



EPIPHANY MINISTRY, INC.

OUR GIFTS

December 2016

In this tumultuous time in history, after a divisive election season, we rejoice:

**“Hark the herald angels sing, “Glory to the new-born king.
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”**

God with Us! “Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel!” Isaiah 7:14

“It is how impossible to conceive how different things would have turned out if that birth had not happened whenever, wherever, however it did...for millions of people who have lived since, the birth of Jesus made possible not just a new way of understanding life but a new way of living it. It is a truth that, for twenty centuries, there have been untold men and women who, in untold numbers of ways, have been so grasped by the child who was born, so caught up in the message He taught and the life He lived, that they have found themselves profoundly changed by their relationship with Him.” Frederick Buechner, award-winning writer and theologian

“Christmas waves a magic wand over the world, and behold, everything is softer and more beautiful.” Norman Vincent Peale, American minister and author

“To the American People: Christmas is not a time or a season but a state of mind. To cherish peace and good will, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have the real spirit of Christmas. If we think on these things, there will be born in us a Savior and over us will shine a star sending its gleam of hope to the world.” Calvin Coolidge, 30th President of the United States

“It is Christmas every time you let God love others through you. Yes, it is Christmas every time you smile at your brother and offer him a hand.” Mother Teresa, now St. Teresa of Calcutta

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A Christmas Prayer for Stars

Epiphany’s Chaplain Jeff Sanford wrote of the awesome baptism of 12 Epiphany Stars at the Swanson facility in Louisiana on Nov. 6th and the plan to baptize at least 14 more on Dec. 18th. But instead of the baptism service, they held a memorial service for Antonio S., age 18, who passed away Dec. 14th of heart problems. The miracle of this is that during Epiphany’s October weekend, Antonio gave his life to the Lord. Chaplain Jeff offers this prayer:

Father God, Creator, Sustainer, thank you for this ministry. For the opportunity to share Jesus with these young men and women. I lift these Stars and Super Stars up to you, and pray that everything we try to do will somehow bring a light into their dark world. And through Your Power and the Epiphany ministry they will come to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior before it’s too late. Through our experience this week, we realize we are not promised our next breath. So God, we pray for every opportunity that You will allow us to have, to bring to these young men and women the gift of Jesus Christ, which first started in a manger on that first Christmas morning. Lord, I pray during this Christmas season that You will wrap your loving arms around each one of the Stars and let them know how much You love them, and that You are right there with them, and that You have provided them the greatest gift of all. And we pray that Your will be done in each one of their lives. Thank You for Your gift of Jesus. And in His name we pray. Amen

Highlights of the September National Meeting

The National Meeting was held near Richmond Virginia and was wonderfully hosted by the Virginia Epiphany community. Thanks especially to Bobbie Stein for organizing so well. Highlights:

- Elected Jeff Sanford as Vice-President, upon the resignation of Carrie Miller
- Reviewed recommended revisions to various manuals to update and restore consistency
- Adopted policy that Stars are not to be added to a weekend after the beginning of the Goals Talk
- Revised Mission Statement: “To show Christ’s transforming love to incarcerated and at-risk youth”
- Voted down changing By-Laws to allow national meeting(s) to be held electronically
- Accepted bid of R.E. Lee, Accounting for tax preparation for 2017

- Adopted an Epiphany Star as our logo
- Appointed Committee Members:

Finance-Bobbie Stein, Bob Lee, Grif Griffith
 Reunions-Jim Caldwell
 Personnel-Executive Committee plus Jim C.
 Expansion-Donnice Brown, Teresa Riggs, Roy Bradshaw
 Mentoring-Grif Griffith, Buzz Brown, Jeff Sanford, Roy Bradshaw

Issues to be discussed/acted upon in May:
 Reunion Manual update
 Adoption of revisions to Manual/By-Laws
 Thrivent
 Expansion/Mentoring process and Manual



A Christmas Gift for Epiphany?

You may contribute a Christmas donation to Epiphany by visiting our website www.epiphanyministryinc.org and using PayPal. Thank you for your generosity!

Stars and Chaplains Say...

I am writing this letter to tell you of the impact your ministry has made on our juveniles and staff and how impressed I am with how well organized your 3 day program was.

Our juveniles and staff were inspired by the consistent love, prayer, music, food, and testimonies shared by your group. The atmosphere in our whole facility is now lighter and less combative. There is more joy...You have a well oiled operation.

Lieutenant Barbara Pressley,
Greenville County (South Carolina)
Department of Public Safety

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Stars from Cuyahoga Hills and Circleville (Ohio) Juvenile Correctional Facilities said:

“When you go back over to the other side (speaking of their living units) that’s when you are going to be tested. They are going to see if you really changed. You have an opportunity to show them how you changed by how you behave.”

“They don’t know me from a box of rocks. I can’t believe how much they care about people they don’t know.”

Do You Know Your Potential

Written by a talented Star

Do you know your potential?
And the qualities and quantities...
Because if you’re using the fundamentals
You can see the things I see.
I mean there’s more young brothers locked
up instead of scholars.
But the background we come from
Time should never be horrible.
And just because you came from a certain
lifestyle
Doesn’t mean you cannot succeed!

If you have faith and put your mind to it
You can do anything.
We came from ancestors who inspired the
Romans and Greeks
And built town houses, big businesses and
universities.
For a person to say you cannot succeed?

They must don’t know the throbbing
potential I have inside of me.
Can you say the same?
To all my brothers in here and listening
Moving forward towards a brighter future
Is knowing the potential given to you.
Do you know your potential?

From the Epiphany Bookshelf

Just Mercy; a Story of Justice and Redemption by Bryan Stevenson

Stevenson founded the *Equal Justice Initiative*, dedicated to defending the poor, wrongly condemned, and those trapped without support in the criminal justice system. The stories of some of these men are “riveting and even shocking...throughout, though, Stevenson lingers on small moments of grace, forgiveness, encouragement and kindness.” (Boston Globe)

Author John Grisham wrote, “Not since Atticus Finch has a fearless and committed lawyer made such a difference in the American South.” The New York Times Book Review said, “The message of this book...is that evil can be overcome, a difference can be made.” The Financial Times says, “As deeply moving, poignant and powerful a book as has been, and maybe ever can be, written about the death penalty.” Very powerful and eye-opening!

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Meet Robert "Grif" Griffith

Grif, although never (yet) a State Rep. to the Epiphany Board of Directors, has probably attended more of its meetings



than any other Epiphany volunteer. He has a large family involved in Epiphany, including his adult-go-kart-racing wife Jayne. They have

dedicated to our ministry since 2001. Grif is currently Chair of the Ohio State Committee. He also trains Lay Directors and non-fourth-day team members. He Chairs the National Mentoring Committee and almost single-handedly makes the raffle of gift baskets at the Annual Meeting a financial success through his gentle persuasion. Both Grif and Jayne have been in singing groups for many years. In his retirement, Grif is Zoning Officer for the Village of West Liberty, Ohio, and loves to work with cut glass as a hobby. Both are active in the lives of their grandchildren. Thank you, Grif and Jayne!

For Your Calendar

January 20-22	Pueblo	Colorado
January 27-29	Willow Le Co-Ed #6	South Carolina
February 3-5	Kansas #2	Kansas
February 18-20	Beaumont	Virginia
March (TBD)	CRC #4	Ohio
	Madison #34	Ohio

**Please send weekend/community agape to
the State Representatives**