an election is needed. The Bylaws state if the number of qualified members nominated by the membership or the Nominations Committee is equal to or less than the number of open positions, the nominees shall be declared elected.

February 20 All ballots (if needed) are due back to Nominations Committee who will open and tabulate.

March 1 Announce results of election. Mail run off ballots if needed.

March 17 Ballots are due back to Nominations Committee who will open and tabulate.

March 30 Announce to membership of The Episcopal Community names of four new members of 2024-2027 Circle of Leadership and three returning members.

July 2024 Installation of 2024-2027 Circle of Leadership at General Convention 81. The new COL selects its officers.

The Nominations/Elections Committee:  
Nancy Young Rebecca Taylor Barbara Harris  
[nominations@theepiscopalcommunity.org](mailto:nominations@theepiscopalcommunity.org)



## Recipe of the Month

Black Eyed Peas with Ethiopian Spices

By [Marcus Samuelsson](#)



*This creamy, complex-tasting dish relies on assertive African flavors like berbere (an Ethiopian spice mix) and coconut milk. Don't leave out the habanero—it's not too hot because it's seeded, and it adds a fruity, tropical flavor. Berbere is a blend of*

*warm spices and may be purchased or made at home, see recipe below.*

### Ingredients

2 cups dried black-eyed peas (12 ounces)  
Kosher salt  
4 tablespoons unsalted butter  
1 large red onion, minced  
1½ tablespoons minced peeled fresh ginger  
3 garlic cloves, minced  
1 habanero chile, seeded and minced  
2 teaspoons berbere seasoning (*purchased or see below*)  
1 teaspoon ground turmeric  
3 medium tomatoes, chopped  
1 cup coconut milk  
1 cup vegetable stock or low-sodium broth  
⅓ cup chopped cilantro  
2 scallions, thinly sliced

### Procedure

In a large saucepan, cover the peas with water and bring to a boil. Simmer over moderately low heat until tender, about 40 minutes. Add a generous pinch of salt and let stand for 5 minutes, then drain well. Meanwhile, in a large saucepan, melt the butter. Add the onion, ginger, garlic and chile and cook over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until softened and just starting to brown, about 10 minutes. Add the berbere and turmeric and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Add the tomatoes and cook, stirring, until softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in the coconut milk and stock and bring to a boil. Simmer over moderately low heat, stirring occasionally, until the tomatoes break down and the sauce is thickened, about 20 minutes. Add the peas to the sauce and cook over moderately low heat, stirring, until the peas are lightly coated, about 10 minutes. Fold in the cilantro and scallions and serve.

**Note:** Can be made with chicken stock.

### Berebere

#### Ingredients

2 tsp. coriander seeds  
1 tsp. fenugreek seeds  
½ tsp. black peppercorns  
¼ tsp. whole allspice  
6 white cardamom pods  
4 whole cloves  
½ cup dried onion flakes  
5 dried chiles de árbol, stemmed, seeded, and broken into small pieces  
3 tbsp. paprika  
2 tsp. kosher salt  
½ tsp. ground nutmeg  
½ tsp. ground ginger

½ tsp. ground cinnamon

### Procedure

In a small skillet, combine coriander seeds, fenugreek seeds, black peppercorns, allspice, cardamom pods, and cloves. Toast spices over medium heat, swirling skillet constantly, until fragrant, about 4 minutes. Let cool slightly, transfer to a spice grinder along with onion flakes and grind until fine. Add chilies, and grind with the other spices until fine. Transfer the mixture to a bowl and stir in paprika, salt, nutmeg, ginger, and cinnamon. Store in an airtight container for up to 6 months.



## Your contributions make a difference!

Donate to one of our designated funds or pay your annual dues. Payments may be made through PayPal, (use the drop-down tab to select a fund or to pay your dues) or by check mailed directly to The Episcopal Community, P.O. Box 242, Sewanee, TN 37375. When paying by check, please designate which fund or annual dues in the memo line.

