

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Epiphany Lutheran Church Competing for *USA Today* ACT Grant
to Support Epiphany Community Garden**

Collierville, Tennessee, USA – Epiphany Lutheran Church recently submitted a video to compete for a grant up to \$100,000 being awarded by *USA Today Network A Community Thrives* (ACT) program. This is the first year for ACT, a new approach to social impact programs to help fund and support great ideas, and encourage creative solutions to communities' most critical needs.

The grant will be used to help fund the upgrade and expansion of the Epiphany Community Garden, located at the corner of Wolf River Boulevard and Bray Station Road in Collierville. The garden is now in its fifth year, and in 2016 provided more than 1,400 pounds of fresh produce to 2,000 members of the Collierville community, distributed through the Collierville Food Pantry and Page Robbins Adult Day Center, both 501(c)(3) charities serving the community. Dick Wieland, member of Epiphany and the initiator of the grant, says, "The Community Garden was started to help provide healthy produce to those less fortunate in our community. Although our garden has grown every year, the need is much greater, and the garden must be expanded to meet that need."

In addition to facilities and equipment upgrades such as a wood fence to keep the deer from destroying the crops and a shelter for equipment and tools, other opportunities exist to increase the garden's yield substantially in order to serve more people in the community. Wendell Kruse, who heads up the garden operations,



explains, “By building a greenhouse, we can start bedding plants earlier and even grow vegetables year round. We would also like to add a number of raised beds, start a kitchen herb garden, and install beehives on our 4.5 acre property. Grant funds would be used for these important upgrades.”

Epiphany is competing for a wellness grant; these ideas support nutrition, mental health, elder care, child development, and other avenues that help to improve physical and emotional well-being. Voting begins online on April 12, 2017 and ends on May 12, 2017; everyone can vote once a day throughout the voting period. The top 10 voted submissions in each category will be reviewed by a panel of judges, and the panel will determine the top three applicants in each category who will be awarded grants of either \$50,000 or \$100,000 each. To vote for the Epiphany Community Garden, please visit <http://act.usatoday.com/> and search for “Epiphany.”

About Epiphany Lutheran Church: Epiphany Lutheran Church worships every Sunday at 10:00 am in the Agape Chapel, 1880 Wolf River Blvd., in Collierville, TN. Epiphany’s Community Garden, tended by volunteers, provided over 1,400 pounds of produce in 2016 to the Collierville Food Pantry and the Page Robbins Adult Day Center. For more information, contact Pastor Monica Weber, (901) 861-6227, or visit www.epiphanylu.org.

About A Community Thrives (ACT): A Community Thrives is a USA TODAY NETWORK nation-wide program that provides the resources necessary for philanthropic missions in our communities to succeed. We’re empowering community members to take on local challenges and share these ideas on a national platform. Because from local to national, even the smallest idea can thrive into something greater. To find out more, visit <http://act.usatoday.com>.

Photo Information:

Photo 1: Members of Epiphany Lutheran Church work in the community garden.

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