



## Questions and Answers about our New Tabernacle and Sanctuary Lamp

### What is a tabernacle?

With roots in Judaism and Holy Scripture, a tabernacle in Christian worship is used to store previously consecrated bread and wine, the body and blood of Jesus Christ. In both Judaism and Christianity tabernacles are meant to be seen.

### Does the Parish of the Epiphany have a tabernacle?

Sort of. We have a metal locked box in the sacristy that a former clergy person, the Reverend Katharine Black, found at a yard sale in Scituate.

### Why are we getting a tabernacle?

To enhance our worship and prayer, and to beautify our sanctuary. A few parishioners, who have come to the Epiphany from other Episcopal Churches, have sometimes asked, “Why isn’t there a tabernacle or a sanctuary lamp?” The visual reality of the tabernacle, and an accompanying sanctuary lamp can be objects of devotion to Jesus and to the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

### Who decided to get a tabernacle?

The Altar Guild, the clergy staff, the Gifts & Memorials Committee, and the family of the late Joseph Georgis.

### Where is the tabernacle going to be?

To the right of the high altar in the ornate niche (itself a gift to us from Winchester Cathedral in England).

### Who is paying for this, and who’s been shepherding this project?

The Gifts & Memorials Committee is using money that was given in memory of longtime parishioner and former senior warden, Joe Georgis. Afaf Georgis, Joe’s daughter, is a member of the Altar Guild and she has been active with the craftsman who is making the tabernacle.

### What is a sanctuary lamp?

In Jewish worship the “eternal light” hangs or stands in front of the synagogue’s ark, representing the menorah of the Temple in Jerusalem. It also symbolizes God’s eternal presence and is therefore never extinguished. Christians incorporated the “eternal light” placing it in our own sanctuaries, and began using such lamps in conjunction with tabernacle as early as the 1300s.

### What does the lamp signify?

The burning candle honors the presence of Christ found in the Sacrament of Holy Communion. When the candle is not burning there is no reserved Sacrament; when it is, one knows that inside the tabernacle are reserved elements from previous celebrations of the Holy Eucharist.

### Does it really burn all the time?

Yes. Inside the fixture is a candle that burns for 14 days. The Altar Guild will insert a new candle every two weeks.

### Who is paying for this and who’s been shepherding this project?

The Gifts & Memorials Committee is using money they have not spent on previous gifts or projects. Leaders and members of the Altar Guild, the clergy, and the head verger have worked with the artisan blacksmith to create a lamp that fits with our architecture. The woodworker and the blacksmith have communicated with each other so that the tabernacle and the sanctuary lamp will look like a unified a set.