



470 Winter Street Ext.
Troy, NY 12180
(518) 283-1372
WWW.HOPELC.ORG

We are a community empowered by the Holy Spirit, called to bring God's comfort, to work for God's justice, and to share the hope and love of Jesus with all.

January 2026 Newsletter

Our Core Values



HAPPY NEW YEAR

A Message from Our Pastor

Happy Epiphany!

Epiphany : a Christian festival held on January 6 in commemoration of the coming of the Magi as the first manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles or in the Eastern Church in commemoration of the baptism of Christ

*2: an appearance or manifestation especially of a divine being
the epiphany of God in Christ*

I have to admit I was more than a little bit surprised when I looked up the definition of the word Epiphany in the dictionary, only to see that the first two definitions were directly related the birth of Christ Jesus. The most relevant definition of a word is always listed first. I knew it was the most relevant, but I didn't think the compilers of the dictionary would think so as well. Be that as it may, it's the third definition I want to lift up in reference to being a Christian.

*3: an intuitive grasp of reality through something (such as an event) usually simple and striking
... a food writer who has traveled around the world in an endless quest for epiphanies of flavor*

...
— Jeff Gordinier

It's the example they use in this third definition of the word "epiphany" that I find so fascinating. We normally think of an epiphany as something that happens to us. In other words, we have no power over making it happen. But in the above example, a food writer travels around the world in an endless quest for epiphanies of flavor. She is faithfully seeking these epiphanies and thus she finds them. What if part of our sometimes experiencing an epiphany, that experience of God in our midst, is something we are called to actively seek out in our everyday lives. God desires to be in relationship with us. What if when we reach out to God in faith, God only too eagerly reaches out to us in return. Even going back to the first definition of an epiphany being defined as the "coming of the magi," it is the magi who first seek the king of the Jews. The magi follow a star, seeking the revelation of God's in-breaking into the world. In return, God sends a star to guide them to this amazing epiphany, the baby Jesus lying in a manger. The magi trust and have faith that they will find the child, and as a result of that faithful trust, God responds with a star and dreams of guidance. We don't control epiphanies, but perhaps we nevertheless are called to faithfully seek out those epiphanies of light, knowing that our God will respond. Epiphany is not just a one-time happening, but continuously happens all around us if we but look with eyes of faith.

Happy Epiphany!

Pastor Pamela



Will You Be My Neighbor?

A new podcast episode!

Hello,

We are excited to be taping and posting new episodes. Here is our January gem.

Listen/watch as Catherine welcomes Kyra Alte of the Albany NNORC: Neighborhood, Naturally Occurring Retirement Community. They talk about new ways to think about--and create--neighborhoods: ever consider a floor of an apartment building a neighborhood? They also discuss loneliness in depth: how everyone experiences it and ways to move out of it towards connection and community.

Pastor Pamela's comments on this episode were: "... podcast was excellent. Was really well done and informative."

Here is the link that will take you to the episode on all the platforms (YouTube, Spotify, and Apple) as well as a link to our Facebook Page.

<https://lnk.bio/hellocommunity>

If you are new to podcasts, don't miss the show notes with each episode: they include the episode summary (for a preview); guest biography, timestamp, resources, and other items of interest.

Depending on the platform you are on, the show notes are next to the episode graphic or below the video.

If you enjoy this episode, please share it on your social media or send it to someone who you might know that is experiencing loneliness. So together, we can create a world where everyone has the connection and community they need and want.

Till next time,

Catherine

Altar Flower Dedications

Sign-up to donate flowers for the sanctuary.

The flowers on the altar on Sundays can be donated in memory of or in honor of a loved one, or a special occasion.

Each donation costs \$60 and runs for two-weeks.

**At the end of the second week,
you can take the flowers home if you would like.**

Instructions:

Write your name on the sign-up sheet.

Then take a form and envelope from the basket.

**Fill out the form and put it with your payment (cash or check
– checks made out to: Hope Lutheran Church) in the
provided envelope. The envelope can then be placed in the
offering plate on Sunday.**

Tonya will confirm receipt of your donation.

Did you know...



volunteers to help pack food once-a-month at:



SERVING 1,000 CHARITABLE AGENCIES	ACROSS 23 NYS COUNTIES	FEEDING 350,000 PEOPLE EVERY MONTH
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The Regional Food Bank is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. We collect donated food from the food industry and distribute it to nearly 1,000 charitable agencies throughout 23 counties of northeastern New York. This donated food helps feed over 350,000 people each month. The Regional Food Bank is a member of [Feeding America](#) and [Feeding New York State](#).

Here is our schedule for 2026 -- mark your calendars!



**We meet at the RFB:
965 Albany Shaker Road in Latham.**

The time is 10:30am to noon.

(Wear clothes that you don't mind getting a little dirty, as well as closed-toe shoes.)

We welcome you to join us!

January 3

April 4

July 11

October 3

February 7

May 2

August 1

November 7

March 14

June 6

September 12

December 5

Sharing the hope and love of Jesus with all



November 25, 2025

Dear Friends at Hope Lutheran Church,

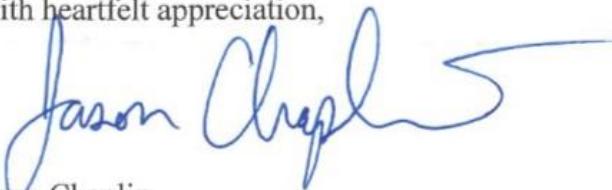
On behalf of the families we serve, I want to extend our deepest gratitude for your generous donation of 15 gift cards to help provide Thanksgiving dinners this year.

In these challenging times, many of the families in our community are facing hardships that make even the simplest traditions, like gathering around a table for a holiday meal, feel out of reach. Your kindness has not only helped put food on their tables but has also reminded them that they are not alone, that there are people who care deeply and are willing to extend a helping hand.

The impact of your gift goes far beyond the meals themselves. It brings warmth, dignity, and hope to those who need it most. For these families, this Thanksgiving will be a moment of joy and togetherness made possible by your compassion.

Thank you for being a beacon of generosity and love. Your support means the world to us and to the families who now have the opportunity to celebrate this season with full hearts and full plates.

With heartfelt appreciation,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jason Chaplin".

Jason Chaplin
Sr. Housing Stability Advocate
St. Paul's Center, Inc.
PO Box 589
Rensselaer, NY 12144
Office: 518-434-2910
JChaplin@stpaulscenter.com

grateful thankful blessed

Once again, Hope LC gave 15 families a tasty Christmas dinner this year. Your food donations were packed up and distributed to families who are "graduates" of the St. Paul's Center homeless shelter. These families are on their own now, but still grateful for any help we can provide.

Many thanks to all who contributed food. We actually ended up with extra stuffing and gravy -- a nice problem to have! Special thanks to Karen Hill, who supplied all the corn and green beans!

Thanks also to the packaging crew, pictured below: Dickie and Pam Dodson, Diane Cornell, Anna-Lisa Hafgren-Willis, and Nora Guido. And thanks to Tonya Humphrey, who put together Hope "swag bags" -- calendars, pens and other items.



Sharing Christmas Blessings

Thank you to the many generous people who provided Christmas gifts to two St. Paul's Center Families this year!





PRAYER CALENDAR

January 2026

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
			1 New Year's Day Sandra Governor's Birthday	2 Dave Armento	3 Lois Batsios	4 Tom Batsios
5 Athena Batsios	6 Epiphany	7 Orthodox Christmas Day	8 Pr. Pamela Hoh	9 Daniel Hoh	10 Joshua Hoh	11 Baptism of Our Lord
12 Monica Hoh	13 Lydia Calabro	14 Sabastian Schomer	15 Mark Schomer	16 Maeve Schomer	17 Dan Churchill	18 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Begins
19 Martin Luther King, Jr.	20 Ciji Churchill	21 Harper Churchill	22 Bailey Churchill	23 Susan Clemente	24 Daniel Clemente	25 Luis Clemente
26 Nancy Clarkson	27 Emily Filuta-Gray	28 George Gray	29 Henry Gray	30 Lucas Boyer	31 Lisa Boyer	



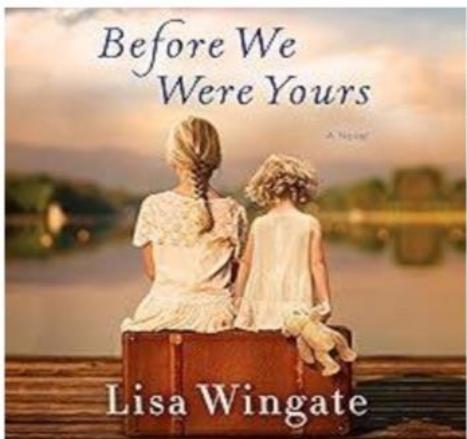
**EACH MONTH WE LIST NAMES FOR YOUR
DAILY PRAYERS. EVERYONE IN OUR
COMMUNITY BRINGS UNIQUE GIFTS FOR OUR
MISSIONARY JOURNEY. OUR PRAYERS
SUPPORT THEM IN THEIR DAILY LIVES. (A
REMINDER...THESE ARE NOT PRAYERS FOR
HEALING.)**



We wish you a very Happy and Blessed Birthday ...

Sandra Governor ~ January 1st





**Book Group Meets to Discuss
Before We Were Yours by Lisa
Wingate on January 28, 2026**

Amazon gives a detailed explanation of this riveting book based on one of America's most notorious real-life scandals—in which Georgia Tann, director of a Memphis-based adoption organization, kidnapped and sold poor

children to wealthy families all over the country.

It begins in **Memphis, 1939**. Twelve-year-old Rill Foss and her four younger siblings live a magical life aboard their family's Mississippi River shantyboat. When their father must rush their mother to the hospital one stormy night, Rill is left in charge—until strangers arrive in force. Wrenched from all that is familiar and thrown into a Tennessee Children's Home Society orphanage, the Foss children are assured that they will soon be returned to their parents. They quickly realize the dark truth. At the mercy of the facility's cruel director, Rill fights to keep her sisters and brother together in a world of danger and uncertainty.

Aiken, South Carolina, present day. Born into wealth and privilege, Avery Stafford seems to have it all: a successful career as a federal prosecutor, a handsome fiancé, and a lavish wedding on the horizon. When Avery returns home to help her father weather a health crisis, a chance encounter leaves her with uncomfortable questions and compels her to take a journey through her family's long-hidden history.

Gail Markert will lead the January meeting discussion. The Women's Book Group meets the 4TH Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the home of Marilyn Dyer and Pr. Elaine Berg (47 Deerhaven Lane, Rensselaer 12144) **NOTE: THE BOOK GROUP WILL NOT MEET IN FEBRUARY AND MARCH. WE WILL JOIN IN THE LENT SOUP SUPPERS ON WED. EVENINGS.**



Give blood.
Help save lives.



**Sanctuary
470 Winter Street Ext.
Troy, NY 12180**

**1/31/2026
8:00 AM to 12:00 PM**

Please call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit RedCrossBlood.org
and enter: **hopelutheran** to schedule an appointment.



Scan to schedule an
appointment

1-800-RED CROSS | 1-800-733-2767 | RedCrossBlood.org | Download the Blood Donor App

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HOPE'S GATHERING MEETS JAN. 31ST FOR FUN, FOOD AND BINGO!

Come chase away the winter chill with the warmth of friends, food, and bingo! An evening of fun, good food and if you're lucky, win a prize for winning numbers! Join our hosts: Dawn Conville and Lynda Seiling to drive out the January blahs!

Please bring your favorite appetizer, dip or small plate food to share. We'll make a meal of appetizers. (A sign-up sheet will be available.)

Cold/hot beverages, coffee and dessert will be provided! Food will be served at 6:00 PM with bingo games immediately following! Hope to see you there!



Worship Volunteer Duties for January 2026

Please find your own replacement if you cannot be available on date of assignment.

	4-Jan	11-Jan	18-Jan	25-Jan
	Worship 10:00am	Worship 10:00am	Worship 10:00am	Worship 10:00am
Altar Guild/ Comm. Asst. 2	Charlie H	Bonny M	Donna S	Debbie F
Greeter	Ja'net M	Sandra G	Marlies P	Cindy W
Usher	Dickie D	Marion D	Maureen H	Diane C
Assisting Minister	Chris N	Mike D	Sandra G	Luis C
Comm. Assistant	Chris N	Donna S	Bonny M (+ candles)	Luis C
Snack Set-Up	Susan C	Charlie H	Maureen H	Susan C
Offering Counters	Pam D & Bonny M	Marion D & Charlie H	Maureen H & Bonny M	Diane C & Pam D



Upcoming Events for January of 2026

We have 'In-Person' Sunday Worship Services at 10:00 AM.

We also live-stream our services on our website, Facebook and YouTube.

Sharing the hope and love of Jesus with all

3rd: Regional Food Bank Packing, 10:30 AM – Noon, Meet at RFB.

4th: Prayers of Hope meets in the small classroom following worship service.

6th: Beginner Plus Tai Chi with Pam Dodson @ 7 PM in the sanctuary; (every Tuesday).

7th Qigong with Pam Dodson @ 1:30 PM in the sanctuary; (every Wednesday).

Advanced Tai Chi with Pam Dodson @ 3 PM in the sanctuary; (every Wednesday).

8th: Women's Bible Study @ 6:30 PM at Pr. Elaine Berg's home; (every Thursday).

14th: Worship & Music Committee Meeting @ 6:30 PM in the small classroom.

15th: Grief Support Group @ 5:30 PM in the large classroom.

16th: - Hope's Dine-Out Dinner – TBD.

20th: Hope's Hands meets @ 10 AM in the small classroom.

21st: Council Meeting @ 6:30 PM in the large classroom & via Zoom.

26th: Newsletter Articles Due.

28th: Women's Book Club @ 6:30 PM at Marilyn and Pr. Elaine's home.

31st: Red Cross Blood Drive, 8 AM – Noon, in the sanctuary; Register Online at:

<https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/drive-results?zipSponsor=hope-lutheran>

Hope's Gathering Event – BINGO @ 6 PM in the large classroom; There is a sign-up sheet on big table in the sanctuary.